

The Influence of Perception of Exploitation and Perception of Job Obtaining on The Welfare Through Job Satisfaction as a Mediating Variable

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Abstract.

This study aims to analyze the influence of perceived exploitation and perceived job security on the well-being of online motorcycle taxi drivers, with job satisfaction as a mediating variable. The development of the digital economy has given rise to new forms of platform-based employment relationships, such as those of online motorcycle taxi drivers. Algorithmic systems and partnership status create a paradox between flexibility and uncertainty that has the potential to impact worker well-being. This quantitative study employed a survey approach, targeting 240 active online motorcycle taxi drivers in the Greater Jakarta Indonesia area, who were selected through purposive sampling. The data was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The results showed that perceived exploitation had a negative and significant effect on job satisfaction and well-being, while perceived job security had a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction and well-being. Job satisfaction also had a positive and significant effect on well-being and acted as a partial mediator in the relationship between perceived exploitation and perceived job security and well-being. These findings suggest that the well-being of online motorcycle taxi drivers is not only influenced by the pressures of platform-based work systems but is more strongly determined by the extent to which the work is perceived to provide benefits and fairness, as reflected in the level of job satisfaction.

Keywords: Job satisfaction; perception of exploitation; perception of job gain and well-being.

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of the digital economy in Indonesia has significantly changed people's work patterns, particularly through the emergence of online transportation platforms such as Gojek, Grab, Maxim, InDrive, and ShopeeFood[1]. This app-based work system has opened up new economic opportunities, but has also given rise to unconventional forms of employment[2]. Drivers are categorized as "partners" rather than employees, even though their work activities are controlled by the platform's algorithmic systems and policies[3]. This condition creates a flexibility paradox, where workers have the freedom to organize their working hours, but must face income uncertainty, social risks, and the pressures of a non-transparent digital system [4]. In the context of platform-based work, this phenomenon is closely related to the emergence of perceptions of exploitation. Perceptions of exploitation reflect workers' subjective views that platform work systems oppress them through algorithmic controls, performance targets, and incentive schemes perceived as unfair [5]. Previous studies have shown that digital workers who have high perceptions of exploitation tend to experience stress, emotional exhaustion, and decreased psychological well-being [6]. Similar findings are also seen in the Indonesian context, where the pressures of digital work systems and income uncertainty contribute to increasing psychological stress among online motorcycle taxi drivers[7].

In addition to perceived exploitation, perceived job satisfaction is also a crucial variable in explaining the well-being of platform workers. Perceived job satisfaction reflects the extent to which individuals perceive their work as providing tangible benefits, whether financial, social, or psychological. Individuals who perceive work as a source of benefits tend to report higher levels of well-being, as work is viewed as a psychological resource that provides a sense of meaning, appreciation, and emotional stability [8]. In the context of online motorcycle taxi drivers, job satisfaction is understood not only as income, but also as social recognition and pride in the profession. Job satisfaction then acts as a psychological mechanism that bridges work experience and individual well-being[9]. Research shows that economic factors, work flexibility, and social support contribute to online motorcycle taxi drivers' job satisfaction[10]. Conceptually, these findings are in line with the Job Demands–Resources theory, which explains that worker

well-being is influenced by the balance between work demands and the psychological resources possessed by individuals [11]. Job satisfaction in this case functions as an indicator of emotional evaluation of work experience, which then has an impact on psychological well-being [12].

Occupational well-being is a crucial indicator in assessing the quality of work experience in the digital age. Technological pressures, algorithmic control, and job uncertainty can undermine well-being if not balanced with adequate psychological resources[13]. For platform workers, such as online motorcycle taxi drivers, well-being is influenced not only by objective working conditions but also by subjective perceptions of fairness, job benefits, and emotional experiences during the workday[14]. While numerous studies have examined the well-being of digital workers, most have focused on economic factors, work stress, or motivation separately [15]. Research that simultaneously integrates perceptions of exploitation, perceptions of job attainment, job satisfaction, and well-being in the context of online motorcycle taxi drivers in Indonesia is still limited[16]. Furthermore, the variable of perceived job attainment is relatively new in human resource management literature and has not been widely adopted in domestic research. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of perceptions of exploitation and perceptions of job attainment on the well-being of online motorcycle taxi drivers, with job satisfaction as a mediating variable.

II. METHODS

Data analysis was conducted using a Partial Least Squares-based Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach with the assistance of SmartPLS 4.0 software[17]. Evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) was conducted through tests of convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability. The structural model (inner model) was evaluated through R-square values, path coefficients, and hypothesis testing using bootstrapping procedures. Hypotheses were declared significant if the T-statistic value was >1.96 and the P-value was <0.05 . This study used a quantitative approach with a survey method to test the causal relationship between variables in the mediation model. The research model consisted of Perceived Exploitation and Perceived Job Gain as independent variables, Job Satisfaction as a mediating variable, and Well-Being as a dependent variable[18], [19]. The mediation model was used to explain the psychological mechanisms that channel the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable [20].

The study population was online motorcycle taxi drivers operating in the Greater Jakarta (Jabodetabek) area. The sampling technique used purposive sampling, with the following criteria: active drivers, having worked for at least six months, and being of productive age. A total of 240 respondents were used in this study. Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). All research instruments were adapted from scales validated in previous research. The Perception of Exploitation variable was measured using an instrument referenced in previous research [5], which represents the dimensions of algorithmic control, income uncertainty, and job insecurity. The Perception of Job Gain variable is measured using an instrument based on the concept of sense of gain [8], which reflects the economic, social, and psychological benefits felt by individuals. Job Satisfaction is measured using the Generic Job Satisfaction Scale[13], while Well-Being is measured using the Quantitative Well-Being Index [21].

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondent characteristics indicate that this study involved 240 online motorcycle taxi drivers in the greater Jakarta Indonesia area. The majority of respondents were male (84.6%), with a dominant age range of 26–30 years (43.3%) and a high school/vocational high school education level (67.1%). Respondents were spread across Jakarta (28.8%), Depok (20.8%), and Bogor (19.6%). Most respondents were single (52.1%) and worked on the Gojek (34.2%) and Grab (32.1%) platforms. In terms of work experience, the majority of respondents had worked for 2 to 4 years (35.0%) with a work intensity of 7 to 9 hours per day (46.7%). Respondents' income levels were predominantly in the range of IDR 3 to 4 million per month (39.2%). This distribution reflects the general profile of online transportation platform workers who are of productive age with relatively adequate work experience.

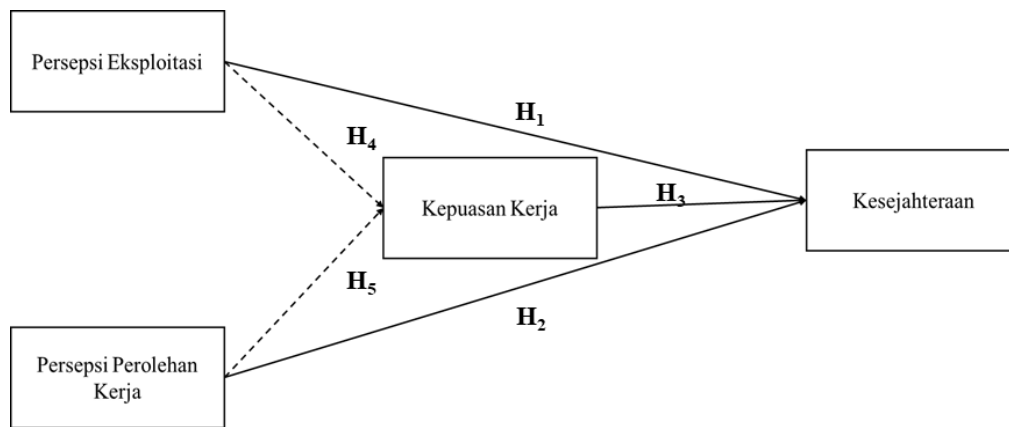


Fig 1. Research Model

The path diagram analysis yielded an R-squared value of 0.915 for the Job Satisfaction variable. This indicates that the combination of Perceived Exploitation and Perceived Job Gain explains 91.5% of the variation in Job Satisfaction, while the remaining 8.5% is influenced by factors outside the model being tested. For the Well-Being variable, the R-squared value was recorded at 0.961. In other words, Well-Being is explained by 96.1% of Perceived Exploitation, Perceived Job Gain, and Job Satisfaction, while the remaining 3.9% is influenced by other variables not included in this analysis. In the hypothesis testing stage, a proposition is considered accepted if the T-statistic exceeds the T-table value of 1.96.

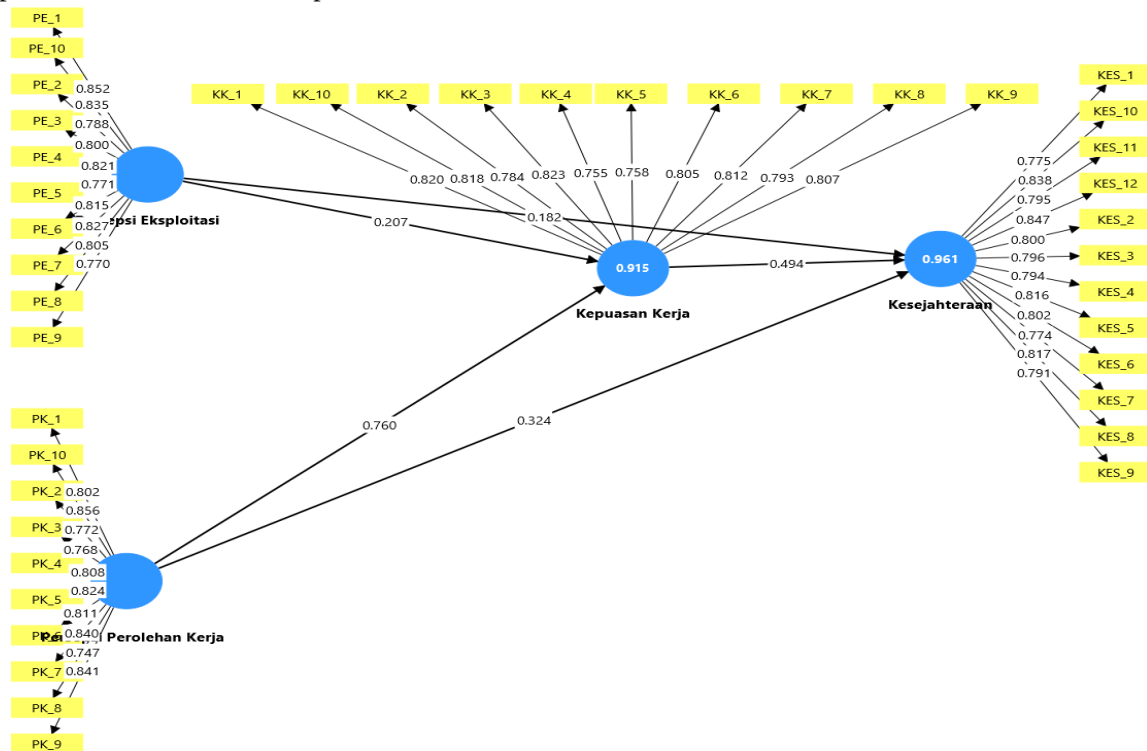


Fig 2. Path Diagram T-Value

Evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) was carried out to assess the validity and reliability of the research construct.

Variables	Indicator	Outer Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability
Perceptions of Exploitation	PE1	0.852	0.654	0.950
	PE2	0.788		
	PE3	0.800		
	PE4	0.821		
	PE5	0.771		
	PE6	0.815		
	PE7	0.827		
	PE8	0.805		
	PE9	0.770		

	PE10	0.835		
Perceptions of Job Gain	PK1	0.802	0.652	0.949
	PK2	0.772		
	PK3	0.768		
	PK4	0.808		
	PK5	0.824		
	PK6	0.811		
	PK7	0.840		
	PK8	0.747		
	PK9	0.841		
	PK10	0.856		
Job Satisfaction	KK1	0.820	0.637	0.946
	KK2	0.784		
	KK3	0.823		
	KK4	0.755		
	KK5	0.758		
	KK6	0.805		
	KK7	0.812		
	KK8	0.793		
	KK9	0.807		
	KK10	0.818		
Well-Being	KES1	0.775	0.647	0.956
	KES2	0.800		
	KES3	0.796		
	KES4	0.794		
	KES5	0.816		
	KES6	0.802		
	KES7	0.774		
	KES8	0.817		
	KES9	0.791		
	KES10	0.838		
	KES11	0.795		
	KES12	0.847		

Fig 3. Evaluation of Measurement Model (Outer Model)

Furthermore, the results of the discriminant validity analysis refer to cross-loadings. These findings indicate that each construct in this study has met the criteria for reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Thus, these constructs are considered suitable for inclusion in the structural model being analyzed.

Hypothesis	Hypothesis Statement	Path Coefficient	t-statistic	p-value	Decision
H1	Perception of exploitation influences the well-being of online motorcycle taxi drivers	0,182	3,045	0,002	Accepted
H2	Perception of job security influences the well-being of online motorcycle taxi drivers	0,324	4,024	0,000	Accepted
H3	Job satisfaction influences the well-being of online motorcycle taxi drivers	0,494	5,259	0,000	Accepted
H4	Job satisfaction mediates the effect of perception of exploitation on well-being	0,102	> 1,96	< 0,05	Accepted
H5	Job satisfaction mediates the effect of perception of job security on well-being	0,376	> 1,96	< 0,05	Accepted

Fig 2. Hypothesis Test Results

The results showed that all hypotheses were significantly accepted, but the degree of influence of the variables varied. Perceived Job Gain on Job Satisfaction was the strongest pathway, with a T-statistic of 9.614, confirming that driver job satisfaction was more influenced by perceived job benefits than platform work pressure. Conversely, the influence of Perceived Exploitation on Job Satisfaction was lower, with a T-statistic of 2.467. For the Welfare variable, Job Satisfaction demonstrated the strongest influence, with a T-statistic of 5.259. Meanwhile, Perceived Exploitation demonstrated the lowest influence on Welfare compared to the other variables.

	<i>R-square</i>	<i>R-square adjusted</i>
Job Satisfaction	0.915	0.914
Well-Being	0.961	0.960

Fig 3. R Square Value

Based on the R-square test results, the R-square value for Job Satisfaction is 0.915 with an adjusted R-square value of 0.914. This indicates that Perceived Exploitation and Perceived Job Gain together are able to explain 91.5% of the variation in Job Satisfaction. Meanwhile, the R-square value for Well-being is 0.961 with an adjusted R-square value of 0.960, which indicates that the model has very strong explanatory power for well-being.

	Job Satisfaction	Well-Being	Perceived Exploitation	Perceived Job Gain
Job Satisfaction		0.536		
Well-Being				
Perceived Exploitation	0.065	0.103		
Perceived Job Gain	0.879	0.186		

Fig 4. F Square Value

The f-square test results show that the path Perception of Job Gain → Job Satisfaction has the highest value, namely 0.879, indicating a strong influence. The path Job Satisfaction → Well-Being also shows a strong influence with a value of 0.536. Meanwhile, the paths Perception of Exploitation → Job Satisfaction (0.065) and Perception of Exploitation → Well-Being (0.103) are in the weak category. These values indicate that Perception of Job Gain contributes a greater influence than Perception of Exploitation in the research model. The results show that perception of exploitation and perception of job gain have a significant influence on the welfare of online motorcycle taxi drivers, both directly and through job satisfaction [22]. This finding confirms that the welfare of digital platform workers is not only determined by economic factors, but also by individual perceptions of work experiences.

Perception of exploitation is proven to influence job satisfaction and well-being, indicating that algorithmic control, income uncertainty, and digital work pressure impact the psychological condition of drivers.[23]. However, the influence of this variable is relatively smaller compared to perceptions of job satisfaction. Perceptions of job satisfaction show the strongest influence, confirming that perceived job benefits play a significant role in increasing job satisfaction and well-being [5]. Job satisfaction has been shown to act as a key psychological mechanism in explaining well-being. Perceptions of exploitation decrease well-being through decreased job satisfaction, while perceptions of job gain increase well-being through increased job satisfaction[6]. Practically, these findings suggest that improving driver well-being requires attention to system fairness, platform policy transparency, and strengthening perceptions of work benefits.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis and discussion, this study aims to examine the influence of Perceived Exploitation and Perceived Job Gain on the well-being of online motorcycle taxi drivers, with Job Satisfaction as a mediating variable. Based on the PLS-SEM analysis, all relationships between variables in the model demonstrated significant effects. Perceived Exploitation and Perceived Job Gain were shown to have a significant influence on well-being. Perceived Job Gain demonstrated a more dominant contribution than Perceived Exploitation. Job Satisfaction was also shown to have a significant influence on well-being and acted as a mediating variable, channeling the influence of Perceived Exploitation and Perceived Job Gain. These findings confirm that the well-being of online motorcycle taxi drivers is influenced not only by platform work pressure but also by perceived work benefits and emotional evaluations of the job. Overall, the results of this study indicate that improving the well-being of digital platform workers requires attention to perceived work benefits, system fairness, and a more stable and meaningful work experience.

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