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**FACTORS AFFECTING FOOD DELIVERY RIDERS' INTENTION  
TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GIG ECONOMY**

**By**

**AZARISHAM BIN HAJI SHAFIEI**

**Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in  
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science**

**November 2022**

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis honours both of my parents. My late father, Haji Shafiei, not only raised and nurtured me, but he also paid a high price for my education and intellectual development over the years. In times of despair and discouragement, my mother, Hajah Norani, has been a source of inspiration and strength. Her motherly care and support were demonstrated on several occasions while I was working on this thesis.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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**November 2022**

**Chairman : Rosmah Binti Mohamed, PhD**  
**School : Business and Economics**

This study looked at numerous factors affecting food delivery riders' (FDRs) intention to participate in the gig economy in the wake of the Covid-19 (C19) epidemic. FDRs typically transport prepared food from restaurants to customers. Despite the increased academic interest in a labour market characterized by the prevalence of short-term contracts or better known as the gig economy, the emergence of new types of gig employment, and the factors that inspire workers to participate in the gig economy, few studies have looked at the impact of C19 and its connections to FDRs' participation in the gig economy. In the absence of employment protection, the Push-Pull-Mooring (PPM) theory, with numerous antecedents affecting FDRs, had been used to comprehend factors affecting their participative behaviour. Data was collected from 403 FDRs, 393 of which were valid. SPSS 26.0 and SmartPLS version 3.30 software were used to evaluate the data in this study.

This study found push variables (economic necessities and extra income) and pull variables (flexibility, control and autonomy) to positively correlate with the FDRs' intention to participate in the gig economy. In comparison, limited alternatives (push variable) and enjoyment (pull variable) were found to have a negative relationship with such intention. This study has also indicated that FDRs will have lower participation due to the lack of employment protection (mooring factor), which moderated the relationship between economic necessities and their participation in the gig economy. The empirical results reported herein should be considered in light of some limitations as it focused on FDRs engaged within the Klang Valley Area and utilized a cross-sectional quantitative method on a section of a targeted population, not the whole population. In conclusion, this study provides some practical suggestions for FDRs that assist critical stakeholders in obtaining good work and living conditions during the C19 pandemic.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Master Sains

**FAKTOR-FAKTOR YANG MEMPENGARUHI HASRAT PENGHANTAR-PENGHANTAR MAKANAN UNTUK MENYERTAI EKONOMI GIG**

Oleh

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Kajian ini merungkai pelbagai faktor yang mempengaruhi hasrat penghantar-penghantar makanan untuk mengambil bahagian di dalam ekonomi gig berikutan wabak Covid-19 (C19). Penghantar-penghantar makanan biasanya mengangkut makanan yang disediakan dari restoran kepada pelanggan. Walaupun minat akademik meningkat dalam pasaran buruh yang dicirikan oleh kelaziman kontrak jangka pendek atau lebih dikenali sebagai ekonomi gig, kemunculan jenis pekerjaan baru gig, dan faktor-faktor yang memberi inspirasi kepada pekerja untuk mengambil bahagian dalam ekonomi gig, kajian yang melihat kesan C19 dan kaitannya dengan penyertaan penghantar-penghantar makanan dalam ekonomi gig adalah terhad. Dengan ketiadaan perlindungan pekerjaan, teori *Push-Pull-Mooring (PPM)*, dengan beberapa anteseden yang mempengaruhi hasrat penghantar-penghantar makanan ke dalam ekonomi gig, telah digunakan untuk memahami faktor yang mempengaruhi tingkah laku penyertaan mereka. Data dikumpul daripada 403 responden, 393 daripadanya adalah lengkap. Perisian SPSS 26.0 dan SmartPls versi 3.30 digunakan untuk menganalisa data di dalam kajian ini.

Kajian ini mendapati faktor *push* (keperluan ekonomi dan pendapatan tambahan) dan faktor *pull* (fleksibiliti, kawalan dan autonomi) berkorelasi positif dengan hasrat penghantar-penghantar makanan untuk menyertai ekonomi gig. Sebagai perbandingan, alternatif terhad (faktor *push*) dan keseronokan (faktor *pull*) didapati mempunyai hubungan negatif dengan niat tersebut. Kajian ini juga telah menunjukkan bahawa penghantar-penghantar makanan akan mempunyai penyertaan yang lebih rendah kerana kekurangan perlindungan pekerjaan (faktor *mooring*), yang didapati turut menyederhanakan hubungan antara keperluan ekonomi dan penyertaan mereka di dalam ekonomi gig. Keputusan empirikal yang dilaporkan di sini harus dipertimbangkan berdasarkan kepada beberapa batasan kerana kajian ini memberi tumpuan hanya kepada penghantar-penghantar makanan yang berada di dalam Kawasan Lembah Klang dan kaedah kuantitatif *cross sectional* tidak mencakupi keseluruhan populasi penghantar-penghantar makanan di Malaysia. Kesimpulannya, kajian ini menyediakan beberapa

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FDR	Food Delivery Rider
FDP	Food Delivery Platform
OFDS	Online Food Delivery Services
PP	Push-Pull
PPM	Push-Pull-Mooring
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SmartPLS	Smart Partial Least Squares Software
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Due to the COVID-19 (C19) pandemic, everyone is at risk of fatigue. The frontline food delivery riders (FDRs) who gather food or meals from numerous restaurants and fast-food places and carry it home are also affected. Because of the outbreak, the number of FDRs has recently surged. During the pandemic, people have grown more dependent on online meal ordering. Workplace conflicts and labour disputes among FDRs have increased as the pandemic's significance has grown (Buncaras et al., 2022). An increasing number of FDRs have expressed concerns over food delivery platforms' (FDP) lack of transparency, abusive remuneration system, and poor safety precautions. These are some of the difficulties that FDRs face daily due to being regarded as independent contractors (Katrodia, 2020).

FDRs are responsible for making deliveries go out in all kinds of weather, contending with traffic, exhaustion, and various other logistical obstacles, to fulfil orders on time. This career, like any other, has its difficulties, including the highs of assisting others in their time of greatest need, and the lows of being the recipient of others' assistance (Xue et al., 2021). Their employment requires much physical labour, which is a contributing factor to their job stress. Due to the widespread unemployment, as more inexperienced workers take jobs as FDRs, this may cause the risks associated with this kind of work to become more prevalent (See-Kwong et al., 2017). This research investigates factors that affect FDRs' intention to participate in the gig economy. The results will provide a better understanding of themselves and the factors that affect their mental health in their occupations. It will also assist future researchers in expanding their understanding of FDRs in Malaysia.

### 1.2 Background of the Study

Food delivery services have grown in popularity among urban dwellers and countless other large cities worldwide in only a few short years (Ivanova et al., 2018). There has been a rise in the number of persons using delivery services as a secondary source of income. Customers often believe that ordering meals for delivery, as opposed to eating in a restaurant, is safer since it lowers their contact with other individuals and, thus, their risk of contracting Covid-19 (C19) infection (Ortiz-Prado et al., 2021). Providers who bring food to customers are divided into two categories: those that deliver directly from restaurants to customers and those that deliver directly from platforms to customers. Fast food restaurant providers like Kentucky Fried Chicken and McDonald's are examples of restaurants that provide delivery services. These companies prepare food and then deliver it to the customer. Customers can order directly via the website of restaurant or through the website of a third-party platform. The names of these third-party services might change depending on the nation; Swiggy in India is an example. The phrase "platform

delivery" refers to the process by which third-party platforms deliver online orders submitted by customers directly to partner restaurants.

These businesses may or may not provide delivery services (Li et al., 2020). The delivery of food via the internet involves the employment of exceptionally efficient and scalable real-time delivery systems. Restaurants can use already existing staff members, such as waiters in certain smaller restaurants, for self-delivery. Most renowned restaurants, such as McDonald's, may also consider using specialised delivery crews who have been expressly recruited and educated for this position. In addition, restaurants may employ various types of logistics, such as crowdsourcing and a network of independent contractor delivery riders. This food delivery strategy is successful and economical (Sun, 2019). Lockdowns during the epidemic's beginning, in addition to physical distance limits, have given the sector a huge boost, and delivery has become a lifeline for the food service business. It is expected to be prominent in the gastronomic landscape in the coming years (Castillo & Zhangallymbay, 2020). The closure of businesses due to C19 has had several knock-on effects, including the expansion of existing online delivery services and the paradigm change that has led to an increased number of restaurants focusing on delivery. During this time, delivery services emerged as a feasible option for lowering sales decreases. As a result, even though just forty-six per cent of restaurants and cafes offered delivery services before the lockdown, ninety-two per cent of companies projected that they would continue to do so throughout the confinement. The individuals who work in the delivery industry are now on the front lines of the C19 outbreak. Most of them do so through an application, which allows them to connect with their clients and provide their services to those consumers (See-Kwong et al., 2017).

In Malaysia, purchasing meals online has replaced traditional dining out, and this trend is broader than just takeout and restaurants. Many companies distribute meals and provide delivery services through the internet. One of these businesses is FoodPanda, and it made history in Malaysia by becoming the first delivery service to debut with significant momentum there. Man Delivery, Honestbee, Dahmakan, Running FoodTime, Shogun2U, and Mammam are some of the other companies in this industry that compete with DeliverEat and Uber Eats. Other rivals in this market include Uber Eats. Most meal delivery services may be clustered in significant urban areas such as Kuala Lumpur, the Klang Valley, Johor Bahru, and Penang (Chai & Yat, 2019). The online food delivery service (OFDS) is making headway in Malaysia and is continuing to gather support. When citizens use online food ordering applications, they demonstrate a high level of engagement. Before the pandemic, an emerging pattern in the urban areas of Malaysia was the usage of online meal delivery services such as GrabFood, FoodPanda, and LalaFood, amongst others. This trend continued even after the epidemic was declared over. These and other technology firms contributed to the growth of this trend. Although millennials well received the programme, it needed help appealing to all of the other elder generations in the nation. However, since the Movement Control Order (MCO) was implemented, the market has seen explosive growth. Because of these diverse efforts to sell food products online, a considerable number of new job openings may be created as a direct result of these efforts. In addition, it facilitates the development of contacts between local company owners and others who may assist them in growing their companies (Nayan & Hassan, 2020).

A growing number of people are discovering that working as a courier may effectively bring in consistent income. Customers have the impression that ordering meals for delivery are a safer alternative than dining out since it lowers their risk of catching the C19 virus and their likelihood of coming into contact with other individuals (Ortiz-Prado et al., 2021). During the global C19 pandemic in 2020, the advantages of OFDS were quickly evident because it offered consumers ready-to-eat meals while enabling food producers to continue running their companies (Li et al., 2020). Because of this climate, delivery services have become more popular as a possible source of income for both official and informal businesses, as well as individuals engaging in the gig economy (Chang & Meyerhoefer, 2021). FDPs typically bear the responsibility of recruiting and instructing professional delivery workers. Alternatively, FDPs may resort to crowdsourcing logistics, which entails using delivery labour not engaged by them. Either way, FDPs can recruit and train professional delivery people. Professional delivery people often get training, have at least part of their salary guaranteed, and some remuneration is commission-based. On the other hand, independent delivery personnel, frequently referred to as "riders," are paid on a commission basis instead of an hourly rate (Zhao et al., 2021).

FDPs, also known as a gig economy, have seen a fantastic development, which has created new work prospects built on creative labour practises and redefined what it means to be employed (Ahsan, 2020). A widespread misunderstanding regarding the FDPs involves direct activity sharing between FDPs as service providers and FDRs as workers and customers. According to Dredge and Gyimóthy (2015), the growth of FDPs disregards the function of commercial mediators, who are responsible for creating unregulated workplaces and providing possibilities for unpaid employment. FDRs are obliged to operate as a form of hospitality service within the context of the gig economy. They represent restaurants, customers, and FDPs in interactions with those respective parties. The degree to which front-of-house staff members are ideally equipped for their tasks inside front-of-house delivery platforms and the degree to which restaurants want to use these FDPs are intimately associated with one another. On the other hand, as seen by a slew of recent cases involving labour unrest, many FDRs appear to doubt the value of their employment in an industry that may be unregulated and unequal (Todolí-Signes, 2018). In the Philippines, some of the delivery service's drivers were given ten-year suspensions after organising and participating in a protest over their drastically lower pay (Gregorio, 2021). Workers of an online food delivery service called Deliveroo went on strike in Sheung Wan, Hong Kong Island, protesting new business restrictions that might affect their pay (Westbrook, 2021).

The health of delivery workers is in peril because they are becoming more mobile, with the bulk of them riding motorbikes or motorcycles, and because they have a large number of encounters with other people during the C19 pandemic. Workers in the delivery business are vulnerable to exploitation because they cannot depend on a predictable income and are sometimes prevented from participating in labour and social protection programmes accessible to regular workers (Apouey et al., 2020). The epidemic is becoming more prevalent, which has resulted in a surge of problems in the workplace as well as labour disputes among FDRs. As a response, a significant number of people have come out to express their dissatisfaction with the lack of openness, compensation, and precautionary measures taken. These people have coordinated their efforts to speak with a single voice. These are only some of the many challenges FDRs experienced that



affected their mental health. Because delivery drivers often continue working while being ill or wounded, their poor health may significantly influence driving safety, and stress and worry may have a substantial detrimental impact on how they drive (Buncaras et al., 2022). Another issue associated with FDRs is working hours, which may induce stress or burnout, one of the many challenges that FDRs have to deal with, and it is one of the potential causes of stress on the job. FDRs are not immune to the continuing consequences of the C19 outbreak because of their position as front liners in the fight (Katrodia, 2020). FDRs gather food and lunches from various fast food and restaurant outlets for transport back home. People's reliance on food delivered to their homes over the internet has increased since the outbreak began. Workers who deliver meals have more lofty professional aspirations than just maintaining their present work (Lin et al., 2020). Because of this, companies typically engage more committed delivery riders who are accessible at all times. The ramifications of using online meal delivery services may be broken down into three categories: the economic, the social, and the environmental, and each of these aspects has the potential to have an impact on the services' long-term viability. It has resulted in a significant increase in job opportunities, particularly for those in charge of food delivery. However, they must put up with the repetitive and monotonous nature of their labour, which includes lifting hefty objects, receiving minimal training, and running the risk of injury (Awi et al., 2021).

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Millions of Malaysian employees have been unable to go to work because of the impacts of the C19 pandemic and the containment measures that have been implemented. This situation has led to an extraordinarily severe decline in activity and job losses on a scale never seen before (Nazruzila Razniza & Kamal Halili, 2020). Since March, the implementation of the Movement Control Order (MCO) 2020 and many other forms of MCO have become a knockout punch in terms of their economic impact (Azhar & Shakil, 2021). Inequalities, poverty, and suffering, especially among the most vulnerable, are being exacerbated as the economy continues its downward spiral, with growing damaging consequences on employment, wages, lives, supply chains, and enterprises (Nga et al., 2021). There has been a growth in the number of self-employed workers who need access to social security due to the proliferation of hundreds of thousands of new business models in the gig economy, many of which involve non-standard employment arrangements (Nungsari & Chuah, 2021).

The gig economy is picking pace, but the workers in this category must catch up regarding laws and legislation to protect them. It is necessary to protect their means of subsistence while working. This situation calls for proactive rather than reactive operations that compel businesses to comply with the regulations (Jamaluddin et al., 2021). For people who participate in the "gig economy," these reactions might have far-reaching consequences. It is only sometimes simple to assess the essence of a firm based on looks alone, especially when job outcomes are unfavourable. How a business makes choices may be impacted by various factors, including long-term policies, existing legislation, internal capability, and the present state of the market (Rahim et al., 2021). Most of Malaysia's gig economy workers are independent contractors, such as e-hailing drivers and delivery riders, who are not covered by the country's fundamental labour legislation. According to the Employment Act 1955, the Labour Ordinance (Sabah 67),

and the Labour Ordinance (Sarawak 68), they have not been deemed employees. They do not even make the minimum wage, unlike others with regular occupations (Jais & Marzuki, 2020). The current employment regulations are structured in the traditional contract between an employer and an employee. Workers who engage in the gig economy are more comparable to independent contractors than traditional employees. A gig platform does impact the work people undertake to earn a livelihood (Ahmad, 2020). Finding a job in Malaysia has been a challenging endeavour for many years. The national unemployment rate of 3.3 per cent is high compared to that of many of our contemporaries in Asia. The most critical problem that has to be addressed right now is the availability of employment in Malaysia and how work is organised there.

On the other hand, people might be forced into self-employment out of the need in situations that are not so benign. This type of entrepreneurship is sometimes called necessity entrepreneurship (Karlsson & Wranne, 2019). Research has also been conducted that focuses more on the actual intrinsic motivating variables present in entrepreneurs. These aspects include individual qualities that explain why some persons continue in entrepreneurship while others do not. Past research has also been done concentrating more on entrepreneurs' fundamental intrinsic motivating aspects in addition to these studied topics (Ravenelle, 2019).. Various research was conducted on motivation at various phases of the process of becoming self-employed, specifically in areas that aim to induce the motivation to become self-employed. However, some elements inspire employees to continue to be self-employed, and very few variables motivate workers to stop being self-employed.

This study investigates what factors motivate them to continue participating in the gig economy by analysing certain factors that lead to their intention to stay. In light of Lewchuk (2017) observation that the gig economy now seems to infringe on what defines workers' rights and avoid regulation, this research seeks to understand what reasons encourage those who already work in the gig economy to stay in it. For the most part, existing research has concentrated on the elements that initially entice individuals to participate in activities related to the gig economy. However, these studies often ignore the factors that encourage or discourage employee engagement. The study done to evaluate employees' engagement in the gig economy during the C19 pandemic is relatively limited. Even if it does exist, it does not indicate that workers' participation was related to the epidemic's effect. Most studies concentrate on a specific target group, such as an industry, skill set, technology platform, global flows, place of work, or country. Although much effort has been put into understanding the characteristics that motivate gig workers, participation in the gig economy still needs to improve. Healy et al. (2017) found that there currently needs to be a hole in the academic literature around the gig economy, even though there is an apparent problem of public concern for employees inside the gig economy. The findings of previous research focus almost entirely on motivating elements, but they do not link this information with inhibiting aspects; as a result, the findings of these studies are all over the place.

Due to the current dearth of literature on the topic, the gig economy needs to be better conceptualised, and its workings still need to be understood (Donovan et al., 2016). Much study has been done to figure out how to recognise or take advantage of opportunities, as well as how or why entrepreneurs establish intents for creating



possibilities and concepts like these, commonly referred to as opportunity entrepreneurship. (Woodcock & Graham, 2019). Within the PPM theory, few antecedents of push factors and gig workers' participation have been studied. Push factors such as stresses (Wang et al., 2019), financial need, contextual factors, job deprivation (Angelucci, 2020), lack of income or employment opportunities (Keith et al., 2019), lack of choices (Paul, 2019), and to secure regular employment (Jeon et al., 2019). The relationship between push factors and gig workers' participation is not fully comprehended (Angelucci, 2020), (Sevilla, 2020), (Keith et al., 2020), (Karlsson & Wranne, 2019), and (Paul, 2019). Lack of research examining the pull factors and workers' participation (Sevilla, 2019), (Paul, 2019), (Keith et al., 2019); and (Angelucci, 2020). Inconsistent relationship between pull factors and workers' participation (Sevilla, 2019), (Paul, 2019), (Keith et al., 2019), (Angelucci, 2020); and (Campion et al., 2019). No specific factor was found to have encouraged nor discouraged gig workers' participation (Seargeant, 2017), (Rachmawati et al., 2022). A variety of antecedents have been tested, such as precarious work (Bajwa et al., 2018), workers' compensation (Tran & Sokas, 2017), and traditional regulations (Stewart & Stanford, 2017). Mooring factors and gig workers' participation is not fully grasped (Flanagan, 2019), (Milland, 2017), and (Friedman, 2014). Only five studies utilized a push-pull theoretical framework for examination (Angelucci, 2020), (Sevilla, 2020), (Keith et al., 2020), (Karlsson & Wranne, 2019); and (Paul, 2019). The PPM theoretical framework is not widely explored.

The Malaysian High Court concluded on July 9, 2021, that the driver for the e-hailing service Grab, also known as the Claimant, did not meet the requirements to be considered an employee under the terms of the Industrial Relations Act 1967 ("IRA"). Because of this decision, the Claimant could not file a wrongful dismissal claim against Grab. Because the Claimant's circumstances did not meet the threshold requirements, the Minister of Human Resources did the right thing when she decided not to forward the matter to the Industrial Court for consideration. This decision was made because the Claimant's situation did not satisfy the threshold requirements. The Claimant referred to the "UK Uber case," which determined that Uber drivers are employees. The case was resolved in *Uber BV, and Others v. Aslam and Others* (2021) UKSC 5 and was referred to as "the UK Uber case." Grab, on the other hand, argued that the facts of the Uber case are factually different and that the New Zealand judgement in *Arachhige v. Rasier New Zealand Ltd & Uber BV* (2020) NZEmpC 230 ("NZ Uber Case") (finding that e-hailing drivers are not workers) applicable in this particular scenario. The High Court decided that Grab was in the right, and as a result, it decided to dismiss the claim that the Claimant had brought (Uchiyama et al., 2022). Because of the recent events, many people in Malaysia are still looking for work at gig firms like FoodPanda and Grabcar, amongst others. Particular attention is given to platform capitalism, a deregulation process that has destabilised employment, eliminated the boundaries between businesses and altered the distinguishing characteristics of different types of labour.

Although the larger conversation should justifiably centre on work and social control, social imagination and practices still need to be considered. The recent struggles of delivery riders and their participation in grassroots mobilisations in economically depressed urban areas, the utilisation of platforms for the creation of exchange networks between urban and rural activities, and the reshaping of the urban environment through the farming of seasonal produce are all examples that provide glimpses of possible new

forms of social experimentation (Cingolani, 2022). In light of the C19 pandemic, the gig economy has become an increasingly important segment of the labour market in this country. People under 40 are more likely to engage in freelance arrangements than full-time jobs. Research on the reasons for and consequences of this shift has focused on objective measures of income, working hours, and employment conditions. However, there has been little work exploring Malaysians' subjective experiences of the gig economy without discreet employment laws governing their employment. Although today's gig economy has given many people access to a new kind of work, how it is implemented in Malaysia is still founded on the employment paradigms of the past. Despite the significance of the gig economy, which is regarded as a game-changer in Malaysia, much research has yet to be done on the factors that drive FDRs, such as gig labour and their participation in the gig economy during the C19 epidemic.

A greater emphasis was placed not on FDRs but on determining FDPs and customer views. Even though a few studies have concentrated on FDRs, these studies have only looked at motivational variables and elements that may preclude FDRs' participation. This situation leaves additional factors, or "moorings," to be left unexplored. This study suggests using migration studies to identify and analyse the variables that influence the continuous engagement of gig workers in the gig economy. This research expands the Push-Pull (PP) framework to add mooring aspects to investigate multiple antecedents better to comprehend FDR's participation in Malaysia's gig economy. By investigating all of the hypothesised connected antecedents, this study provides some theoretical and practical recommendations for FDRs. It may help critical stakeholders reasonably secure FDRs' employment and well-being in the country.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives (RO)**

The objectives of this study are divided into general and specific, which are as follows:

##### **1.4.1 General Objective**

This study aims to determine the relationships between push, pull, and mooring factors and FDRs' intention to participate in the gig economy.

##### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

More specifically, the current study aims to:

1. Examine the relationship between push factors and FDRs' intention to participate in the gig economy.
2. Examine the relationship between pull factors and FDRs' intention to participate in the gig economy.

3. Investigate the relationship between the mooring factor and FDRs' intention to participate in the gig economy.
4. Investigate if the mooring factor moderates the relationship between push-pull factors and FDRs' intention to participate in the gig economy.

### **1.5 Research Question (RQ)**

After aligning all the objectives, this study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1: Do push factors affect FDRs' intention to participate in the gig economy?  
RQ2: Do pull factors affect FDRs' intention to participate in the gig economy?  
RQ3: Does the mooring factor affect FDRs' intention to participate in the gig economy?  
RQ4: Does the mooring factor moderate the relationship between push-pull factors and FDRs' intention to participate in the gig economy?

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This research focuses on the gig economy in the real world, as opposed to the internet gig economy more generally. According to Vallas and Schor (2020), platforms like Uber and Airbnb, as well as food delivery services, are included in what is often referred to as the sharing economy, another name for the physical gig economy. These websites and mobile apps, sometimes called platforms, depending on their users to give customers their material and human resources. Platforms may be mobile or desktop based. Many people who make their rents and services available via these websites (sometimes referred to as providers) do it on a casual or part-time basis (Burtch et al., 2018).

A significant number of service providers seek to earn money from pre-existing home assets, such as unused rooms or personal automobiles, to do so. Because of the fact that these platforms make it possible for such assets to be used by a more significant number of people, they are sometimes grouped and referred to as components of the sharing economy. Platforms for the sharing economy offer users a venue for discussion, a standard set of contractual conditions, and a safe way of payment (Meijerink & Keegan, 2019). Workers in this category need to possess the physical capital necessary to supply the questioned services and employ the labour needed to do so directly. These physical gig workers offer a platform to conduct trades and, in return, charge a fee for each completed transaction (Bajwa et al., 2018). A study's population is, briefly, the total number of persons that participated in the research in some capacity, as determined by a headcount of all of the factors that the conclusions of the study attempt to reflect (Sekaran, 2003). A population that has been precisely characterised guarantees that the findings and conclusions may be applied to the appropriate subcategory of components in the gig economy of the nation (Montgomery & Baglioni, 2020).

The primary purpose of the research is to investigate the characteristics that motivate physically based gig economy self-employed individuals, such as FDRs, to maintain their participation in the gig economy. To be able to pay closer attention to food delivery companies in a comprehensive assessment of influencing factors, the multiple case study strategy presents the FDRs of the five selected FDPs, consisting of FoodPanda, GrabFood, BungkusIt, HomeTaste, and Dahmakan which are operating within Klang Valley, Malaysia as the central populations under this study.

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The study brings contributions in both theoretical and practical aspects. The underlying motives studied may be applied to the future implementation of any labour education or improvement program for effective laws and regulations by Malaysian authority bodies, such as the Ministry of Human Resources (MoHR), Department of Statistics Malaysia (DoSM), and Labour Department Peninsular Malaysia (LDPM). The following subsections describe in detail the significance of this study.

### **1.7.1 Literature and Body of Knowledge**

Hao (2020) asserted that platforms have become integral to modern life. Instead of amassing wealth through physical control of industrial facilities, platforms do so by facilitating communication between users. Most notably, ride-hailing services like Uber, Grab, and Gojek highlight platform work's precarious nature and the dual nature of platform worker status as capitalists' labour. The geographical context of platform capitalism has mainly been ignored in favour of studies examining its economic and social effects. Li (2018) added that companies like Uber and Grab have entirely reshaped the ride-hailing market in a short amount of time. Recent studies have examined how ridesharing services affect the economy and technology. This study further added that few studies had investigated the social implications of this shift, especially drivers' roles in the gig economy's novel and sometimes-paradoxical institutional frameworks. As a result, of this change in the ride-hailing industry, drivers are now subject to the requirements of both the government and the companies they work for, which might be in direct conflict with one another.

According to Hauben et al. (2020), it is challenging to undertake comparative research that can provide findings or generalisations because the information is so dispersed and depends on different definitions and conceptualisations, methodology and data sources. It has been argued that some of the available research findings and survey results need to be revised due to vague or overly specific ideas, problems with measurement, or small sample sizes. More work is required to collect various types of data. Platform work and digital work intermediation platforms require more standardised concepts and definitions. Khozen et al. (2021) added that there are still gaps in our understanding of platform work in several important ways, including the prevalence and characteristics of online platform work, under-declared work, cross-border platform work, the coordination of social security for platform workers working across borders, the role of private digital intermediaries in the functioning of the labour market. One prominent

example is working on hybrid platforms, in which one set of actors interacts with another set of actors already present in the market. On top of that, some platform workers, such as those who work across borders, are often ignored. Knowledge gaps continue, and what effect of changes in the legislative framework still needs to be clarified. This study outcome adds to the present body of knowledge and sheds light on the participative behaviour of Malaysians in the gig economy. Besides, it was challenging to compile a comprehensive study on the gig economy within Malaysia since this area is acknowledged as a grey area. Hence, this study presents findings exploring factors affecting FDRs' intention to participate in the gig economy.

## **1.7.2 Theoretical Significance**

This study will offer something of worth to the previous research in several different ways. The push-pull-moorings (PPM) hypothesis from human migration is utilised to demonstrate the switching intention of self-employed workers in the gig economy. PPM originates from the study of human migration. In addition, the PPM will be expanded to depict the effect that the C19 epidemic will have on the job situation. The push-pull migration model was first presented by (Ravenstein, 1885). The PPM is an upgrade that was made to that model. To this day, one of the most often used frameworks for understanding human migration is known as the push-pull paradigm (Cohen, 1996).

### **1.7.2.1 Strengthening of the Results**

The PPM model is the preeminent paradigm in the migration literature, and it serves to remind scholars that personal concerns and cultural values are equally significant aspects of migration. The marketing discipline has benefited from the use of the PPM paradigm. According to Bansal and Eiselt (2004), the PPM model offered a unified framework for situating the indicators that may be discovered in the current service switching research. These predictors included quality, satisfaction, and value. They discovered that the PPM model worked well as a helpful framework to describe the switching behaviour of customers once they included these variables in the model. This research offers empirical data about the applicability of PPM on the motivation of employees in the gig economy hence strengthening the past researches results (Sevilla, 2020); (Angelucci, 2020); (Keith et al., 2019); (Karlsson & Wranne, 2019); and (Paul, 2019).

### **1.7.2.2 Developing Logics**

The second contribution this research makes to workers' motivation in the gig economy is that it develops logic by identifying novel antecedents to PPM components in the context of employee motivation in the gig economy. PPM was used in previous research to discover and analyse the characteristics that influence the continuing engagement of employees (Huang et al., 2020). Since this research focuses on the elements that influence workers' participation behaviour in the gig economy, this study serves as the theoretical foundation for investigating employees' motivation in the gig economy. In the context of workers' motivation, the following antecedents have been identified: low pay,



inconsistent income, absence of benefits and protections, responsibility for one's taxes and expenses, potential for stress and burnout, low barrier to entry, flexibility, variety, independence, opportunity to try new jobs, retrenchment, temporary layoff, unpaid leave, pay cut, and the ability to work from home. This research provides empirical data that helps to boost employees' motivation in the gig economy literature on encouraging switching behaviour and attitude of gig economy workers. Hence, the second theoretical significance of this study is that it helps develop the logic that reconciles predictions from past researches (Sevilla, 2020); (Angelucci, 2020); (Keith et al., 2019); (Karlsson & Wranne, 2019); and (Paul, 2019).

### **1.7.2.3 Expanding the Framework**

According to this concept, migration is seen as an interaction between the push effect at the starting location and the pull effect at the destination. People are compelled to leave their native location because of push effects, which are unfavourable influences. A dearth of employment possibilities and unfavourable weather conditions are also examples of push effects. On the other hand, pull effects are the excellent qualities of the location that entice people to visit. These positive elements pull people in. Examples of pull effects include improved economic growth, employment prospects, and increased salaries (Lee, 1966). The push-pull paradigm needs to provide a satisfactory explanation for the movement of persons.

Migration choices are influenced by various normative and psychological factors, which several academics have acknowledged. Within the context of a conversation on push-and-pull dynamics, Lee (1966) brought up the ideas of "intervening impediments" and "personal variables." Moon (1995) proposed the PPM model to explain people's migration. This model expands the Push-Pull model that incorporates the mooring notion. This study expands the past frameworks. Exploring new nuances of gig workers' participation, this study expands the past researchers' studies made (Sevilla, 2020); (Angelucci, 2020); (Keith et al., 2019); (Karlsson & Wranne, 2019); and (Paul, 2019).

### **1.7.2.4 Contributing to Limited Research**

This research contributes new knowledge to the existing body of literature by determining a mediating condition for the PPM caused by the lack of employment protection. In this research, the lack of employment protection is modelled as a moderator. This empirical support for the moderator boosts employees' motivation in the gig economy literature in Malaysia by segmenting whether gig workers who engage in the gig economy were retrenched, temporarily laid off, gone on unpaid leave, experienced a pay drop, or worked from home. This study contributes factors associating with the push-pull-mooring theory (Sevilla, 2020); (Angelucci, 2020); (Keith et al., 2019); (Karlsson & Wranne, 2019); and (Paul, 2019).

### **1.7.3 Practical Significance**

Gig economies are those economies in which people display their abilities, whether in incompetent work markets like Grab driving or as skilled experts like coders who offer their services on websites. People highlight their abilities in incompetent work markets like Grab driving and skilled expert work markets like coders who offer their services on websites. In any event, a significant number of workers are forced into the gig economy rather than choosing to participate in it voluntarily (Friedman, 2014). The Malaysian government gains a great deal economically from the gig economy, particularly in terms of expanding existing enterprises and contributing to the country's overall growth. As a result, the government has to investigate the predicament of the people working in the gig economy. Workers participating in the gig economy are not considered employees because of the industry's structure. Malaysia has to develop and implement appropriate legislation to protect both enterprises and independent contractors who participate in the gig economy. For instance, if there is a disagreement, gig workers such as those employed by Foodpanda should be protected in the Labour or Industrial Court (Paul, 2019).

#### **1.7.3.1 Establishing Reasonable Policies and Guidelines**

Investigating employees' experiences, considering the material impacts of the C19 epidemic, can enlighten many stakeholders on how circumstances for flexible working relationships may be improved over the long run. Employees' experiences during and after the C19 outbreak will supply online labour platforms and contracting businesses with knowledge of the workers' requirements. Platforms can use these insights to align their infrastructure and services better to achieve sustainability. In particular, this can be accomplished by minimising the depletion of workers through support, promoting their work performance, and thereby improving the quality of their workforce. Workers' experiences during the pandemic will highlight the risks and opportunities of flexible employment relationships and foster a deeper understanding of the potential role of stakeholders such as platforms, unions, and federal offices in driving sustainability in flexible employment relationships. For society, this will result in a better understanding of the potential role of these stakeholders in driving sustainability in flexible employment relationships. If feasible, this should result in the formulation and adoption of brand-new rules and regulations that assist employees engaged in flexible employment arrangements. This study helps establishing reasonable policies and guidelines to safeguard gig workers' employment (Seargeant, 2017), and (Rachmawati et al., 2022).

#### **1.7.3.2 Promulgating Laws**

Finally, yet importantly, workers with flexible employment will gain a greater awareness of the impact that their working conditions have on their health, as well as the impact those conditions have on their work and the development of their careers. This situation could lead to the empowerment of workers in the form of conscious self-care and the request for workers' rights. This study may promote the promulgation of the existing laws for gig workers (Seargeant, 2017), and (Rachmawati et al., 2022).

## 1.8 Assumptions of the Study

Participants in this research were individuals who worked in the Klang Valley as food delivery riders. The educational levels of these FDRs vary from those who have completed high school to those who have earned PhDs. Because of this, the research presumes that each participant will be truthful and honest throughout the process. Since this factor influenced the findings of the investigation, there is no question that the assumptions mentioned in this study served as the basis for reliable and legitimate research work.

## 1.9 Definition of Terms

This research identifies fourteen different constructs that will be employed during this investigation, and each one is discussed in detail. The definitions of the constructs are based on the frequently accepted meanings used by the researchers of past studies. **Table 1** depicts the precise definition that should be used in this study.

**Table 1: Terms and Definitions of the Study**

Terms	Definitions
<b>Economic Necessities (EN)</b>	Insolvency or circumstances where funds are lacking to maintain reasonable level of service and care (Manyika et al., 2016a), (Sevilla, 2020), (Bajwa et al., 2018), and (Graham et al., 2017).
<b>Limited Alternatives (LA)</b>	Actions which may reasonably be available to achieve the same or altered purpose of the proposed action, including the alternative of no action (Manyika et al., 2016a), (Sevilla, 2020), (Bajwa et al., 2018), (Graham et al., 2017).
<b>Extra Income (EI)</b>	Additional money that one earns or receive, as opposed to the money they have to spend or pay out (Keith et al., 2019), and (Angelucci, 2020).
<b>Flexibility (F)</b>	A strategy of responding to changing circumstances and expectations (Angelucci, 2020), (Keith et al., 2019), (Bajwa et al., 2018), and (Sevilla, 2020).
<b>Control and Autonomy (CA)</b>	The extent to which employees have control and discretion of how to conduct their work (Angelucci, 2020), (Keith et al., 2019), (Bajwa et al., 2018), and (Sevilla, 2020).
<b>Enjoyment (E)</b>	The state or process of taking pleasure or the action of possessing and benefiting from something at work (Angelucci, 2020), (Keith et al., 2019), (Bajwa et al., 2018), and (Sevilla, 2020).
<b>Lack of Employment Protection (LEP)</b>	An insufficiency, shortage, or absence of relevant laws governing ones' employment that is desired or required (Paul, 2019), (Rachmawati et al., 2022), and (Sargeant, 2017).
<b>Intention to Participate (ITP)</b>	The action or fact of intending to join or receive part of something (Huang et al., 2020).



## **1.10 Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis has been organised in a manner that is consistent from chapter to chapter in order to make it easier to read. In Chapter One, we discuss the historical context of the study, the issue statement, the research question, the research goals, the importance of the study, and the scope of the investigation. After that comes Chapter Two, which summarises the research that has been done on the subject of what motivates employees in the gig economy. In addition, it examines the elements that had a role in employees' engagement during the C19 pandemic. The conceptual foundation of the study is outlined in Chapter Three, as well as the formulation of hypotheses.

## **1.11 Chapter Summary**

This chapter lays out an organised strategy for the research that will be conducted for the subsequent chapters. This chapter explained the history of the study, emphasised the issue statements, enumerated the research aims and questions, and discussed the importance of the study. In addition to that, the definitions of the variables that were used in this research are dissected as well. The next chapter provides a summary of relevant prior research used in the design of the structure of this study.

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