Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Sustained Engagement Among Gig Workers in the Malaysian Ride-Hailing Industry

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and sustained engagement among gig workers in the Malaysian ride-hailing industry. The findings are anticipated to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics within the gig economy, enabling policymakers, regulators, industry stakeholders, and gig workers themselves to develop strategies that enhance the overall sustainability and success of gig workers, particularly in the evolving landscape of the ride-hailing sector. This study is expected to benefit policymakers and regulators by offering insights that can inform the formulation of policies and the development of regulations aimed at supporting and protecting gig workers as the industry grows. For industry stakeholders, the study's findings may inform the enhancement of business models to improve worker satisfaction and retention. Additionally, gig workers can use the insights gained from this research to navigate the gig economy more effectively, achieving greater job satisfaction and engagement. This study contributes to the existing literature by focusing specifically on the Malaysian ride-hailing industry, providing nuanced insights into the factors influencing job satisfaction and sustained engagement among gig workers. By integrating multiple theoretical frameworks, this research offers a comprehensive and innovative approach to understanding the emerging employment trends within the gig economy.

Keywords: Gig Economy, Gig Workers, Job Satisfaction, Sustained Engagement, Ride-hailing Industry

INTRODUCTION

The impact of the pandemic on the gig economy, particularly in the United States, has been profound, with lockdown measures contributing to its significant expansion (Lyaskovskaya & Khudyakove, 2021). The rise of technology and the internet has further created new opportunities for individuals affected by hiring freezes and salary reductions during economic downturns (Norzaidi, 2023; De Stefano, 2016). The gig economy operates by connecting "providers" with "requestors" through online platforms for specific tasks of varying durations. This model has broadened to encompass freelancers, e-hailing and p-hailing drivers, and independent contractors, collectively referred to as gig workers. While gig work offers independence and flexibility, it is often characterized by a lack of job security and benefits, leading to challenges such as low wages and regulatory concerns. Despite these challenges, the gig economy provides significant advantages to businesses, workers, and consumers by offering adaptable solutions to meet dynamic market demands. However, criticisms persist, particularly regarding issues such as visibility, control, and data privacy.

A critical challenge within the gig economy, especially for gig workers, is the absence of social security benefits and legal protections (Koutsimpogiorgos et al., 2020; Huang et al., 2020). Gig workers, often classified as independent contractors rather than employees, frequently face neglect from governments and policymakers, lacking both collective bargaining power and access to essential benefits. The gig economy encompasses various sectors, including delivery, transportation, and online freelancing. In Malaysia, the ride-hailing industry has seen substantial growth, becoming a prominent sector for gig workers. Platforms such as Grab and AirAsia Ride have emerged as key players, providing convenient transportation solutions. As gig workers form the backbone of the ride-hailing industry (Shafiei et al., 2022), understanding the factors that influence their job satisfaction and

sustained engagement is essential. While scholars have highlighted dimensions such as income stability, job satisfaction, and working conditions, the specific nuances within the Malaysian context remain underexplored (Leenoi, 2021).

Gig workers face challenges such as job insecurity, lack of benefits, and inadequate regulatory oversight, which significantly impact their job satisfaction and sustained engagement. Despite the industry's growth, there remains a gap in understanding the long-term sustainability of gig workers within the Malaysian context (Norzaidi, 2023; Salleh et al., 2023). The rapid expansion of the gig economy has outpaced the development of an appropriate legal framework, leaving gig workers in a precarious position, uncertain of their rights and recourse in the event of grievances (Todoli-Signes, 2017). As a result, gig workers may feel insecure about their future, potentially leading to demotivation and reluctance to continue in gig work, particularly in the ride-hailing industry, which is a major component of Malaysia's gig economy.

Challenges and Problems with Job Satisfaction and Sustainability

Several challenges faced by Malaysian gig workers have been identified, including external issues such as the lack of job security, health insurance, retirement benefits, and other forms of social protection (Abd Samat et al., 2023). The absence of these benefits can undermine gig workers' financial stability, further impacting their overall well-being (Khaizie et al., 2024). Another significant concern is the lack of regulatory oversight and accountability for gig platforms, which can result in issues such as low wages, unfair labor practices, and a lack of transparency in the gig work process. Health and safety concerns are also critical, as gig workers may be exposed to physical harm or injury while performing their tasks, including risks such as road accidents for drivers or the handling of hazardous materials by delivery workers (Bergstrom, 2018).

i. Lack of Job Security

Gig workers often face a lack of job security due to the temporary and flexible nature of gig work. According to a report presented by the International Labor Organization (ILO), there is about 72% of gig workers reported feeling unsecure about their job stability. This feeling of lack of security can lead to increased stress and anxiety that negatively impacts their overall job satisfaction and engagement.

ii. Absence of Benefits

One of significant challenges facing by gig workers is the lack of access to benefits such as retirement plans, health insurance and paid leave. The World Economic Forum in their study found that only 10% of gig workers globally have access to benefits typically provided to a traditional employee. Gig workers in Malaysia often rely on personal saving or family support for medical expenses which can be financially debilitating.

iii. Inadequate Compensation

Many gig workers received low and inconsistent pay. According to a study by Malaysian Institute of Economic Research or MIER, gig workers in Malaysia's ride-hailing sector earn an average between RM 1,500 to RM 2,000 per month which is below the national median income. This low compensation can lead to dissatisfaction and decreased motivation to remain in the gig work.

iv. Exploitation and Lack of Protections

There is no formal employer-employee relationship, and without this relationship the gig workers are vulnerable to exploitation and unfair labor practices. Reports indicate that 65% of gig workers have experienced some form of exploitation such as unpaid wages or excessive working hours. The lack of adequate legal protection exacerbates these issues and makes it difficult for gig workers to seek redress.

v. Health and Safety Concerns

Health and safety are one of the significant concerns for gig workers especially those in the ride-hailing and delivery sector. Studies have shown that gig workers are at higher risk of workplace injuries and accidents. A survey conducted by the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), found that that ride-hailing drivers have

a 4.4% higher rate of road accidents as compared to traditional taxi drivers. Ride-hailing drivers in Malaysia reported have work long hours and fatigue, increasing the likelihood of accidents.

vi. Financial Instability

The lack of benefits and low compensation contribute to financial instability among gig workers. 60% of gig workers in Malaysia struggle to save money or invest in their future and leading to long-term financial instability, study revealed by Khazanah Research Institute (KRI). This stability can affect their mental health and overall well-being, reducing job satisfaction and engagement.

vii. High Turnover Rates

Research by Ministry of Human Resources Malaysia indicates that the turnover rate among gig workers in the ride-hailing industry is approximately 35%, significantly higher than in the traditional employment sectors. Due to the challenges and problems mentioned above, gig workers often experience low job satisfaction, leading to high turnover rates

Despite the growing importance of the gig economy, particularly in Malaysia's ride-hailing sector, a significant gap exists in the literature regarding the long-term sustainability of gig workers, which is crucial for their continued engagement. While existing studies acknowledge challenges such as job satisfaction and income stability, they fail to delve deeply into the evolving nature of gig work within the Malaysian context. The employment status of gig workers often precludes them from accessing benefits typically associated with traditional employment, such as healthcare and retirement plans, leading to a sense of insecurity and lack of protection among these workers. Legal and sociological academic debates have increasingly addressed the gig economy, with comparative and legal studies often focusing on the nature of work and employment status. However, the relationship between job satisfaction and sustained engagement in the gig economy, particularly in Malaysia, remains underexplored.

Although issues related to working time have been examined in previous studies (De Stefano, 2016; Huws et al., 2018), there is a paucity of research specifically addressing the link between job satisfaction and sustained engagement among gig workers in the gig economy market. The unique cultural and regulatory factors in Malaysia have not been sufficiently investigated in the context of gig workers' job satisfaction and sustained engagement, leaving a critical knowledge gap. Existing literature underscores the significance of job satisfaction in determining the well-being and productivity of gig workers (Kuhn, 2016); however, the specific dynamics shaping job satisfaction and sustained engagement within the Malaysian ride-hailing industry remain largely unexplored.

This lack of clarity regarding the relationship between job satisfaction and sustained engagement presents considerable challenges for policymakers, ride-hailing companies, and gig workers. Without a comprehensive understanding of these dynamics, stakeholders may struggle to develop effective strategies to support gig workers' well-being and ensure their sustained engagement in the industry. This study is therefore significant for various stakeholders, including gig workers, policymakers, platform operators, and researchers, as it aims to provide insights that can inform policy development, platform refinement, and worker empowerment. Additionally, this research will contribute to the academic discourse by enhancing the understanding of the gig economy's impact on the Malaysian labor market.

The overarching aim of this study is to determine the relationship between job satisfaction and sustained engagement among gig workers in Malaysia's ride-hailing industry. Specifically, the research seeks to analyze how various factors influencing job satisfaction contribute to the sustained engagement of these workers. Furthermore, the study will assess the levels of job satisfaction and engagement within this demographic and seek to validate the proposed research model.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The global rise of the gig economy has been significant, with Malaysia's ride-hailing industry emerging as a prominent sector within this trend. Ensuring the sustained engagement of gig workers is crucial for both the

industry's success and the well-being of those involved. This review aims to explore and analyze the relationship between job satisfaction and the continued involvement of gig workers in Malaysia's ride-hailing sector. Initially, the term "gig" originated from itinerant music artists, denoting one-time jobs lacking a fixed schedule or income predictability (Graham, Hjorth & Lehdonvirta, 2017). With advancements in information technology, particularly the internet and mobile devices, gig work has expanded beyond the music industry to encompass various online digital platforms.

Today, the gig economy refers to a market for temporary workers facilitated by online platforms, encompassing a range of flexible jobs differing from traditional employment (Abraham et al., 2018). Key features include the efficient use of digital platforms to match supply with demand across various sectors such as personal transportation, tutoring, and food delivery. Algorithmic control within these platforms provides gig workers with autonomy, allowing them to choose tasks, clients, work methods, and rates. Autonomy and flexibility are central to gig workers' engagement, according to research (Donovan et al., 2016) and (Wood et al., 2019). Fair compensation, social support, technological infrastructure, regulatory environment, and training opportunities are identified as critical elements shaping gig workers' success and satisfaction (Bergstrom et al., 2018) and (Katz & Krueger, 2019). Compensation fairness and transparent incentive structures positively influence gig workers' commitment and motivation (Chen & Sharif, 2020). Social support and community belonging enhance engagement, while user-friendly interfaces and efficient app design improve the gig worker experience (Rogers et al., 2020). Regulatory frameworks play a crucial role in ensuring gig workers' rights and confidence in the industry (Edelman & Geradin, 2015). Training and skill development opportunities are essential for gig workers to adapt and thrive in the evolving landscape (Pfeffer, 2010).

The gig economy's emergence has been driven by digital platforms and demographic shifts, offering flexible work arrangements amidst uncertainties in traditional employment. However, concerns arise regarding gig workers' social protection and rights, particularly in areas such as insurance, healthcare, and retirement savings. Addressing these challenges requires a redesign of protection frameworks involving governments, platforms, and private insurers to ensure the sustainability and security of modern gig work. The gig economy's growth in Malaysia, fueled by smartphone apps and online platforms, covers a wide range of sectors, providing opportunities for income amidst economic challenges. While offering flexibility, gig work also raises concerns about job security and labor protections, prompting regulatory efforts to ensure fair practices. Balancing opportunities and protections for gig workers remains a priority for stakeholders.

Ride-hailing services, a significant segment of the gig economy, have revolutionized transportation by providing convenient alternatives to traditional taxis. However, regulatory frameworks are essential to ensure fair competition and safety within the industry. The employment status of gig workers, particularly their classification as independent contractors or employees, is a subject of debate, impacting their rights and entitlements.

Gig workers' rights, interests, and needs, including fair compensation, health and safety protections, and access to benefits, require attention from policymakers, companies, and labor organizations. Striking a balance between gig workers' flexibility and their rights is an ongoing challenge in the evolving landscape of the gig economy. In Malaysia, the gig economy, including ride-hailing services, has flourished, driven by factors like digital technology, demographic shifts, and economic conditions (Donovan et al., 2016) and (Kässi & Lehdonvirta, 2018). While offering flexibility and income opportunities, gig work raises concerns about income inequality, job security, and regulatory oversight (Donovan et al., 2016). Regulatory efforts aim to balance gig workers' rights and interests with industry growth (Donovan et al., 2016).

Ride-hailing services, facilitated by digital platforms, have transformed personal transportation, offered convenience and efficiency while addressed grievances associated with traditional taxi services (Hamid, 2016), (Amirul et al., 2016), (Hui, 2017), (Khor, 2017) and (Nair, 2017). Legalization and regulation, as seen in Malaysia since 2017, aim to ensure safety and fair competition in the industry (Teo et al., 2018).

The gig economy attracts individuals for various reasons, including flexibility, income generation, skill development, and career exploration (Clarke, 2018). However, the employment status of gig workers remains contentious, with legal classifications impacting their access to rights and protections (Harpur & Blanck, 2020).

Balancing flexibility and worker rights is crucial as gig work continues to shape labor markets globally.

Underpinning Models and Theories

Job Characteristics Model

The Job Characteristics Model (JCM), developed by Hackman and Oldham in the 1970s, provides a foundational framework for analyzing the influence of job attributes on employee performance, motivation, and satisfaction. According to Hackman and Oldham (1976), the JCM identifies five core job characteristics: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. Skill variety refers to the range of activities and skills required in a job, exemplified by gig workers navigating routes and interacting with passengers. Task identity pertains to the completion of a distinct work segment, such as finishing a ride from pickup to drop-off. Task significance reflects the impact of the job's outcomes on individuals or society, evident in the critical transportation services provided by ride-hailing workers. Autonomy denotes the degree of freedom and discretion in scheduling and task execution, crucial for gig workers' flexibility. Feedback involves the clarity of performance evaluations, facilitated through passenger ratings and reviews. The JCM posits those three critical psychological states—experienced meaningfulness of work, experienced responsibility for outcomes, and knowledge of results—mediate the relationship between job characteristics and outcomes. Experienced Meaningfulness of Work is shaped by core job attributes, indicating the perceived value of the job. Experienced Responsibility for Outcomes reflects the worker's sense of accountability, heavily influenced by autonomy. Knowledge of Results relates to awareness of job effectiveness, supported by feedback mechanisms. Applying the JCM to the Malaysian ride-hailing industry aims to deepen understanding of job satisfaction and sustained engagement. By identifying key factors influencing job satisfaction, this study seeks to enhance working conditions and inform interventions to improve gig workers' well-being and industry outcomes.

Labor Market Segmentation Theory

Labor Market Segmentation Theory challenges the neoclassical economic and human capital theories by proposing that the labor market is divided into distinct segments based on stability attributes, differentiating between primary and secondary segments (Smith et al., 1985; Reich et al., 1973). This theory highlights that primary segments offer greater stability and benefits compared to secondary segments. Gig workers, as part of the secondary segment, may experience a separation from traditional employment with limited access to labor rights and social protections. The application of Labor Market Segmentation Theory to the Malaysian gig economy provides insights into whether gig workers face unequal treatment compared to traditional employees. Key factors include benefits, legal protections, and job security. Examining gig work through this lens helps assess the adequacy of rights and protections for gig workers in Malaysia and evaluates whether gig workers receive comparable benefits and protections as traditional employees. This theory also informs the need for equitable labor laws that ensure social inclusion and adequate protection for gig workers, including minimum wage regulations, occupational health and safety standards, and access to social benefits.

Capability Approach Theory

The Capability Approach, refined by Amartya Sen (1993, 1995), is influential in political philosophy and development studies, focusing on individuals' capabilities to lead lives aligned with their values. Sen defines 'capability' as the range of valuable states or activities an individual can achieve, emphasizing the freedom to pursue different lifestyles. This approach assesses whether gig workers possess the capabilities to lead fulfilling lives, including access to decent work, income, healthcare, education, and economic security. The Capability Approach facilitates an analysis of gig workers' agency in making choices about their work and lives, identifying constraints imposed by precarious employment. It also examines how policies and initiatives impact gig workers' capabilities, addressing social safety nets, labor regulations, and taxation policies. By applying this approach, the study aims to evaluate the protection of gig workers' rights and their real opportunities to lead fulfilling lives, informing policymakers about challenges and areas for improvement in the gig economy.

Capability Approach Theory

The Capability Approach, significantly influential in political philosophy, development studies, and discussions

on social justice, poverty, and inequality, is foundational to understanding the rights and well-being of individuals within various contexts. According to Sen (1993), 'capability' refers to the range of valuable lifestyles an individual can choose, representing their ability to engage in valuable actions or achieve valued states of being. Sen (1995) further refines this concept by explaining that capabilities encompass a set of functioning vectors, which reflect an individual's freedom to pursue diverse life options, including those essential for survival and poverty prevention. This framework emphasizes the importance of individuals' capabilities and their freedom to lead lives that align with their personal values.

Applied to the gig economy in Malaysia, the Capability Approach provides a comprehensive perspective on whether gig workers have the capabilities necessary to lead fulfilling lives. This involves assessing whether they have access to decent work, fair income, and essential components of well-being such as healthcare, education, and economic security. The approach enables an analysis of the extent to which gig workers can exercise agency in their work and life choices, highlighting constraints imposed by limited options and precarious employment conditions. It also allows for an exploration of gig workers' freedom to thrive as individuals, maintaining dignity in their work and navigating economic and social challenges. Furthermore, an intersectional analysis considering factors such as gender, ethnicity, and age can reveal disparities in access to rights and protections among gig workers. In the realm of social justice and public policy, the Capability Approach evaluates how policies and initiatives affect gig workers' capabilities, including social safety nets, labor regulations, and taxation policies. It also acknowledges the evolving nature of capabilities, recognizing that gig workers' circumstances may change over time due to shifts in the gig economy or alterations in government policies. By employing the Capability Approach, this study aims to assess the protection of gig workers' rights in Malaysia and their opportunities to lead fulfilling lives, providing valuable insights for policymakers and researchers to enhance gig workers' capabilities and overall well-being within the gig economy.

Synthesis of Previous Models / Theories

The subsequent section will address the synthesis of the relevant models and theories pertinent to the current study. This synthesis is crucial for examining the functionalities, advantages, findings, and other significant aspects of each model and theory. By integrating insights from various theoretical frameworks, this process aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of their respective contributions and limitations. Such an approach is essential for the development of a robust theoretical framework, ensuring that the framework effectively incorporates the strengths of each model and theory while addressing any identified gaps. This synthesis not only clarifies how each theory informs the research but also facilitates the formulation of a cohesive and integrative theoretical foundation for the study.

Table 1: Comparison underpinning models and theories

Items	Jobs Characteristics Model (JCM)	Labor Market Segmentation Theory (LMST)	Self-Determination Theory (SDT)	Capabilities Approach Theory (CAT)
Author	Wang, Liu, Qian, and Parker (2021)	Heojin Seo (2021)	Gagne et al., (2022)	Hiroto Yanaka and Richard Heeks (2023)
Issue / Concepts	The COVID-19 pandemic forced a sudden shift to remote work for many organizations, raising questions about how to maintain effectiveness in this new work arrangement. This study aims to explore how work design can	To empirically examine segmentation patterns in the European labour market using different indicators of labour market precariousness.	To explore how motivational factors, such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness, impact work-related behaviors, attitudes, and outcomes in evolving work environments.	To examine the development impact of the gig economy, particularly focusing on the physical gig economy sector. This may involve assessing how participation in the gig economy affects individuals' capabilities, well-

	facilitate effective remote working during the pandemic.			being, and overall development, as conceptualized by Sen's Capability Approach.
Methodology	Mixed-Methods	Quantitative	Quantitative	Quantitative
Variables	Work Desing and Remote Work Effectiveness	Labour market segmentation, Precarious Work and Varieties of precarious	Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Future of Work and Work-related Behaviours and Outcomes	Gig Workers, Capabilities and well-being and development impact
Findings	They found that higher autonomy and effective feedback mechanisms significantly enhance remote workers' job satisfaction and productivity.	The findings show the need to examine various aspects of labour precariousness in order to capture the complexity of post-industrialised labour markets and identify different types of outsiders across Europe that need to be protected for building a more cohesive society.	The findings state that by understanding of how future work is likely to influence the satisfaction of the psychological needs of workers and how future work can be designed to satisfy such needs is of the utmost importance to worker performance and well-being	The findings stated that global evidence shows it is possible for gig work to help workers realise a whole raft of freedoms, this is not the case yet for the great majority of workers in India who realise few freedoms, who realise most freedoms to only a very limited extent, and who are subject to a set of unfreedoms

Development of Research Framework

Drawing upon reviews of various theories and models, this paper advocates for the integration of these frameworks into the development of an effective gig work system aimed at ensuring sustainable employment for gig workers in the Malaysian ride-hailing industry. The theoretical foundations of the Job Characteristics Model, Labor Market Segmentation Theory, Motivation Theory—specifically Self-Determination Theory—and Capability Approach Theory are utilized to elucidate the relevance of work configurations within the gig economy (see Figures 1 and 2). The primary objective of the proposed framework is to discern the relationship between job satisfaction and sustained engagement among gig workers in the Malaysian ride-hailing sector.

Independent Variables

The conceptual framework is informed by four main input factors: job characteristics, labor market segmentation, motivation, and capability.

Job Characteristics: These encompass aspects of a job that can influence an employee's motivation, performance, and satisfaction. Notable factors include skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, feedback, task complexity, task variety, job control, workload, and independence.

Labor Market Segmentation: Gig workers often encounter labor market segmentation, which leads to separation from traditional employment and limited access to labor rights and social protections. Relevant considerations include employment status, working conditions, income stability, and benefits assessment.

Motivation: Drawing from Self-Determination Theory (SDT), this study examines both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. SDT posits that individuals have innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which significantly influence their motivation and well-being.

Capability: This factor encompasses training opportunities, skill development, resources, and support, which are crucial for gig workers to feel secure in their jobs and foster retention intentions.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables in this study are outcomes resulting from the aforementioned input factors, which include characteristics, motivations, capabilities, and needs satisfaction of gig workers in the ride-hailing industry.

Job Satisfaction: This variable entails the degree of contentment gig workers experience in their roles, influenced by factors such as organizational support, income stability, perceived fairness, work-life balance, and opportunities for growth.

Sustained Engagement: This refers to gig workers' ongoing involvement and commitment to their work over time. Factors contributing to sustained engagement include the satisfaction of rights, interests, and needs, long-term commitment, loyalty to platforms, opportunities for growth, and considerations related to work-life balance.

By analyzing the relationship between job satisfaction and sustained engagement among gig workers in the Malaysian ride-hailing industry, this study aims to provide insights into the factors influencing gig workers' continued participation in the gig economy. Insights from previous studies offer valuable perspectives on the dynamics of engagement, satisfaction, and retention within this context.

Figure 1: The Proposed Model of Theoretical Framework

Based on a review of relevant theories and models, this paper proposes the integration of these theoretical frameworks to develop an effective gig work system that promotes sustainable employment, enabling gig workers to remain engaged in the gig economy. The underlying assumptions of the Job Characteristics Model, Labor Segmentation Theory, Motivation Theory (specifically Self-Determination Theory), and Capability Approach Theory are utilized to explain the relevance of work configurations that may be effective within the gig economy context. Refer to Figure 2 below for the proposed conceptual framework for this study.
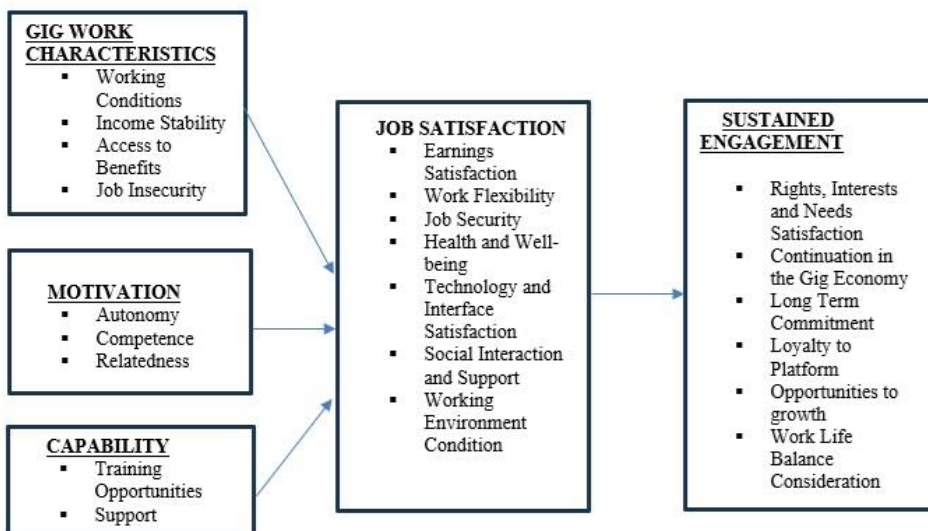

Figure 2: The Proposed Model of Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

This study will employ quantitative methods to systematically examine the relationship between job satisfaction and sustained engagement among gig workers in the Malaysian ride-hailing industry. The quantitative research approach involves the use of numerical, quantifiable measures derived from data collected through survey questionnaires. These questionnaires are meticulously designed to capture detailed information on job satisfaction and sustained engagement among gig workers. The questionnaire comprises a mix of closed-ended questions, Likert scale items, and a few open-ended questions to gain deeper insights into the experiences and perceptions of the respondents. The questions are structured to cover various dimensions of job satisfaction, including job security, compensation, benefits, work-life balance, and job engagement.

To facilitate data collection, the survey questionnaires will be distributed using Google Forms. Google Forms is selected for its user-friendliness, accessibility, and capability to automatically compile responses into a structured dataset. This platform allows for the efficient distribution and collection of responses, particularly from a dispersed and diverse population of gig workers. The survey link will be shared via email, social media, and messaging apps to reach a wide audience. Additionally, Google Forms offers real-time data collection and preliminary analysis features, which are advantageous for monitoring the response rate and ensuring data quality.

To ensure comprehensive coverage and inclusivity, the survey will be distributed both online and offline. The online survey will be accessible through various digital platforms, including social media, email, and forums related to gig work. This approach leverages the widespread use of smartphones and the internet among gig workers, facilitating easy access and participation. For gig workers who may have limited internet access or prefer paper-based surveys, printed questionnaires will be distributed at key locations such as ride-hailing hubs, driver rest areas, and community centers. Field researchers will assist in distributing and collecting these questionnaires, ensuring that responses from offline participants are accurately recorded.

Upon completion of the data collection phase, the gathered data will be exported from Google Forms into a format compatible with SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for in-depth analysis. SPSS will be employed for its robust statistical analysis capabilities, which include:

1. **Descriptive Statistics:** Calculating measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode) and dispersion (standard deviation, variance) to summarize the basic features of the data.

2. **Inferential Statistics:** Performing correlation analysis, regression analysis, and hypothesis testing to determine the relationships between job satisfaction and sustained engagement.

3. **Factor Analysis:** Identifying underlying factors that influence job satisfaction and engagement among gig workers.

4. **Cross-tabulation:** Analyzing categorical data to explore relationships between different variables, such as age, gender, and job satisfaction.

This comprehensive approach will provide a thorough understanding of the factors influencing job satisfaction and sustained engagement among gig workers in Malaysia's ride-hailing industry.

Sampling Frame and Population

The considerations and procedures involved in creating a sampling frame for this study focus on the ride-hailing services within the gig economy in Malaysia. The development of the sampling frame will begin with identifying the platforms where a comprehensive list of ride-hailing services operating in Malaysia will be compiled. Collaboration with these ride-hailing platforms will be sought to gain access to their pool of gig workers, and the platforms will be contacted to secure their cooperation in survey distribution. Additionally, government and industry reports will be consulted to gather data on the overall size and distribution of the ride-hailing workforce in Malaysia. This study requires approximately 385 respondents to complete the survey questionnaire.

The sampling frame for this study consists of gig workers who are actively engaged in the ride-hailing industry

across various regions in Malaysia. Gig workers in this study include individuals providing transportation services through ride-hailing platforms such as Grab, Lalamove, In-Drive, Maxim, AirAsia Ride, MyTaxi, MyCar, and others. The sampling frame encompasses both full-time and part-time gig workers, representing a diverse range of demographics, working conditions, and experience levels within the industry. In establishing the sampling frame, ethical considerations will be paramount. Formal approval will be obtained from the ride-hailing platforms before accessing their gig worker base, and informed consent will be secured from both the platforms and the individual participants. Furthermore, the confidentiality of participants' information will be strictly maintained, with data used solely for the purposes of the study and not shared with external entities.

The population for this study comprises gig workers engaged in ride-hailing services in Malaysia, including those working with platforms such as Grab, Lalamove, In-Drive, Maxim, and AirAsia Ride. The target population consists of gig workers who are currently active in the ride-hailing sector, whether they work full-time or part-time. The inclusion criteria for this study are gig workers with diverse demographic characteristics, including age, gender, education, and geographic location. Individuals who are not currently engaged in ride-hailing services and participants who provide incomplete survey responses will be excluded from the study.

Investigating the relationship between job satisfaction and sustained engagement among gig workers in the Malaysian ride-hailing industry necessitates the use of an appropriate sampling technique to ensure the representativeness and validity of the findings. Given the diverse nature of gig workers and the dynamic landscape of the ride-hailing industry, a combination of sampling strategies will be employed to capture a comprehensive sample (Bryman, 2016). By using a combination of stratified random sampling, convenience sampling, and snowball sampling techniques, this study aims to create a robust and comprehensive dataset. This approach will ensure a diverse sample of gig workers in the Malaysian ride-hailing industry, facilitating a thorough investigation into the relationship between job satisfaction and sustained engagement.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study establishes the groundwork for a comprehensive examination of the factors influencing job satisfaction and sustained engagement among gig workers in the Malaysian ride-hailing services industry. It underscores the importance of investigating these factors within the Malaysian context, given the global rise of the gig economy. As noted by Katz and Krueger (2019), the gig economy has profound implications for labor markets and traditional employment structures, making it essential to analyze the specific dynamics within sectors like ride-hailing, which serve as microcosms of this broader phenomenon. The study highlights the growing prominence of gig work and the unique challenges faced by ride-hailing gig workers in Malaysia, reflecting the insights of Manyika et al. (2017) on the transformative role of digital platforms in shaping the future of work. While gig work offers flexibility, it also introduces uncertainties and vulnerabilities for workers, necessitating a closer examination of the factors contributing to their success and sustained engagement.

Moreover, the research objectives and questions posed in this study align with the call for empirical research on gig work, as advocated by scholars like De Stefano (2016), who emphasize the need for a nuanced understanding of its impact on workers and society. By addressing these questions, this study aims to provide evidence-based insights that can inform policymaking, guide ride-hailing platforms, and empower gig workers themselves. The literature review lays the groundwork for comprehending the multifaceted dynamics of ride-hailing services within Malaysia's gig economy. The rights, interests, and needs of gig workers emerge as pivotal elements in shaping their satisfaction and intention to remain within the industry. While the gig economy offers flexibility and autonomy, numerous challenges related to job security, benefits, and regulatory governance require careful consideration. This review paves the way for empirical research to explore these dynamics within the specific context of Malaysia, thereby contributing valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on job satisfaction and the protection of gig workers' rights, interests, and needs for their sustained engagement in the ride-hailing industry.

The study integrates theoretical frameworks to offer a comprehensive analysis of job satisfaction and sustained engagement among Malaysian ride-hailing gig workers. By bridging a critical gap in the literature, this research offers timely perspectives that can shape strategies for enhancing the well-being and sustainability of gig workers in the ever-evolving landscape of the gig economy. The literature review has provided a thorough understanding of the labor market within Malaysia's gig economy, with particular emphasis on the ride-hailing services sector.

This focus is especially important given the evolving nature of work and the increasing reliance on gig labor within the transportation industry. As the literature review reveals, the gig economy in Malaysia, particularly within the ride-hailing sector, presents a complex landscape where factors such as job satisfaction, capability development, and regulatory governance converge. The synthesis of existing knowledge underscores the necessity for future research to delve deeper into the nuanced experiences of gig workers in Malaysia, taking into account the evolving regulatory landscape and the dynamic nature of gig work.

In building on the groundwork established by this study, future research should focus on empirical investigations that explore the experiences of gig workers in Malaysia, especially in light of the changing regulatory landscape. Policymakers and ride-hailing platforms should collaborate to address the challenges identified, such as job security, benefits, and regulatory governance, to enhance the well-being and sustained engagement of gig workers. Additionally, there is a need for continuous monitoring and adaptation of regulations to ensure they align with the dynamic nature of gig work and protect the rights and interests of workers. By doing so, stakeholders can contribute to the development of a more sustainable and equitable gig economy in Malaysia.

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