



Measuring GIG Economy At UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya: Typology, Characteristics, And Interest (Case Study of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya Students)

Ekky Rasyidi⁽¹⁾, Bacharuddin Abdillah⁽²⁾, Fathul Mubin Hawari⁽³⁾

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia

*E-mail: : ⁽¹⁾ekkyrasyidi@gmail.com, ⁽²⁾bacharuddinabdillah99@gmail.com,
⁽³⁾fathulmubinhawari@gmail.com*

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Abstract

The gig economy is a market that is usually characterized by short-term contracts or the presence of independent or free workers as opposed to permanent employment. As the Covid-19 Pandemic encourages the birth of several new habits, the Gig Economy has spread to the community. No exception to the student environment of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. The Gig Economy that occurs among students is a dilemma, because it has two sides behind it. This study aims to describe the phenomenon of Gig Economy at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. This research uses qualitative methods that conclude that the Gig Economy has a significant impact on students even though it leaves some important notes.

Keywords: GIG economy, student, work

Introduction

The rapid development of technology today, has changed human life in various sectors of life. One of them is the economic sector. The change is not only in terms of payment methods that become cashless, but also in terms of how to earn income. The development of technology allows people to work as self-employed workers from any location they want, without having to come to the office. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic which has had a broad impact on the economic sector.

At least 1.7 million Indonesians lost their jobs due to the pandemic (Saputera, 2020). This, combined with the implementation of physical distancing and work from home policies, has provoked public interest in switching to independent workers. One form of self-employment is the gig-economy. Gig economy is a system of short-term employment contracts between free workers and those who need labor services. Examples of gig workers include freelancers, independent contractors, project-based workers, and others (Rouse, 2019).

Users of gig workers are not only individuals, but also companies, for example the IT

industry. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) reports that 10 million Indian freelancers work as web designers, web researchers, mobile developers, etc. for IT companies. Today, the development of the gig economy has also penetrated professions such as musicians, actors, artists, etc (Pawar, Dahiya, & Pant, 2018).

This has encouraged the creation of new business models run by business organizations or companies that create online-based platforms that provide services that bridge between service providers and service seekers through internet media (Signes, 2017). Based on BPS data in May 2019, independent workers in Indonesia reached 5.89 million people. This is one of the drivers for certain parties to participate in creating a gig economy platform.

Freelance marketplaces for local professional services that have been operating are such as Sribu, Gobann, Trakteer, Sribulancer, etc. that compete with outside sites such as Freelancer, Elance-oDesk, 99designs, PeoplePerHour, etc. The difficulty of competition in getting a job can be one of the impetus in the development of the gig economy in Indonesia. The global nature of freelance marketplaces, not limited by geograph-

ical factors, makes the gig economy a great choice as an alternative to traditional jobs.

In 2018, the Head of the Creative Economy Agency (Bekraf) stated that Indonesia's creative economy GDP increased by close to Rp 1.102 trillion, of which one of the four largest sectors was Visual Communication Design (DKV) growing by 8.14 percent. This further confirms the potential of the gig economy for buying and selling professional services. In 2018, the Head of the Creative Economy Agency (Bekraf) stated that Indonesia's creative economy GDP increased by close to Rp 1.102 trillion, of which one of the four largest sectors was Visual Communication Design (DKV) growing by 8.14 percent. This further confirms the potential of the gig economy for buying and selling professional services.

In addition to platforms built specifically to facilitate the gig economy, social media is also used by some gig economy actors in buying and selling activities. This can be evidenced by the many Facebook groups containing a community of professional service providers from the same field of expertise (Robinson, 2016). For example, on Facebook social media, for illustration professional services only, the Commission Corner Indonesia and Commission Art Center Indonesia groups, each of which has more than 27,000 members. Social media is important because this platform can help in establishing communication between the parties involved (Aitken, 2017).

Based on the description above, this study is intended to understand the typology and characteristics of the gig economy, especially the professional interests desired by students at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, both in general and in terms of gig economic characteristics. In addition, the study also aims to provide an overview of the potential of the future of the gig economy and challenges that may not be known by UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya students.

Materials and Method

This type of research is descriptive qualitative. Qualitative research is a tool to understand social phenomena that occur. This study focuses on Measuring Gig Economy in Uin Sunan Ampel Surabaya: Typology, Characteristics, and Interests. The research method is the result of the mindset and assumptions that are used as the basis for thinking in conducting a

research.

The research method in this study is a qualitative method, qualitative methods quoted from (Noor, 2017) qualitative data is an emphasis on a process that does not measure emphasis in the form of quantity, and intensity. The interview method is one of the data collection techniques. Qualitative methods are the methods used in this study. According to Bogdan, Taylor's qualitative method is the result of researchers' observations based on a person's behavior, while descriptive data can be spoken or written words. (Moleong, 2017).

Data collection techniques in compiling get all the data needed in the study Measuring Gig Economy at Uin Sunan Ampel Surabaya: Typology, Characteristics, and Interests. In data collection, a technique is used: Participating Observer. Observation involved is also called participatory observer, which requires the presence of researchers directly with their five senses and directly facing the object of research.

The research parameters used in this study are more focused on Measuring Gig Economy in Uin Sunan Ampel Surabaya: Typology, Characteristics, and Interests. This research was conducted with in-depth interviews with resource persons and continued with observations to find out the GIG economy that occurred at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, and how students' perspectives in responding to career and work challenges in the future or in the future. Those who will be interviewed are 6 UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya students who work freelance.

Results and Discussion Gig Economy

The gig economy according to Oxford Language is a market that is usually characterized by short-term contracts or the presence of independent workers as opposed to permanent employment (Oxford, n.d.). Gigs are often single-task, which are more suitable for short-term contracted workers than traditional labor (Green, McCann, Vu, Lopez, & Ouattara, 2018).

Technology helps those who need manpower for per-task work find outsourced and contract workers over the internet. Employee and employer do not have to be in the same location or close together because they can be connected via an internet connection (Walter, 2013). Moreover, in buying and selling expertise services that produce digital goods. In the IT industry, it is estimated

that in 2011 outsourcing cost 3.7 trillion US dollars worldwide (Agarwal & Kumar, 2011).

Technological developments have also affected other sectors such as the entertainment and arts industries. For example, the media in the UK has largely replaced long-term workers with gig workers (Storey, Salaman, & Platman, 2005). In addition, technology also opens new avenues in sales that contribute to changes in the form of the art market that begins to implement a virtual buying and selling system that is simpler when compared to offline purchases (Waelder, 2015).

Changes in the economic system provoked the emergence of digital freelance marketplace platforms that allow companies to hire individuals or small companies for special work in a short time from all over the world remotely. A platform (in a business context) according to Gartner is a product that facilitates or enables other products or businesses to operate.

In this study, the definition of a platform or digital platform in question is digital media in the form of sites or applications that facilitate service or business operational activities. One form of platform used in buying and selling services is the freelance marketplace. Freelance Marketplace is a medium for meeting buyers and freelance / gi service providers to buy and sell services. Freelancer marketplaces are usually in the form of websites or applications and are connected to digital payment system service providers.

While the term freelance itself, in the scope of this study, means a type of work that is only tied to the employer for a short time without affiliation with an official company or organization. People who carry out freelance professions are called freelancers or independent / free workers, in this study the use of the term freelancer interchangeable with gig workers, independent workers, and freelancers.

Heeks (2017) grouping the gig economy based on media and the way of delivering products/services into two, namely the physical gig economy and the digital gig economy (Heeks, 2017). An example of a physical gig economy is Gojek's transportation service that physically delivers service users from one location to another. While an example of a digital gig economy is the logo creation service on Fiverr.

These services are in the form of services that produce digital products that are handed over to service users through online media.

While the study conducted by Mastercard grouped the gig economy according to the type of services managed by the gig economy platform, namely; Asset Sharing Services (AS), Transportation-Based Services (TS), Professional Services (PS), and Handmade Goods-Household-and Miscellaneous Services (HGHMS). Asset Sharing Services (AS) is a gig economy platform that facilitates the rental of property owned by service providers to service users, for example such as car, room, boat, etc. rentals.

Transportation-Based Services (TS) is a gig economy platform that manages transportation services for people or goods from one place to another for example such as food delivery, online motorcycle taxis, etc. Handmade Goods-Household- and Miscellaneous Services (HGHMS) is a gig economy platform that facilitates handicraft making services and services related to household tasks, for example, such as home cleaning services, pet grooming services, babysitters, etc.

While Professional Services (PS), which is the focus of this research, is an online platform that directly connects freelancers with parties who need services in order to complete their projects. Examples of professional services are coding, consulting, writing, translation, design, etc. (Mastercard and Kaiser Associates, 2019). As for if it is related to the grouping of Heeks, the PS gig economy is a digital gig economy, because the product of the service or the way the product is presented is digital and is carried out online.

The gig economy itself has been the topic of several studies that have been done before. These studies, based on his point of view, have differences. Alexandre Walter (2013) conducts gig economy research from the point of view of service buyers (Walter, 2013). Meanwhile, research based on the point of view of service providers has been conducted by Das et al (2018).

In addition, the literature review also considers survey results from institutions such as MetLife and MercyCorps (MetLife, 2019). This research will look at both sides, namely buyers and service providers, especially the gig economy in the field of professional services that produce products in the form of digital goods. Based on surveys conducted by MetLife, nearly 30 million Americans earn their main income from the gig economy.

The majority of gig economy actors are generation Y with a percentage of 34%, with the last education of undergraduate or higher at 62%.

Based on gender, women work more in the gig economy than in the traditional sector, but overall, there are more male gig economy workers than women (MetLife, 2019). A similar study conducted in Kenya concluded that 40% of gig economy workers in the country work in the professional services sector. (Genesis Analytics..LTD, 2019).

Meanwhile, in a country that is closer geographically and culturally more similar to Indonesia, namely Malaysia, the majority of Malaysian independent workers aged 25 to 29 years are also dominated by workers in the gig economy sector of creative services and multimedia, followed by writing and translation (Ng, Gen, & Mahadeva, 2017). For Indonesia itself, research on the professional services gig economy has been conducted by A. Labib Fardany Faisal (2019). The research also found that the creative and multimedia fields are the most popular types of professional services gig economy in Indonesia. (Faisal, Sucahyo, Ruldeviyani, & Gandhi, 2019).

As for the position of the gig economy as the main or side income, it can be seen from the following various studies. In Italy, gig workers with other jobs as the main job are the most compared to gig workers as the main job or the only job. If you look at the weekly working hours, gig workers who make gigs as their main job have the largest working hours compared to the other two types of gig workers. (Boeri, Giupponi, Krueger, & Machin, 2018).

In European countries, about 80% of gig workers on platforms make their gig work a second or third income (Schwellnus, Geva, Pak, & Veiel, 2019). A 2013 survey conducted by oDesk showed that 21% of freelancers on the platform were college students (Kuek, Paradi-Guilford, Fayomi, Imaizumi, & Ipeirotis, 2015). Based on the results of these studies, gig economy jobs are often a side job to earn additional income. Based on the data collection method, the research of A. Labib Fardany Faisal (2019) in Indonesia used related statistics to determine the employment status of Indonesian gig workers, and used web crawling, web scraping, and ATC to gather information on Indonesian professional service providers from nine freelance marketplaces (Faisal, Sucahyo, Ruldeviyani, & Gandhi, 2019).

While in this study, researchers used a different approach, namely getting information directly from the professional services gig economy actors. So that researchers get information

not provided by freelance marketplaces such as age, employment status, length of working hours, origin of expertise, etc.

In terms of platforms, based on Das et al's (2018) research on IT workers in Bangladesh, 74% chose to work on the Upwork site, followed by Freelancer. (Das, et al., 2018). In Indonesia, research by A. Labib Fardany Faisal (2019) shows Fiverr's freelance marketplace as the most widely used freelance marketplace by Indonesians (Faisal, Sucahyo, Ruldeviyani, & Gandhi, 2019).

Meanwhile, this research itself not only considers freelance marketplaces, but also involves the use of social media as a gig economy media. According to Palmer and Lewis (2009), social media is an application that allows users to build personal websites that can be accessed by other users as a form of communication, collaboration, and exchange of personal information (Palmer & Koenig Lewis, 2009). Based on research by Shankar (2011), social media is a means that can play an important role in promoting business to consumers because sellers can increase consumer awareness of business brands (Shankar, Inman, Mantrala, Kelley, & Rizley, 2011).

This is consistent with one element of the definition of marketing, which is creating brand awareness. The ability of social media to build two-way communication between buyers and sellers makes social media a strategic tool in the marketing process (Sorescu, Frambach, Singh, Rangaswamy, & Bridges, 2011). Therefore social media platforms can be considered as a good marketing tool (Odhiambo, 2012).

One good location to find connections with potential buyers is a Facebook group, as its members come from the same community. Most likely people who are members of the group are more interested in what gig workers market. Other social media such as Twitter is also a good marketing tool, Twitter traffic and the very open nature of social media can make it easier to find potential buyers. (Bradford, 2016).

Gig Economy Pada Mahasiswa UINSA

From the results of interviews with related students, it can be described the jobs chosen, it is known that seven students work as online drivers, while the other three work regularly in graphic design services. Through in-depth interviews, the gig economy they admit can provide a number of benefits. Starting from additional income to experience in the world of work. The benefits can be

described as follows: *Pendapatan Tambahan Bagi Mahasiswa*

As overseas students, they recognize that they often need an additional source of income to finance their tuition, books, or daily necessities that support their lives. No exception to follow the latest trends in the world of teenagers. The gig economy provides an opportunity to earn additional income through work done. The ten students interviewed did admit that the main motive before jumping into the work done was purely because they wanted to increase their income. Moreover, these students think about not burdening their parents too much.

As students studying outside the city, they honestly admit that the need for an additional source of income is a must to cope with various costs, such as tuition, books, and daily necessities that support their lives. Not only that, but they also feel the urge to stay connected to the latest trends among teenagers, which often require additional spending. In the face of these challenges, the concept of the gig economy is emerging as a promising opportunity to earn additional income through different types of flexible work.

Ten students interviewed sincerely admitted that their main motivation for engaging in this work was the desire to increase their income. They realize that by engaging in the gig economy, they can be more financially independent, while also feeling lighter to not put an excessive economic burden on parents. This step was taken with good intentions, namely to contribute in financing their own education and not depend entirely on parental support. As such, these students not only pursue the latest trends in adolescent lifestyles, but also seek proactive solutions to address financial challenges faced during their studies outside the city.

Skills Development for Students

There are only three who admit this. Namely those who work in the field of graphic design services. Although often not always pursued by constant orders, they clearly admit that the income earned from their efforts in the graphic design world is already quite satisfying. Through active involvement in the gig economy, they feel they are not only doing financially rewarding work, but also unearthing valuable skills that have great potential to shape their future careers.

Graphic designers involved in the gig economy have an added advantage, namely the

opportunity to develop skills and knowledge that match their major or interest. By engaging in relevant projects, they can significantly expand the scope of knowledge and skills related to the field of graphic design. All of this is not just about earning income, but also about exploring opportunities that can open doors for future professional advancement.

Not only in the technical aspects of design, the gig economy also provides a golden opportunity to hone soft skills that are highly valued in the world of work. Effective time management, negotiation skills, good communication, and the ability to work independently are concrete examples of skills that can be developed through experience working in the gig economy. This not only makes them reliable graphic design professionals, but also individuals who can compete in the competitive job market. In other words, the gig economy for them is not only a source of additional income, but also an invaluable school to mature themselves in facing future challenges.

Student Working Time Flexibility

In this context, seven students interviewed revealed that they often face busy schedules, filled with demands from lectures, tasks to be completed, and participation in various organizational activities in the campus environment. However, the gig economy comes as an option that allows them to work flexibly, providing flexibility in managing work time according to a challenging college schedule. They feel very fortunate to be able to choose for themselves the appropriate times to engage themselves in this additional work. However, it is undeniable that even though they have control over their work schedules, there are challenges in dividing time. Three students involved in the field of graphic design, for example, revealed that sometimes, especially on certain days, they have difficulty in putting together schedules. They face a situation where job orders come in so many that it requires them to work more intensively to meet deadlines. However, both still admit that although there are obstacles in managing time, it does not have a significant impact on the implementation of their formal college duties and obligations.

In this context, these students explained that they have good time management skills and have developed strategies to stay productive in various aspects of their lives. Despite being involved in the gig economy, they diligently try to maintain a balance between work and academics, so as not to sacrifice the quality of their educa-

tion. Difficulties in timing are recognized as temporary challenges, but they are not insurmountable obstacles in their journey as regional students striving for success in academics and economics.

Student Practical Experience

Through a series of interviews that have been conducted, it was revealed that the gig economy is a vehicle for students to gain valuable practical experience in the world of work. By engaging in a variety of real projects, they are not only faced with challenges and demands that may be comparable to the conditions after graduation, but also able to develop practical skills that can be applied directly in their future careers. This experience is considered an effective means to permeate and understand more deeply the dynamics of the industry that is the focus of their studies.

Thus, students involved in the gig economy feel more prepared and confident to face the transition from an academic environment to the world of work after completing their higher education. Participation in these real-life projects gives them the opportunity to hone critical skills, adapt to various situations, and develop a deeper understanding of the practical aspects of the profession they are eyeing. However, not all students feel the positive impact uniformly.

For students involved in work as online drivers, there is an understanding that this job may lack credibility comparable to the needs of companies in the world of work. However, they do not ignore the added value obtained in terms of mentality. While it may lack the specific skills that employers want, they recognize that this experience shapes a mentality, toughness, and adaptability that may not be gained from conventional work experience.

In addition to the advantages obtained, these students also feel that some things must be sacrificed when choosing to study while working. Through interviews that have been conducted, two perceived shortcomings of this model work were found, namely as follows:

Student Income Instability

Although these ten college students have managed to access additional sources of income through active participation in the gig economy, the reality shows that they are also haunted by erratic income fluctuations. Despite their painstaking efforts to earn extra income, they often experience periods when stable projects or jobs are hard to come by, presenting challenging financial uncer-

tainty. Especially for students who work as online drivers, they openly admit that there has recently been a significant decline in their income. Both in terms of the number of incoming orders and the bonus obtained from the application, the reality is not comparable to the conditions two years ago.

This not only creates financial uncertainty, but also creates new challenges in maintaining their personal economic stability. Interestingly, these students also realize that jobs in this gig economy do not offer adequate welfare guarantees. This situation encourages them to see this job as an option that can only be relied upon in the short term. They feel limited by the uncertainty inherent in this job and realize the need to plan their financial future more carefully. Given these challenges, the ten students are faced with the struggle of managing income fluctuations, adjusting to changes in the gig economy ecosystem, and finding alternatives to ensure their financial sustainability in the long term.

Limitations of Student Career Development

In some span of time, the ten students admitted that the challenge of lack of time was the main obstacle to their participation in non-formal activities on campus. The main factor that causes this time limitation is the need to work, especially when the orders or jobs received have increased in number. This condition forces them to prioritize work obligations to meet their financial needs. The sacrifices they had to make were seen in the recognition that several times they had to miss important moments related to campus activities.

Attendance at social events, seminars, or self-development activities is often hindered by job pressures and the need to maintain their financial balance. Especially for students who work as online drivers, they feel the long-term impact associated with this limitation. Their attachment to jobs that require significant time and energy often keeps them stuck in routines that may not match their interests or career aspirations. This condition can result in obstacles in long-term career development, because the main focus lies on fulfilling existing orders or projects, not on exploring opportunities that can enrich and support their professional growth.

Some students, especially those involved in specific projects or assignments, may feel

stuck in a routine that provides less opportunity to develop an established career path or achieve steady progress in their chosen job. Nevertheless, they continue to try to navigate this struggle in hopes of finding a better balance between their job obligations and self-development aspirations in a campus environment.

Conclusion

The gig economy phenomenon run by UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya students provides them with additional income, skill development, and practical experience. Online driver students get the flexibility of working time, while those in graphic design develop practical and soft skills. Although it has its advantages, there are also challenges such as income instability and time constraints for long-term career development, especially experienced by those who choose to become online drivers. However, these students still try to find a balance between work and self-development on campus, with an awareness of the benefits and risks of the gig economy.

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