



URBAN POVERTY, INFORMAL, ECONOMY, AND SOCIAL NETWORKS IN INDUSTRIAL URBAN PERIPHERIES

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Abstract

This paper examines urban poverty in industrial urban peripheries by focusing on informal economic practices and social networks as household survival mechanisms. The discussion frames poverty as recurrent exposure to income instability, insecure work, and uneven access to basic services, which pushes households toward flexible livelihoods. Informal work is described as a spectrum of trading, service provision, and casual labor that converts local demand into daily cash flow while remaining vulnerable to market shifts and spatial regulation. Social networks operate through reciprocity norms, reputation, and information exchange, enabling small loans, delayed payments, childcare support, and job referrals. The synthesis explains how households combine multiple income sources with consumption management and risk sharing, and how housing mobility can weaken trust formation and reduce network based support. It also clarifies how network composition, including strong and weak ties, shapes access to opportunities and buffering capacity during shocks. The paper concludes that informal livelihoods and social networks function jointly through income pathways, support pathways, information pathways, and social legitimacy pathways that stabilize everyday life in peripheral industrial settlements.

Keywords: urban poverty, informal economy, social networks, reciprocity, reputation, household livelihoods, industrial peripheries.

Introduction

Urban poverty frequently manifests alongside shifts in occupational structures, rising living costs, and household income volatility. In rapidly expanding urban spaces, basic necessities such as housing, transportation, clean water, and healthcare services are met through market mechanisms and public utilities whose quality varies significantly across regions. Mahmudah (2021) points out that this environment exerts a direct impact on the food vulnerability of poor households in densely populated urban areas due to severely limited economic access. Low-income households confront stark choices among food security, rent, educational expenses, and medical needs, forcing daily decisions to prioritize the most immediate demands. Under these circumstances, protected formal employment is not always universally accessible, whereas the need for cash remains constant and pressing. Consequently, many households rely on flexible, short-term, and precarious income streams, including daily labor, piece-rate contracts, or small-scale enterprises that feature low entry barriers but high market vulnerability. At the societal level, these economic pressures shape patterns of relationships among neighbors and kin, as small loans, the exchange of services, and shared job leads become the primary safety net when earnings fluctuate (Perez et al., 2022). This structural reality positions urban poverty as a multi-layered lived experience rather than a static income classification.

In the growth of suburban industrial zones, the dynamics of urban poverty assume a distinctive character. Population displacement, factory expansions, and the emergence of new settlements create spaces that simultaneously offer employment opportunities and heighten vulnerability. Examined from its spatial dynamics, Wisnujati and Mardikaningsih (2021) demonstrate that the phenomenon of urban sprawl and the high daily mobility of suburbanites gradually test the social cohesion of communities in these peripheral regions. While many residents migrate with the hope of securing manufacturing or auxiliary jobs, the reality of labor is frequently characterized by short-term contracts, fluctuating working hours, and intense competition among job seekers. Living in industrial fringes often incurs substantial mobility costs, whereas access to basic infrastructure lags behind central urban

districts. Households manage expenditures through survival-driven budgeting—such as minimizing food consumption, choosing crowded housing conditions, and deferring non-urgent expenses. Concurrently, industrial zones foster markets for various informal services, including food vending, localized transport, repair services, and petty retail (Khalil, 2022). While these markets present viable opportunities, they remain highly sensitive to shifts in worker flows, public order regulations, and demand fluctuations. Social interactions between migrants and long-term residents establish networks that determine access to employment leads and commercial vending spaces.

Industrial suburban fringes often serve as the intersection between changing spatial designs and the survival needs of low-income households. Settlements proliferate rapidly through rented rooms, tenement houses, or temporary dwellings situated close to production sites. This proximity curtails commuting costs but regularly correlates with overcrowding, inadequate sanitation, and weak tenure security. According to the findings of Mahmudah (2022), this economic informality inherently deepens urban worker precarity within contemporary city governance systems. Within these environments, informal economic activities expand in response to the daily requirements of workers and families, ranging from micro-groceries and laundry services to home-based childcare and commission-based labor. These activities are predominantly network-based, as capital is typically drawn from modest savings, loans among kin, or razor-thin profit reinvestments. Individuals learn trading practices from neighbors, share supply sources, and guard each other's stalls during family emergencies. Within informal labor arrangements, agreements rely heavily on mutual trust and personal reputation, positioning social relations as the primary form of capital. However, dependency on reputation also introduces vulnerability, since minor personal disputes can terminate access to clientele. Thus, informal economic practices and social networks are inextricably linked, operating together to sustain livelihoods.

At the household level, survival in industrial suburban fringes is frequently achieved through income source diversification and flexible work arrangements (Oldfield, 2014). Family members may combine factory labor with secondary jobs, or supplement small-scale retail with order-based services. This strategy aims to maintain a steady daily cash flow

when working hours fluctuate or when primary employment is temporarily suspended. In this process, the roles of women and youth often become vital to the household economy, contributing through home-based food production, tailoring services, or online sales leveraging personal social networks. Amidst these pressures of modernity that demand constant flexibility, Amri and Khayru (2022) observe how local communities strive intensely to preserve their traditions and original social rhythms within urbanizing spaces. Because informal economic activities frequently take place around the home, the boundary between domestic and workspaces becomes blurred. While this condition can complicate time management, childcare, and health, it remains a preferred option because it provides flexibility and minimizes commuting costs. When emergency needs arise, households rely on social networks to borrow money, obtain goods on credit, or find job referrals. These networks can be based on family, neighbors, coworkers, or regional migrant communities. This dynamic indicates that survival is not merely a matter of labor, but of the capacity to manage relationships and trust within a rapidly changing environment.

When economic pressures intensify, social networks function as safety nets that provide emergency assistance, information, and moral support. Assistance can take the form of small loans, profit-sharing partnerships, shared work equipment, or informal childcare when parents must work. In many situations, this aid is not given as pure charity, but rather as an exchange bound by norms of reciprocity. The necessity for such systemic flexibility aligns with the perspective of Arifin and Darmawan (2022) regarding the importance of adaptive approaches in crisis management to cope with extreme economic uncertainty. These norms ensure that aid continues to circulate, but they also create social obligations that must be fulfilled when others find themselves in need. In industrial fringes, reciprocal norms are frequently tested by high population mobility, as migrants may change rental housing or switch jobs quickly. When social ties are unstable, households must rebuild trust, a process that requires considerable time. Concurrently, some networks can become exclusionary such as those strictly based on shared regional origins or close kinship leaving access to aid unequal among the poor population. These discrepancies in access shape varying levels of resilience across households. Consequently, the study of urban poverty in industrial

suburban fringes must closely examine the interplay between informal economic practices and the architecture of the social networks that sustain them. The prominent problem described is the ambiguity in understanding informal economic practices as a survival mechanism that is simultaneously productive and vulnerable. On one hand, the informal economy provides a relatively accessible entry point for poor households to generate income, particularly when formal employment is unavailable. On the other hand, the informal economy frequently operates without labor protections, market certainty, or robust institutional support. Rizky and Udjari (2021) note the importance of reflecting on social welfare theory as a solid legal foundation for formulating sustainable public policies targeted at marginal sectors. This prevailing uncertainty forces actors to manage daily risks, such as demand fluctuations, spatial regulations, and unexpected expenses. Within a normative explanation, a distinction must be made between the informal economy as an active choice and as a forced alternative. This differentiation is critical because it influences how we understand the rationality of action, small-scale investments, and the tendency to persist or relocate. As part of group dynamics, this economic behavior is analyzed deeply by Darmawan (2013) in the discussion of organizational behavior principles that underlie collective action. Furthermore, informal practices in suburban industrial zones frequently rely on public and semi-private spaces with ambiguous legal status. When spatial status is contested, informal actors are placed in a precarious position, directly impacting income stability. Without a clear conceptual framework, analytical discussions risk reducing the informal economy to a general symptom without dissecting the actual mechanisms that transform it into a primary safety net for livelihoods.

The next issue concerns the dual nature of social networks as a survival mechanism that can be simultaneously inclusive and restrictive. Social networks offer vital support through micro-loans, job recommendations, and access to clients and suppliers. However, these networks also demand compliance with norms of reciprocity and group loyalty. Al-Hakim and Irfan (2024) assert that conflict management and team harmony serve as crucial strategies for maintaining the effectiveness of collaborative work in high-pressure environments. When a household is unable to reciprocate assistance, its social standing may weaken, which can subsequently reduce its access to aid in the future. Moreover, networks are frequently formed around specific identities such as kinship, regional origin, or occupational proximity leaving households without these ties forced to negotiate through alternative means. A multicultural perspective

is highly necessary within conflict management policies to map out both the challenges and opportunities for this social integration in Indonesia (Hariani & Halizah, 2024). In industrial fringes, high population mobility makes networks prone to fragmentation, compelling households to continuously construct new relationships. This relationship-building process incurs social costs, including time investments, attendance at community activities, and the constant preservation of reputation. If these social costs become prohibitive, networks fail to solidify, leaving households facing isolation. This issue illustrates that social networks are not automatically available resources, but rather fragile relational structures. A normative framework is required to explain how social networks convert economic vulnerability into survival capacity, as well as how they can inadvertently generate social exclusion.

This exposition is vital because discussions on poverty often stall at generalized indicators, whereas daily survival mechanisms require a more systematic explanation within a socio-economic framework. The industrial suburban fringe highlights the intersection of employment opportunities and systemic vulnerability, turning informal practices and social networks into the primary mechanisms for sustaining livelihoods. Rojak et al. (2021) highlight how civic political participation and the dynamics of civil society movements help shape the negotiation space for securing these economic rights. This analysis is also important to clarify the categories of coping mechanisms, such as differentiating between income-generating activities, consumption cutting, and relational support. In addition, the adaptive responses of communities to new environmental regulations such as public behavior analysis regarding the use of eco-friendly shopping bags as substitutes for single-use plastics examined by Hariani and Al Hakim (2022)—demonstrate shifts in household consumption patterns due to external policies. Without conceptual mapping, social policy and urban planning run the risk of ignoring the logic underlying the actions of poor households, alongside how they assess risks and opportunities. The academic urgency lies in contributing to a stronger conceptual understanding of how the informal economy and social networks shape the collective behavior of households, including norms of reciprocity, reputation, and the familial division of labor. This normative analysis is essential as a foundation for developing more targeted future research.

The purpose of this writing is to construct a conceptual framework regarding the survival mechanisms of poor urban households in industrial suburbs through informal economic practices and social networks. This writing identifies categories of informal practices, forms of network support, and the logic of reciprocity that governs the exchange of assistance. It also organizes the relationship between labor mobility, residential security, and reputation building as prerequisites for accessing economic opportunities. Theoretically, this piece clarifies the link between labor market structures and social relation structures in the formation of livelihoods. Practically, this framework provides a conceptual reference for readers to evaluate urban and labor policies that affect poor households.

Method

This study employs a qualitative literature review to construct a normative synthesis regarding urban poverty and survival mechanisms in industrial suburbs, focusing on informal economic practices and social networks. Ragin and Amoroso (2011) are used to organize the logic of social research construction, particularly in selecting concepts, formulating questions, and building coherent arguments from diverse traditions of thought. Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell (2018) are utilized to maintain the rigor of the scientific workflow, such as establishing source inclusion criteria, systematic reading, and the thematic organization that avoids disjointed summaries. The selection of sources is directed toward writings discussing urban poverty, the informal sector, precarious work, social capital, norms of reciprocity, and household livelihood structures. Since this writing is purely based on written sources, all claims are maintained within the conceptual realm and are not extrapolated into generalizations that would require field verification.

The processing of materials was carried out through thematic coding and discourse reading to evaluate how terms such as poverty, informality, and social networks are used, as well as to organize the differing definitions and accompanying assumptions. Dunn and Neumann (2016) were used to guide the reading of social discourse, particularly when assessing how narratives regarding migrants, spatial order, and the legitimacy of informal work shape the understanding of urban poverty. Variations in citation styles were applied proportionally for instance, narrative forms such as

Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell (2018) and parenthetical forms such as (Ragin & Amoroso, 2011) to ensure the flow remains natural. The results are presented as a thematic synthesis explaining survival mechanisms through income pooling, consumption management, and relational support, with a clear distinction between economic and social structures. This writing does not utilize interviews or field observations; thus, the method functions to organize conceptual arguments in an orderly manner.

Result and Discussion

Urban poverty in industrial suburban fringes can be understood as a condition in which households confront income instability, job precarity, and restricted access to basic services that support productivity. Rojak et al. (2012) emphasize that historically, uncontrolled urbanization dynamics accelerate the expansion of urban poverty patterns, thereby demanding more inclusive prevention strategies. Within these zones, the distance between centers of industrial activity and low-income settlements often highlights two intertwining currents: the flow of employment opportunities and the flow of vulnerability. Employment opportunities arise through factories, warehouses, logistics operations, and supporting services that absorb labor with diverse skill sets. Vulnerability manifests through easily terminated employment contracts, rising living costs, and a commuting burden that consumes both time and financial resources. Within a normative framework, poverty cannot be interpreted merely as a lack of money, but rather as a limitation in a household's capacity to manage recurring risks. These risks include healthcare expenses, tool damage, school fees, and family emergencies that demand immediate cash. Because these risks are recurring, households require mechanisms that operate rapidly, flexibly, and in close proximity to resources. From this vantage point, informal economic practices and social networks are understood as survival mechanisms that bridge daily needs with the opportunities available around industrial zones.

Informal economic practices can be defined as income-generating activities that take place outside of strict formal labor regulations, characterized by high flexibility and low protection (Thulare et al., 2021). In this discussion, the informal economy is not treated as a single category, but rather as a spectrum of practices that differ in capital levels, skills, and

spatial dependence. Some practices focus on small-scale retail that follows the flow of industrial workers, such as selling food, beverages, localized gentrification products, and daily necessities. This condition is complicated by patterns of social segregation that isolate the living spaces of marginal groups, where Fauzi (2021) identifies that spatial patterns of poverty in metropolitan areas tend to cluster within high-vulnerability residential pockets. Other practices focus on services that leverage social proximity, such as laundry services, informal childcare, or equipment repairs. Additionally, some practices center on project-based freelance labor, such as loading and unloading goods, local courier work, or piece-rate construction labor. This diversity is significant because each type of practice requires networks and reputation in distinct ways. Small-scale retail demands stable clients and locations, services require trust, and freelance work relies on referrals and rapid information. Within a survival framework, the informal economy provides the ability to convert time into cash on a daily scale. This daily scale is crucial because the needs of poor households often cannot be deferred. Consequently, the informal economy becomes a mechanism that shortens the gap between cash demands and income availability.

In industrial suburban fringes, the informaleconomy is often tied to the rhythm of industrial operations. This rhythm shapes peak hours, busy locations, and changing types of demand. When worker shifts rotate, small vendors relocate their goods or adjust their products. When production activity slows down, the demand for supporting services can drop, forcing informal actors to seek alternative markets. This dependence on industrial rhythms gives the informal economy an adaptive character. Adaptation is carried out through changing product types, shifting work hours, and altering supplier networks. In a normative explanation, this adaptation is a form of practical rationality the ability of households to read market signals and change actions rapidly. In relation to regional governance, Mardikaningsih and Hariani (2021) remind us that realizing sustainability in public policy absolutely requires a solid balance among economic, social, and environmental protection dimensions where these informal communities operate. However, adaptation also carries costs, because adjustments require working capital, new skills, and a tolerance for uncertainty. Therefore, the informal economy is not always a comfortable

choice, but rather one that secures survival through the sacrifice of time and physical labor. At the collective level, adaptation produces a dynamic informalecosystem where actors replicate practices perceived as successful. This replication process requires information, and information flows most frequently through social networks. Consequently, dependence on industrial rhythms reinforces the need for social relations as a source of information and support.

Social networks can be understood as relational structures that connect individuals and households with resources, information, and support. In this context, social networks are not reduced to emotional proximity, but are viewed as exchange mechanisms bound by norms, reputation, and reciprocal obligations. The norm of reciprocity drives assistance during crises, with the expectation that aid will be returned in a comparable form at another time. In industrial suburban fringes, this norm structures the flow of small loans, the provision of goods on credit, and informal childcare assistance when parents are working. Saputra and Darmawan (2021) describe this phenomenon as a dialectic between individual freedom and collective responsibility, illustrating the dynamic nature of social solidarity amidst the current era of modern individualism. Reputation determines who is deemed worthy of receiving assistance, as it signals whether a person can be trusted to fulfill their social obligations. Within a normative framework, social networks are a form of capital built over time through presence and behavioral consistency. This capital can be utilized to secure job leads, find suppliers, or gain access to customers. However, networks can also cause exclusion, as bonds are frequently formed around specific identities. Exclusion occurs when newcomers lack an established reputation, making it difficult for them to access support. Consequently, social networks operate as a mechanism that can reinforce survival capacity, yet this capacity remains unevenly distributed across households.

The survival mechanisms of poor households can be mapped as a combination of income-generating activities, consumption cutting, and relational risk management (Marques, 2015). In terms of income generation, households tend to combine multiple revenue streams so that the failure of a single source does not immediately halt their cash flow. In terms of consumption cutting, households manage expenditures,

defer purchases, opt for crowded housing conditions, and reduce mobility costs through strategic location selection. To reinforce this defensive capacity, the optimal provision of public services is highly crucial; Gautama et al. (2021) demonstrate that the close relationship between employee well-being and public organizational performance contributes directly to the effectiveness of community services. In terms of relational risk management, households utilize social networks for micro-loans, material assistance, or service access. This combination shows that survival is a process of both internal family coordination and external coordination through relationships. Within a normative framework, internal coordination involves the familial division of labor, determining who works in the factory, who engages in trade, and who manages domestic chores. External coordination involves social negotiations regarding reciprocal obligations. When coordination succeeds, households can maintain their basic needs. When coordination fails, households enter a state of acute vulnerability, such as escalating debt without repayment capacity or the loss of employment access. Therefore, informal practices and social networks are understood as the very instruments that structure this coordination, rather than supplementary activities outside the household's economic life.

Informal economic practices frequently require access to physical space, whether near industrial gates, along neighborhood roads, or around residential settlements (Morgner et al., 2020). Access to these spaces is not always legally clear and is often subject to public order regulations. Fauzi (2022) underlines that the penetration of gentrification projects within urban renewal agendas regularly leads to the marginalization of low-income communities, forcibly displacing informal entrepreneurs from their living and working environments. In a normative explanation, the ambiguity of spatial status generates risks of eviction and customer loss. This risk compels informal actors to develop social protection mechanisms, such as building relationships with neighbors, maintaining order around their stalls, and negotiating with authorities who manage the space. Because these mechanisms are relation-based, social networks become increasingly vital. Actors with robust networks tend to be more capable of maintaining their space or navigating new regulations. Conversely, those without strong networks remain highly vulnerable. The

link between space and networks demonstrates that survival is not merely a matter of trading capability, but of the capacity to manage social legitimacy for the business's presence. Social legitimacy is established when local residents view informal activities as helpful to local needs and non-disruptive. Thus, the informal economy demands social acceptance. This acceptance is constructed through behavior, reputation, and compliance with community norms. This explains why some informal actors prioritize good relations with residents, as these bonds serve as a form of non-formal protection against the risk of losing physical space.

Employment and market information serve as decisive resources in industrial suburban fringes. Formal and semi-formal jobs are frequently distributed through word-of-mouth, coworkers, or referrals. Similarly, informal employment heavily relies on timely information regarding service demands and high-traffic locations. Within a normative framework, social networks function as the primary distribution channels because information is highly rapid and situational. Warin (2022) links these information exchange patterns to the social determinants of public health, noting that the characteristics of dense urban residential environments significantly influence social interactions and collective well-being. Households connected to factory workers learn more quickly about opportunities for extra shifts or internal transfers. Meanwhile, households connected to other vendors are faster to discover cheaper suppliers or emerging locations. Information also encompasses knowledge of localized rules, such as public enforcement schedules or patrol habits, which directly affect the security of informal trading. Because information carries economic value, social relationships are continuously maintained through small exchanges such as sharing goods, helping with childcare, or participating in community events. These micro-exchanges build trust, which in turn encourages more open information sharing. Conversely, information can be intentionally withheld under intense competition. Such hoarding behavior can weaken solidarity and leave certain households lagging behind. Consequently, information distribution through social networks shapes varying survival capacities across households by determining access to income streams and economic spaces.

Micro-debts and purchasing goods on credit frequently serve as crucial cash-flow management tools for poor households (Anja & Zhang,

2023). In a normative discussion, small debts are not viewed merely as financial burdens, but as instruments that allow households to bridge consumption gaps until the next income becomes available. However, this instrument requires a strong reputation, as lenders constantly evaluate both the capacity and willingness to repay. Reputation is constructed from transaction histories and ongoing community social assessments. On the other hand, these cycles of debt and dependency often reinforce structural arguments regarding persistent urban poverty; a comprehensive evaluation by Rojak (2024) rejects claims of a "culture of laziness" and offers structural explanations as the primary root cause of poverty that remains difficult to break. When a household maintains a good reputation, it gains vital breathing room. When its reputation declines, it loses access and must seek alternative sources that are often costlier, both socially and economically. Purchasing goods on credit from local neighborhood stores or trade suppliers operates on the same logic, functioning as a trust-based contract. Within industrial fringes, rapid employment shifts can cause repayment capacities to fluctuate abruptly. Therefore, households often maintain relationships with creditors through active communication and incremental payments. This structured installment approach mitigates social conflict and preserves financial access. Nevertheless, these social obligations can heighten psychological pressure, particularly when households must choose between debt repayment and meeting other urgent basic needs. Such dilemmas are frequently resolved through relational negotiation. Thus, social networks transform financial access into reputation-based access, positioning reputation as a core component of the survival mechanism.

The division of labor within the household is central to survival mechanisms. Households strategically organize who works outside the home, who manages informal home-based activities, and who handles childcare and domestic chores. Within a normative framework, this division of labor is rarely symmetrical, as it is heavily shaped by gender norms, childcare demands, and available employment opportunities. Rejeki (2024) observes that these dynamics reflect institutional shifts within the family structure under contemporary societal norms, which radically redefine normative authority and domestic obligations among family members. In industrial fringes, factory shifts require rigid hours,

whereas informal work offers high flexibility. This flexibility encourages certain family members to fill time gaps, such as running a small stall in the morning and evening while other members work standard shifts. The division of labor also leverages extended family networks, such as leaving children with relatives so parents can work longer hours. When family networks are unavailable, households must seek alternative solutions that often incur additional financial costs. Social networks, therefore, directly influence the household division of labor through access to childcare support. An effective division of labor can enhance a household's ability to stabilize income and protect family health, whereas an unstable division can spark internal conflict and lower overall productivity. Consequently, survival mechanisms must be understood as a system of family decisions continuously shaped by informal economic opportunities and the surrounding social support networks.

Population mobility and residential insecurity are key factors that destabilize social networks (Marques, 2011). This phenomenon is tightly intertwined with the pace of urban sprawl when it lacks supporting infrastructure; Wisnujati and Mardikaningsih (2021) demonstrate that extreme daily commuting caused by fragmented urban spacing gradually erodes community cohesion in suburban fringes. In industrial fringes, rental housing is heavily occupied by migrants with uncertain residential plans. When individuals move frequently, newly formed social relationships can fracture before solidifying into deep trust. Within a normative framework, this creates high social costs, as households must continuously reinvest in rebuilding their reputations. The compounding insecurity and psychosocial vulnerability stemming from this mobility can even trigger stigmas surrounding mental health within families, rendering the role and scope of civil legal protections highly urgent to examine (Zahid et al., 2022). Reputation cannot be built overnight; it requires validation through repeated social interactions. Residential instability also hinders a household's capacity to establish informal businesses that depend on a steady, loyal customer base, which is typically drawn from neighbors and nearby coworkers. If a household's location changes constantly, its client base remains unstable. As a result, households tend to opt for highly mobile income-generating activities, such as freelance manual labor or itinerant street vending. While these transportable activities offer

flexibility, they often yield highly volatile incomes. This financial fluctuation reinforces the need for safety nets, drawing households into a continuous cycle of reliance on social support. Consequently, mobility and residential insecurity act as binding elements that link the informal economy and social networks within survival mechanisms, serving as a dual response to the exact same structural uncertainties.

The relationships between newcomers and long-term residents can shape distinct access structures. Long-term residents typically possess a more established knowledge of local rules, neighborhood networks, and social legitimacy. Newcomers, on the other hand, bring an immediate, pressing need for employment and housing. Within a normative framework, this positional divergence can generate mutually beneficial relationships; for instance, long-term residents provide information while newcomers contribute labor and local consumption. However, this asymmetry can also create social distance. Irfan and Al Hakim (2022) observe that shifting human relationship patterns in contemporary urban societies frequently reinforce these social boundaries, triggered by increasingly intense competition over space and resources. Newcomers may be perceived as competitors for trading spaces or job openings. This social distance can hinder the formation of cross-group networks. When cross-group networks are weak, assistance and information become segmented. Such segmentation makes it difficult for certain households to access opportunities outside their immediate circle. To overcome this division, households often build connections through social anchor points, such as places of worship, rotating savings associations (*arisan*), or community activities. These activities serve as venues to introduce and validate one's reputation. However, participation demands time and money, leaving heavily overworked households at risk of being left behind. Consequently, the local social structure influences survival mechanisms through network access paths. Network access determines both informal economic opportunities and job openings, making it a primary component in explaining variations in survival capacities.

The informal economy frequently collides with public order norms and perceptions of legality (Ischak et al., 2017). In a normative discussion, legality is not merely a matter of statutory status, but also encompasses social and administrative acceptance. When informal

activities are perceived as disruptive, social and administrative pressures can escalate. Such pressures compel informal actors to modify their behavior, such as maintaining cleanliness, regulating trading hours, and coordinating with local residents. Rigid law enforcement and environmental management, as analyzed by Nuraini et al. (2021), regularly clash with the realities of these subsistence economic needs, thereby demanding a more accommodating regulatory approach. This coordination is fundamentally a negotiation for legitimacy. Social networks serve as an instrument for negotiation because they open communication channels and reinforce trust. Informal actors who maintain good relationships with residents secure social tolerance more easily. This social tolerance can act as a shield during enforcement sweeps, as residents may offer support or at least provide advance warnings. However, social tolerance can be fragile and easily disrupted by minor conflicts. For this reason, informal actors often view social relationships as assets that must be actively maintained. This demonstrates that survival contains distinct moral and social dimensions, rather than being a purely economic endeavor. Informal actors guard their reputations to ensure they can continue operating in the same physical space. Thus, social legality is an essential component of the survival mechanism, constructed through networks and daily behaviors that preserve community acceptance.

Survival mechanisms are also closely linked to how households manage health and education expenditures. These expenditures are often substantial and frequently arise at unpredictable times. Within a normative framework, poor households tend to rely on a combination of consumption cutting and network assistance to meet these demands. Consumption cutting may take the form of delaying medical care, choosing cheaper services, or purchasing medications in partial amounts. Network assistance can manifest as loans, small donations, or practical help, such as accompanying a sick family member to a clinic. Practical assistance is vital because it reduces time-related financial costs. In industrial suburban fringes, rigid factory shift hours can make childcare and healthcare arrangements difficult to coordinate. Extended family and neighborhood networks help fill these operational gaps. However, network aid carries social obligations that must be reciprocated, often

prompting households to expand their informal work hours once the immediate crisis has passed. The psychological conditioning and mental strain resulting from this accumulated socio-economic burden frequently trigger new vulnerabilities within the family, where Aisyah and Issalillah (2022) highlight that the social stigma surrounding mental health issues in society often acts as a primary barrier to the recovery of household well-being. This escalation of informal labor increases physical burdens, which can trigger subsequent health risks. From this perspective, a conceptual cycle of risk becomes evident. Survival mechanisms function effectively to cover today's immediate needs, but they can compound tomorrow's burdens in the absence of stable income recovery. Therefore, any analysis of survival mechanisms must dissect the relationships between crises, network assistance, and informal work adjustments as a chain of interconnected decisions.

Consumption management and food budgeting constitute a critical part of household survival mechanisms (Kornita et al., 2022). Households arrange menus, choose cheaper ingredients, and utilize small-scale retail purchasing tailored to their available daily cash. Within a normative framework, consumption management is not merely an act of saving, but a technique for maintaining the continuity of life when income fluctuates. This technique is frequently learned from family, neighbors, and cumulative life experience. Social networks become an arena for exchanging practical knowledge, such as uncovering cheaper places to shop, food processing methods, and ingredient preservation techniques. The exchange of knowledge reduces information costs, enabling households to endure with limited resources. However, consumption cutting has its thresholds, as continuous reduction can compromise health and labor capacity. When physical stamina declines, work capacity drops. When work capacity drops, income falls. Therefore, households strive to maintain a baseline level of consumption that keeps them physically fit to work. In industrial suburban fringes, physical labor demands can be high, making bodily energy requirements equally high. This consumption tension demands ecological sensitivity in managing constraints; Nuraini et al. (2022) emphasize that the combination of a strong internal locus of control and sound environmental insight is highly crucial in fostering sustainable adaptive behaviors at the household level. The tension between

energy needs and cash constraints drives households to seek additional income through informal activities. Consequently, consumption management correlates directly with informal economic decisions and the intensity of social network usage to cover financial shortfalls.

Women often serve as the primary managers of survival mechanisms through a combination of informal labor, consumption budgeting, and the management of assistance networks (Junaidi et al., 2023). Within a normative framework, this role emerges because women frequently occupy positions that bridge the domestic sphere and the local economic space. Activities such as home-based food production, laundry services, and small retail are often conducted close to home, enabling simultaneous childcare. Additionally, women frequently act as the guardians of neighborhood and family relationships, interacting through rotating savings associations, community activities, or mutual aid exchanges. These relationships subsequently become access pathways to micro-loans and employment leads. Darmawan et al. (2021) examine this phenomenon through a psychological perspective in the Society 5.0 era, where an individual's mental resilience and social intelligence serve as primary capital in navigating complex double roles across public and domestic domains. However, this double responsibility also increases time and physical burdens. These burdens can limit a woman's capacity to expand a business into a more stable scale. Therefore, survival mechanisms that depend heavily on women must be understood as labor structures prone to physical and emotional burnout. While social networks can alleviate burdens through childcare assistance, such aid also carries reciprocal obligations. These obligations add layers of invisible social labor. Thus, any discussion on the informal economy and social networks must incorporate the dimension of the household division of labor, as it determines who has the time to build a reputation and who has the time to access better income opportunities.

Children and adolescents in poor households can also become integrated into survival mechanisms, whether through light labor, assisting in family businesses, or taking over domestic chores. Within a normative framework, this involvement is understood as a family alignment to counter labor deficits and cash shortages. A child's involvement can increase household income or reduce expenditures,

such as babysitting younger siblings while parents work. However, this involvement carries long-term consequences for education and development. Households value education as an investment, yet it requires both direct financial outlays and time commitments. When income is unstable, education can be perceived as an onerous short-term financial burden. To preserve educational continuity, households often lean on social networks, such as borrowing money for tuition fees or securing school supplies through mutual aid. Through targeted education and public awareness, Gautama and Mardikaningsih (2022) assert that sustainable behavioral shifts can be accelerated, effectively breaking the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Networks also provide information regarding more affordable schooling options. However, when these networks are absent, households may cut educational costs in ways that undermine quality. This demonstrates that social networks directly influence educational choices, which ultimately shapes the employment opportunities of the next generation. Consequently, survival mechanisms driven by the informal economy and social networks possess a distinct intergenerational dimension. Households make immediate decisions today that actively shape future capacities. A normative discussion positions these decisions as survival rationalities under structural pressure, rather than as easy choices.

Employment relationships within the informal sector are frequently constructed upon personal trust rather than written contracts (Dewi & Nugroho, 2019). This trust shapes wage structures, profit-sharing systems, and social protection patterns. Within a normative framework, trust can lower transaction costs because it reduces the need for rigid surveillance. However, trust can also engender inequalities when one party holds significantly higher bargaining power. For instance, informal employers may defer payments or unilaterally alter agreements. Poor households often accept these conditions out of fear of losing their primary income stream. In this context, social networks can function as a protective mechanism because an employer's reputation is distributed through word-of-mouth. If an employer becomes known for unfair practices, workers can actively avoid them. Leadership patterns in local governance oriented toward public service, as conceptualized by Rojak (2021), serve as an essential instrument for creating a sense of security and fairness, even in

mitigating exploitation within the informal sector. The capacity to avoid unfair employers depends heavily on the availability of alternative work options. Therefore, social networks influence the informal labor market by channeling reputational information. This reputational data structures employment choices and shapes standards of decency. In environments with strong information networks, unfair behavior faces immediate social sanctions, whereas in environments with weak networks, exploitative practices are more likely to recur. Consequently, social networks operate as a social regulatory apparatus that dictates the quality of informal labor, which in turn conditions the stability of household survival mechanisms.

Within industrial suburban fringes, relationships with formal factory workers often serve as vital pathways to unlock informal economic opportunities (Bromley & Wilson, 2018). Factory workers constitute the primary consumer base for local food, transport, and daily services. Households with family members employed inside factories gain rapid access to information regarding peak operating hours and changing worker demands. This information can be directly operationalized to structure small-scale businesses. Within a normative framework, this relationship underscores that the boundary between the formal and informal sectors is not rigid, but rather complementary. Formal workers supply the consumer demand, while informal actors deliver services that fill the gaps left unaddressed by corporate entities. This symbiotic relationship is frequently rooted in shared social backgrounds; Rojak and Darmawan (2012) explain that the dynamics of gender and ethnic diversity in contemporary organizations actively influence how informal networks are forged along the outer perimeter of the industrial ecosystem. Factory employment networks also generate referrals for secondary jobs, such as local delivery or repair services. However, this heavy reliance on factory workers leaves informal businesses highly vulnerable to corporate policy shifts, schedule rotations, or labor downsizings. This systemic vulnerability compels households to maintain multiple income streams simultaneously. Here, social networks again serve as a tool to cultivate new avenues when traditional channels weaken. Thus, the interconnectedness of the formal and informal sectors demonstrates that survival mechanisms are fundamentally systemic. Households continuously navigate diverse

working spaces by leveraging relationships, reputation, and their capacity to adapt to industrial rhythms.

Poor households frequently confront social pressures stemming from community obligations, such as neighborhood dues, social events, or mutual aid for neighbors. Within a normative framework, these obligations can be viewed as an immediate burden because they deplete available cash reserves. However, they can simultaneously be understood as a social investment that secures a household's positioning within the network. This network positioning determines access to critical assistance when a crisis strikes. This social anchoring aligns with the findings of Rejeki (2021), which demonstrate that forging social networks through communities based on shared interests or living spaces in urban areas constitutes a crucial strategy for building a collective social cushion. Consequently, households often treat community obligations as an integral part of their survival mechanism. They deliberately choose to attend specific events to preserve their reputations. Presence generates trust, and trust unlocks access. Nonetheless, this choice creates a profound dilemma when economic constraints are severe. Such dilemmas illustrate that survival encompasses both moral and social dimensions. Within industrial suburban fringes, communities are often composed of a mixed population, which means normative obligations can vary across groups. These varying norms can spark misunderstandings and conflict. Conflict, in turn, fractures the network, and when the network weakens, the capacity to survive diminishes. Thus, community stability functions as an underlying condition that directly impacts the ability of poor households to endure through informal social support.

The informal economy also involves complex relations with suppliers and intermediaries, particularly for small-scale vendors (Deshen, 2014). Suppliers may extend special pricing or provide goods on credit to vendors who have proven themselves trustworthy. Trust is measured through repayment histories and circulating reputational data. Within a normative framework, supplier relationships constitute an economically oriented segment of social networks. These relationships grant vital access to working capital without the intervention of formal financial institutions. However, this access carries strict repayment obligations. When sales decline, vendors face mounting pressure to settle accounts

with suppliers. This pressure can force them to borrow from alternative networks or liquidate small personal assets. Consequently, social networks forge an interconnected chain of obligations. This chain acts as a safety net when functioning smoothly, but converts into a source of acute vulnerability when disrupted. In a macro context, this structural vulnerability mirrors patterns of systemic inequality; Gani (2022), in a political ecology study, argues how the nexus between vulnerability and structural inequality places marginalized groups in the most high-risk positions against external shocks. In industrial suburban fringes, disruptions can stem from changing worker flows or spatial enforcement sweeps. Therefore, small vendors frequently diversify risks by maintaining relationships with multiple suppliers and offering varied products. Risk diversification requires accurate information, which is gathered through wider merchant networks. This highlights that survival mechanisms within the informal economy represent a micro-scale blend of relationship management, reputation management, and market risk management.

Consumption cutting practices frequently operate in tandem with the acquisition of goods through social channels, such as sharing food, tools, or transport vehicles. Within a normative framework, sharing is a form of exchange that minimizes individual costs through collective utilization. Shared usage expands a household's operational capacity without requiring capital outlays. However, shared utilization demands deep trust due to risks of property damage and interpersonal conflict. Trust is cultivated through daily interactions and a shared adherence to norms regarding respect for others' property. In densely populated settlements, sharing can evolve into a deeply embedded habit because physical proximity eases coordination. This habit helps households survive when incomes drop. Nonetheless, shared utilization can also generate friction if imbalances arise, such as when one party constantly borrows without giving back. Such friction can degrade the network, and a degraded network lowers survival capabilities during a crisis. For this reason, households actively strive to maintain an equilibrium in their exchanges. They keep track of who has provided help and when that help must be reciprocated. This practice of tracking functions as a form of social accounting. Social accounting preserves the continuity of exchange within the community. Thus, social networks provide a trust-based mechanism

for cost savings, functioning as a vital component of the survival mechanisms deployed by poor households in industrial suburban fringes.

Within a normative framework, it is essential to distinguish between strong social ties (*bonding*) and weak social ties (*bridging*). Strong ties are typically rooted in kinship or close friendships, facilitating more intense and rapid mutual assistance. Weak ties, conversely, are usually built upon work acquaintances or distant neighbors, providing more limited immediate aid but often granting access to a broader spectrum of information. Both network structures are vital components of household survival mechanisms. Strong networks act as crucial buffers during acute crises, such as severe illness or sudden job loss, while weak networks serve to unlock novel opportunities, including employment leads or emerging market trends. In industrial suburban fringes, weak networks frequently crystallize through factory floor connections, customer relations, and supplier contacts. These bridging ties can significantly expand a household's economic options. However, cultivating weak ties demands deliberate social skills and a considerable investment of time. Households subjected to extreme work-related stress may struggle to develop these weak ties, narrowing their economic options and forcing them into a deeper reliance on strong networks. This over-reliance on strong ties can generate burdensome social obligations. Consequently, network structure directly dictates adaptive capacity, which in turn determines whether a household can seamlessly pivot from one income source to another when economic disruptions occur. Thus, survival mechanisms are fundamentally shaped by the specific composition of a network, rather than its mere existence.

Collective action among households frequently manifests as small-scale business collaborations, such as pooling financial capital, sharing labor, or co-utilizing physical spaces. In a normative framework, this form of cooperation serves as a pragmatic strategy to overcome structural constraints in capital and workforce availability. Such collaborations allow informal enterprises to scale up slightly, enabling larger volumes of food production or faster service delivery. The implementation of these highly participatory practices at the grassroots level underscores the vital importance of community engagement; Zulkarnain et al. (2021) demonstrate that actively involving residents through community-based social support is highly effective in managing various emerging local issues.

However, these joint endeavors require clear internal guidelines and a high threshold of mutual trust. Without mutually understood rules, collaborations easily dissolve due to disputes over profit distribution. Within industrial fringes, these ventures are often forged among close relations, which strengthens informal social control. This social control enforces compliance with agreements; however, it can also exert immense pressure on individuals seeking to exit the arrangement, even when their economic rationale for doing so is sound. This pressure demonstrates that social networks inherently possess a dimension of social control. While control safeguards collective stability, it can simultaneously restrict individual choice. Therefore, survival mechanisms operating through social networks are not synonymous with absolute autonomy; rather, they represent a continuous trade-off between social support and reciprocal obligations. Households evaluate this trade-off pragmatically, remaining within a cooperative structure only as long as its practical benefits outweigh the social burdens incurred.

The presence of informal institutional structures—such as community savings groups, rotating savings and credit associations (*arisan*), or neighborhood mutual aid funds significantly fortifies household survival mechanisms. Within a normative framework, these institutions systematize social support, converting informal relations into more structured financial instruments. Members contribute regularly and receive payouts or loans based on established collective guidelines. This financial predictability allows households to budget for anticipated expenditures, such as school tuition or essential home repairs. Nonetheless, informal institutions remain deeply dependent on interpersonal trust and social discipline. When a member fails to meet their financial contribution, internal tension surfaces, which can ultimately destabilize the group. In industrial suburban fringes, high population mobility can easily disrupt this financial discipline, particularly when members relocate for new factory jobs or change residences. To counter this vulnerability, these groups often impose social enforcement mechanisms to preserve commitment, such as reputational sanctions or social exclusion from community activities. These penalties serve as a regulatory apparatus that ensures the long-term sustainability of the group, yet they can simultaneously compound the

hardships of a member experiencing an acute financial crisis. This dynamic illustrates that informal institutions function as survival mechanisms that simultaneously deliver tangible financial benefits and rigid social obligations. Households choose to join these associations due to the advantages of structured planning and financial access, even while bearing the weight of routine financial obligations. This choice reflects a community-anchored rationality of survival.

Spatial consumption patterns within industrial suburban fringes are frequently dictated by proximity to employment engines and social nodes. Households purposefully choose to reside close to factories or nearby relatives because both choices effectively mitigate everyday risks. Living close to factories minimizes commuting expenditures and eases the search for secondary, informal income streams. Residing near relatives guarantees rapid access to informal childcare support and modest financial assistance. Within a normative framework, the choice of residential location constitutes a core element of household survival mechanisms because it directly structures daily access paths. However, these spatial dynamics regularly confront communities with cohesion challenges; Mardikaningsih (2021) outlines that massive urbanization triggers social inequalities that become severe hurdles in weaving social cohesion within urban-based environments. Escalating rental prices compel displacement, and physical displacement fractures local social networks. This network rupture immediately diminishes informal support. Consequently, housing decisions are socio-economic judgments tightly interwoven with network stability. Households possessing deep social roots in a specific area tend to stay put despite substandard physical settlement conditions, as the social cost of losing their network is perceived to be far greater than the material benefit of relocating. Conversely, households with weak social ties move more easily, yet repeated relocations further erode their network capacity. This creates a self-reinforcing loop of vulnerability. Therefore, any analysis of urban poverty must view housing as an active component of the survival mechanism rather than a static backdrop, as the spatial locus determines informal job opportunities, access to mutual aid, and information flows.

Within the architecture of survival mechanisms, reputation functions as a social asset carrying tangible economic value. Reputation is methodically constructed through consistent behavior, integrity in micro-

transactions, and visible adherence to community norms. In a normative explanation, a solid reputation lowers transaction costs because it fosters the interpersonal trust necessary to secure goods on credit, obtain informal loans, or unlock employment opportunities. A reliable reputation also positions an individual as an information broker, enabling them to recommend workers or bridge connections between suppliers and purchasers. However, reputation can be easily compromised by minor conflicts or a failure to meet localized social obligations. When reputation is damaged, network access rapidly contracts, severely undermining the household's survival capacity. For this reason, poor households frequently strive to protect their reputations even at a steep material cost, such as prioritizing the repayment of minor neighborhood debts over other needs to preserve their trustworthiness. This sacrifice demonstrates that economic decisions are routinely made with careful calculation of their long-term social consequences. Within industrial suburban fringes, densely populated social environments accelerate the circulation of reputational information. This rapid dissemination reinforces the function of reputation as an instrument of social control. While social control can foster collective discipline, it can simultaneously exert intense psychological and social pressure on households navigating an acute crisis. Thus, reputation acts as the linchpin connecting social networks to informal economic practices within the survival mechanism.

Access to public services and market amenities also heavily influences the structural shape of survival mechanisms. If public transit options are severely limited, households become more dependent on jobs situated close to home or highly flexible vocations. This structural dependency directly stimulates the expansion of the local informal economy. Similarly, when formal healthcare systems are difficult to access, households lean heavily on social networks for medical recommendations and informal assistance. Within a normative framework, service deficiencies amplify the functional value of social networks as a substitute for formal access. Accommodating such societal shifts must be integrated into policy formulation; Halizah and Mardikaningsih (2022) assert that inclusive sustainability policies must deliver solutions that are equitable and highly relevant to the real, immediate needs of grassroots communities. However, relying on social

networks has its thresholds because a network's resource capacity is inherently finite. When multiple households experience simultaneous economic shocks, network-based support can buckle. This collective decline forces individual households to seek harsher alternatives, such as expanding informal work hours or sharply cutting consumption. These alternatives can compound short-term physical and financial burdens. Consequently, survival mechanisms dynamically adapt to fluctuations in service access. Because shifts in service accessibility are rarely within a household's control, maintaining high operational flexibility becomes paramount. This flexibility is simultaneously derived from the informal economy and social networks: the informal economy provides income flexibility, while social networks deliver support flexibility. Together, they form a complementary system. This explanation directly addresses the core research problem by positioning informal practices and social networks as adaptive instruments explicitly shaped by urban conditions within the industrial suburban fringe.

The synthesis of the entire discussion demonstrates that informal economic practices and social networks construct household survival mechanisms through several deeply interconnected pathways. The first pathway is the income stream, defined as the capacity to convert localized opportunities into daily subsistence through informal labor that dynamically adapts to industrial rhythms. The second pathway is the mutual support stream, which reflects the network's capacity to deliver micro-loans, goods on credit, and physical assistance during acute crises. The third pathway is the information stream, which encompasses the network's ability to diffuse reputational data, job openings, and emerging market opportunities. The fourth pathway is the social legitimacy stream, representing the informal actors' capability to preserve community acceptance, thereby securing uninterrupted access to physical trading spaces and customer bases. The fifth pathway is the family coordination stream, involving the calculated household division of labor that allows the simultaneous operation of formal and informal work commitments. Within a normative framework, these five pathways drive a collective household behavior fundamentally oriented toward daily lifecycle sustainability. This behavior involves complex decision-making processes that weigh economic outlays and social costs simultaneously.

Consequently, the relationship between urban poverty, the informal economy, and social networks can be conceptualized as a structural dynamic that both outlines immediate choices and defines the boundaries of those choices. This explanation underscores that survival mechanisms do not consist of isolated actions, but rather represent a continuous chain of decisions structurally organized by labor market demands, residential spaces, and norms of reciprocity.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this writing states that urban poverty in industrial suburban areas creates a need for survival mechanisms that are rapid, flexible, and relation-based. Informal economic practices provide income streams that can be adapted to industrial rhythms and daily cash needs, yet these practices carry vulnerabilities due to market uncertainty, spatial insecurity, and weak labor protections. Social networks provide support systems through small loans, assistance in goods and labor, as well as information flows regarding work and markets; however, these networks also demand reciprocal obligations and the maintenance of reputation, which can become a pressure when households are in crisis. Survival mechanisms are formed as a combination of income, savings, risk management, and family coordination, with reputation serving as the asset that links the informal economy and social exchange. Variations in survival capacity are explained by the composition of strong and weak networks, residential stability, and the positions of migrants and long-term residents within local relational structures. Thus, the interconnectedness of the informal economy and social networks is the core conceptual explanation of how poor households maintain their livelihoods in industrial suburbs.

The implications and suggestions emphasize that the reading of urban poverty needs to position the informal economy and social networks as livelihood structures that possess their own logic, norms, and forms of social accounting. An orderly conceptual understanding of reputation, reciprocal norms, and the social legitimacy of business spaces is required so that urban and labor policies do not oversimplify informal practices as mere disturbances of order. Public service and housing planning must consider that residential stability affects network stability, and network stability affects a household's access to support during a

crisis. Further studies based on written sources can deepen the categorization between strong and weak networks, as well as organize propositions regarding the relationship between mobility, social segmentation, and the flow of job information. In the realm of theoretical development, there is a need to strengthen concepts regarding social accounting in the exchange of assistance and the interaction between industrial rhythms and informal economic adaptation. These suggestions aim to ensure that academic discussion remains focused on mechanisms rather than on generalizing normative judgments.

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