

## **The Role Of Online Motorcycle Tickets In Reducing The Unemployment Rate And Increasing Public Purchase Power In Makassar City**

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### **Abstract**

This descriptive qualitative research examines the role of online motorcycle taxi (ojek online) work in reducing unemployment and increasing people's purchasing power in Makassar City. The research method employed in-depth interviews with seven informants consisting of five online motorcycle taxi drivers and two supporting informants selected through purposive sampling. Data analysis used the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model with stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings show that the gig economy through online motorcycle taxi work has successfully absorbed a diverse workforce, in which 40% of drivers come from unemployed groups, 35% are workers who shifted professions, and 25% take it as a side job. The main driving factors include economic needs, flexible working hours, easy access with simple requirements, and technological application support. Economically, drivers earn IDR 100,000–200,000 per day or IDR 2–5 million per month, which has proven sufficient to meet basic family needs with a surplus for savings and increased purchasing power. The overall socioeconomic impacts are positive, including increased accessibility to urban mobility, the development of MSMEs through GoFood services that increase turnover by 40–60%, as well as the expansion of drivers' social networks. Although there are challenges such as income fluctuations depending on weather and economic conditions and conflicts with conventional transportation modes, digital transformation in transportation has proven effective in addressing employment issues in the digital economy era. This research contributes to understanding how innovations in urban mobility create a sustainable economic ecosystem with low barriers to entry, while also driving the micro economy and improving the welfare of Makassar City residents through comprehensive implementation of the gig economy.

**Keywords:** Gig Economy, Digital Transformation, Urban Mobility, Online Motorcycle Taxis, Purchasing Power

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Unemployment is one of the main challenges in economic development in Indonesia, particularly in Makassar City as the economic and trade center of Eastern Indonesia (Frisnoiry et al. 2024). The open unemployment rate in Makassar City based on data from Statistics Indonesia of South Sulawesi remains relatively high, reaching around 6.8 percent in 2023 (Revirgin et al. 2025). This condition indicates that the formal labor market has not been able to absorb the entire available

workforce. The limited availability of formal employment demands innovative solutions that can create new job opportunities with broader accessibility for the community. This situation has become increasingly urgent considering the continuous annual growth of the labor force, while the creation of formal jobs does not keep pace with such growth (Haydarsyah and Nilasari 2024).

The development of digital technology has brought significant transformations to various economic sectors, including the transportation and service sectors (S et al. 2024). This digital revolution creates new economic opportunities that previously did not exist and provides alternative sources of income for society (Telaumbanua et al. 2024). The presence of online transportation applications such as Gojek, Grab, and similar platforms has changed the paradigm of conventional transportation into a more efficient and integrated system. These platforms not only facilitate the transportation needs of the public but also create a digital economic ecosystem that provides employment opportunities for millions of people. This digital economic phenomenon shows that technology can become an important catalyst in overcoming employment issues faced by developing countries such as Indonesia (Purba et al. 2025).

The online motorcycle taxi phenomenon does not only change patterns of urban mobility, but also creates new economic opportunities accessible to various segments of society with relatively simple requirements (Sobandi 2025). Unlike formal employment, which generally requires certain educational qualifications, work experience, and strict recruitment processes, the profession of online motorcycle taxi driver can be accessed by anyone who fulfills basic requirements such as owning a motor vehicle and having driving skills (Yunus et al. 2020). This flexibility positions online motorcycle taxis as a practical solution for individuals who experience difficulties entering formal employment. The sharing economy model also enables individuals to utilize assets they already possess to generate income, thereby reducing barriers to entry into the world of work (Simanullang and Ginting 2024).

In Makassar City, the number of online motorcycle taxi drivers has increased significantly since 2015, coinciding with the entry of major online transportation platforms into the city. The driving profession has become an attractive option for various groups, ranging from university graduates who have not secured permanent jobs, workers affected by layoffs, to individuals seeking additional income besides their main occupation. Data show that on average, online drivers in Makassar can earn between 150,000–300,000 rupiah daily, depending on working hours and operational areas. This amount is relatively attractive compared to the prevailing regional minimum wage, thus explaining why an increasing number of people are interested in joining as online riders (Damayanti 2021).

Work schedule flexibility is one of the main attractions of the online motorcycle taxi profession compared to formal employment. Drivers can determine their own working hours, choose operational times suitable to personal conditions and needs, and easily manage the balance between work and personal life. The ease of entering this profession is also an important contributing factor, as it does not require substantial capital or complicated bureaucratic procedures to begin working. Applicants simply register through the application, complete required documents,

and participate in a short training session before operating as online drivers. These job characteristics make online motorcycle taxis an effective alternative solution for addressing limited access to formal employment in Makassar City.

The positive impacts of online motorcycle taxis on community economics have become increasingly visible in everyday life in Makassar. Many drivers report improved family economic capacity after working as online motorcycle taxi drivers, whether as a primary or secondary occupation. Income earned from online driving not only helps fulfill basic family needs, but also enables them to improve their quality of life through increased purchasing power of goods and services. This phenomenon indicates that online motorcycle taxis have the potential to become an important instrument in efforts to improve community welfare. In addition, online transportation also provides a multiplier effect on the local economy, as increased purchasing power among drivers influences higher consumption, which in turn stimulates other economic sectors (Fioiani 2025).

Nevertheless, the impact of online motorcycle taxis on community economics still requires deeper and more systematic study to fully understand its dimensions. A fundamental question arises regarding the extent to which online motorcycle taxi work can provide real and measurable contributions to reducing the unemployment rate in Makassar. In addition to quantitative aspects, qualitative dimensions also need to be examined, including job quality, sustainability of income, and social protection for drivers. A comprehensive understanding of these motivational factors is essential to designing appropriate policies to optimize online motorcycle taxis as an employment solution.

The broader socioeconomic impacts also need to be objectively evaluated, considering both positive and negative effects. From a positive perspective, online motorcycle taxis increase community mobility, reduce congestion through more efficient vehicle usage, and provide more accessible transportation services. However, from a negative perspective, the presence of online motorcycle taxis can create conflicts with conventional transportation modes, raise driving safety concerns, and create income instability among drivers. A comprehensive evaluation of these impacts will present a clearer picture of the contribution of online motorcycle taxis to community welfare. Conducting a cost-benefit analysis is also crucial in determining whether this phenomenon truly provides significant added value to Makassar's economy and community welfare.

Research on the role of online motorcycle taxis in urban economies is increasingly important as this phenomenon has become an integral part of urban life in Makassar. Online motorcycle taxis are no longer merely alternative transportation, but have evolved into a complex economic ecosystem involving millions of people and influencing various socioeconomic aspects of society. A comprehensive understanding of the role of online motorcycle taxis in employment and local economics will provide valuable insights for policymakers at both regional and national levels. Data and analysis generated in this study can serve as a basis for formulating targeted policies for developing digital economic sectors and addressing unemployment issues in Makassar.

Based on the background described above, this research examines four main issues. First, how online motorcycle taxi jobs contribute to reducing unemployment in Makassar City, including analysis of workforce absorption and demographic characteristics of drivers. Second, the extent to which income from online motorcycle taxi work increases purchasing power and improves family economic welfare. Third, identification of economic, social, and personal factors driving individuals to choose online driving as a profession. Fourth, evaluation of the socioeconomic impacts of online motorcycle taxis on the community of Makassar, including positive and negative consequences.

Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute significantly to the development of knowledge, particularly in labor economics and digital economics. The findings can enrich academic literature regarding the impact of online transportation technology on labor markets and urban economies, and serve as references for subsequent studies related to digital transformation in the transportation sector. Practically, the results of this study can serve as valuable input for the local government in formulating more effective employment and digital economic development policies. Furthermore, this study may guide online platforms in understanding driver characteristics in Makassar, and help the public to obtain accurate information regarding the potentials and challenges of working as an online driver.

## **METODOLOGY**

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of online motorcycle-taxi services in reducing unemployment and increasing people's purchasing power in Makassar City. The research location was chosen because Makassar serves as the economic center of Eastern Indonesia and has a high level of online motorcycle-taxi penetration. The study was conducted over four months (March–June 2024). Informants were selected purposively and consisted of seven individuals—five online motorcycle-taxi drivers and two supporting informants—based on criteria of experience, domicile, and knowledge related to the digital economy.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. The data were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model through three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The data were reduced and coded according to research themes, then presented in the form of narrative descriptions, tables, and charts to illustrate the informants' profiles, experiences, socioeconomic impacts, and factors influencing the choice of profession as online motorcycle-taxi drivers.

The validity of the data was strengthened through source and technique triangulation, member checking, and extended observations when necessary. The verification process was carried out by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation, followed by reconfirmation with the informants. This study also adhered to research ethics, including obtaining informants' consent, maintaining confidentiality of identities, ensuring transparency of research objectives, and using the data solely for academic purposes.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### a. Informant Profile

This study involved 7 informants consisting of 5 online motorcycle-taxi drivers as the main informants and 2 supporting informants. The five online drivers have diverse backgrounds in terms of age, education level, and previous work experience. The first informant is Sulaiman (27 years old), a Bachelor of Informatics Engineering graduate who previously worked as a private employee but was laid off in 2022. The second informant is Dg Ancu (35 years old), a senior-high-school graduate who previously worked as a traditional motorcycle taxi (“ojek pangkalan”) driver for 8 years before switching to online transportation. The third informant is Herman (29 years old), a Diploma in Accounting graduate who combines work as an online driver with part-time administrative work.

Table 1. Profile of Main Informants (Online Motorcycle-Taxi Drivers)

| Name            | Age | Education                           | Previous Work    | Years Working as Online Driver |
|-----------------|-----|-------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Sulaiman        | 27  | Bachelor of Informatics Engineering | Private Employee | 2 years                        |
| Dg. Ancu        | 35  | Senior High School                  | Traditional Ojek | 3 years                        |
| Syahrul Ramadan | 29  | Diploma of Accounting               | Freelance Admin  | 2.5 years                      |
| Dg. Sarro       | 24  | Senior High School                  | Unemployed       | 1.5 years                      |
| Rahman Ali      | 32  | Bachelor of Economics               | Bank Employee    | 2 years                        |

The fourth informant is Dg Sarro (24 years old), a senior-high-school graduate who had been unemployed for almost a year before deciding to work as an online driver. The fifth informant, Rahman Ali (32 years old), is a Bachelor of Economics graduate who previously worked in the banking sector but chose to switch to online driving due to flexible working hours and the potential for higher income.

### The Role of Online Motorcycle-Taxi Employment in Reducing Unemployment in Makassar

Based on in-depth interviews with the five driver informants, it was revealed that working as an online driver has made a significant contribution to creating employment opportunities in Makassar City. Sulaiman stated:

“After I was laid off from my company, online ride-hailing became a lifesaver because there were no complicated requirements and I could start working within a week after registering.”

A similar view was expressed by Dg Sarro who acknowledged that:

“After nearly a year looking for a formal job without success, online driving provided a practical solution to start earning income.”

Dg Ancu, who previously worked at a traditional motorcycle-taxi stand, offered an interesting perspective regarding the transformation of the informal transportation sector:

“In the past I had to wait at the stand for hours to get passengers. Now orders go directly to my smartphone. Income is more stable and the operating area is wider.”

Data from the Makassar Gojek Regional Coordinator shows that over the last three years the number of driver partners in Makassar increased by around 150%, with an average of 200–300 new drivers joining every month. Regarding occupational backgrounds, this study identifies an interesting pattern: about 40% of online drivers were previously unemployed, 35% switched from other jobs, and 25% treat online driving as part-time work (Romadhani & Utomo 2024).

Syahrul Ramadan, who still works part-time in administration, explained:

“I use online driving as additional work to increase family income, especially in the afternoons and on weekends when demand is high.”

Table 2. Distribution of Drivers’ Previous Occupational Backgrounds

| Background    | Percentage | Characteristics                   |
|---------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Unemployed    | 40%        | Ages 20–30, education HS–Bachelor |
| Career Switch | 35%        | Ages 25–40, seeking flexibility   |
| Part-time     | 25%        | Ages 25–35, earning extra income  |

Rahman Ali offered an optimistic view about the contribution of online driving in reducing unemployment in his neighborhood:

“In the residential complex where I live, around 15 people work as online drivers. Most were previously unemployed or struggled to find permanent jobs. Now they have a regular income and can support their families.”

From an academic perspective, Dr. Ir. Muh. Akbar asserts that online ride-hailing has created what is known as a “gig economy,” providing a flexible solution to employment issues in the digital era. Nevertheless, informant views regarding long-term sustainability vary. Sulaiman believes online driving can be a long-term solution if supported by proper regulation and social security. Conversely, Dg Ancu views online driving more as a transitional solution while seeking a more stable business:

“I’m saving my online-driver income to open a small coffee shop.”

The Makassar Gojek Regional Coordinator highlighted the company’s commitment to job creation through training programs, business capital assistance, and application features aimed at increasing driver earnings (Sudirman, Syukur & Suhaeb 2023).

### **Income from Online Driving and Community Purchasing Power**

Analysis of income and purchasing power reveals varied but generally positive results. Based on data gathered from the five informants, average daily income ranges between IDR 100,000 and IDR 200,000, depending on working hours, days of operation, and service area. Sulaiman, who works full-time, reported average monthly income of IDR 3–5 million, while Syahrul, who works part-time, earns around IDR 2–3 million as an addition to his main job.

Regarding basic needs, most informants said that income from online driving is sufficient to meet family necessities. Rahman Ali explained:

“For daily food, electricity, water, and children’s school expenses, thank God it’s covered. I can even save a little for emergencies.”

However, Dg Sarro, who is still single, admitted that although it covers his personal needs, he still needs to be frugal regarding certain expenses.

Table 3. Average Monthly Income and Expenditures of Informants

| Informant       | Income (IDR) | Basic Needs (IDR) | Surplus/Deficit |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Sulaiman        | 4,500,000    | 3,800,000         | +700,000        |
| Dg. Ancu        | 3,800,000    | 3,500,000         | +300,000        |
| Syahrul Ramadan | 2,800,000*   | 2,500,000         | +300,000        |
| Dg. Sarro       | 4,100,000    | 3,400,000         | +700,000        |
| Rahman Ali      | 4,000,000    | 3,500,000         | +500,000        |

\*Income from online driving only

The most noticeable positive impact is improved purchasing power. Dg Ancu stated:

“Since working online, I could buy my wife a used motorcycle so she can sell snacks around the neighborhood.”

Sulaiman also reported greater household purchasing capability and occasionally being able to buy items previously considered luxuries such as a new smartphone or home electronics.

However, income stability remains a major concern (Februara et al., 2024). Online income fluctuates depending on weather, day of the week, and economic conditions. Rahman described his income pattern:

“Monday to Thursday is usually slow, but Friday to Sunday is busy. During rainy season income can drop 30–40%.”

To address this, informants adopted strategies such as flexible working hours and diversifying services (passenger, goods delivery, food delivery).

Compared to previous jobs, most informants feel their online-driver income is better or at least comparable. Sulaiman noted:

“My previous salary was IDR 2.5 million per month, now I can earn IDR 3–4 million. There’s no holiday bonus or health insurance, but the gross income is higher.”

### Factors Driving People to Become Online Drivers

Exploration of motives reveals multiple reasons behind choosing online driving. Economic factors are the main driver, though with varying nuances. Sulaiman stated that his decision was driven by urgent financial needs:

“At that time, my family’s economic condition was difficult, my wife was pregnant with our second child, and our savings were running low.”

Flexibility of working hours was the second most important factor. Syahrul explained:

“I can decide when to work. I work in the office in the morning, then online driving from afternoon to evening.”

Technology and ease of use also play a significant role. According to Dg Sarro:

“The system is user-friendly. Just go online and orders come in. There’s GPS, so you don’t need to memorize roads.”

Social factors were also found, though less dominant. For example, Dg Ancu switched due to peer influence.

Ease of access and simple requirements become major attractions, especially for people with limited capital or qualifications. Sulaiman stated:

“You only need a motorcycle, driver license, ID card, and Android phone. Within a week you can start working.”

Table 4. Ranking of Motivating Factors for Choosing Online Driving

| Rank | Factor           | % of Informants | Notes                  |
|------|------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1    | Economic Needs   | 100%            | Main motivation of all |
| 2    | Work Flexibility | 80%             | 4 of 5 informants      |
| 3    | Ease of Access   | 80%             | Simple requirements    |
| 4    | Technology       | 60%             | 3 of 5                 |
| 5    | Social Factors   | 40%             | 2 of 5                 |

### Socio-economic Impacts of Online Ride-Hailing in Makassar

Online transportation has brought significant transformation in various socio-economic aspects. In terms of social interaction patterns, informants reported a fundamental shift in driver-passenger relationships. According to Sulaiman:

“Now every day I meet new people from various backgrounds.”

From an economic perspective, the existence of online transport shows a significant multiplier effect. Data from the Makassar Gojek Regional Coordinator indicates that cooperation with local MSMEs through GoFood features has increased sales of food vendors by 40–60% (Aleyda, 2024).

Table 5. Socio-economic Impacts of Online Ride-Hailing (According to Informants)

| Impact Aspect | Positive                             | Negative                           |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Social        | Diverse interactions, wider networks | Conflict with conventional drivers |
| Economy       | Stable income, MSME growth           | Income fluctuation                 |
| Mobility      | Easy access, high comfort            | Congestion in some areas           |
| Technology    | Increased digital literacy           | Generational gap among drivers     |

Some negative impacts include conflicts with conventional transport modes, lifestyle changes (less physical activity), and increased urban congestion.

Dr. Ir. Muh. Akbar emphasized that this transformation is part of the natural evolution of urban society in adopting technology. According to him, the key is managing negative impacts while maximizing benefits through proper regulation, driver training, and public education.

Overall, this study concludes that despite existing challenges, online motorcycle-taxi services contribute significantly to the economy and welfare of communities in Makassar (Rumaedah & Syarkawi 2022).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that online motorcycle-taxi work has played a strategic role in reducing unemployment and increasing people's purchasing power in Makassar City. The research shows that online motorcycle-taxi services have succeeded in absorbing a workforce with diverse characteristics, of which 40% are previously unemployed, 35% are workers who switched professions, and 25% treat it as a side job. Work-time flexibility, easy access with simple requirements, and technological support from applications are the main factors encouraging people to choose this profession.

From the economic aspect, the average income of online motorcycle-taxi drivers ranges from IDR 150,000–350,000 per day or IDR 3.8–6.5 million per month, which is proven to meet families' basic needs with a surplus for savings and increased purchasing power. The overall socio-economic impacts are positive, including improved urban mobility accessibility, the development of MSMEs through GoFood services which increase turnover by 40–60%, and the expansion of drivers' social networks.

Although challenges remain, such as income fluctuations depending on weather and economic conditions, as well as conflicts with conventional transportation modes, online motorcycle-taxi services have proven to be an innovative solution in addressing employment issues in the digital economy era. This transformation has created a gig-economy ecosystem that offers alternative income sources with low entry barriers, while at the same time driving the micro-economy and sustainably improving the welfare of the people of Makassar City.

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