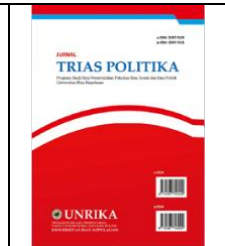


JURNAL TRIAS POLITIKA

2025, Vol 9. No. 2 : 186 – 200

e-ISSN: 2597-7423 / p-ISSN: 2597-7431

Journal Homepage : <https://www.journal.unrika.ac.id/index.php/jurnaltriaspolitika>**THE GIG ECONOMY ACROSS NATIONAL BORDERS: MOTIVATIONS AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS (A STUDY ON THE INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCES OF MAXIM DRIVERS IN ATAMBUA)****Adriana R. Fallo¹, Theny I. B. Kurniati Pah², Mariayani O. Rene^{3*}, Belandina L. Long⁴**^{1, 2, 3, 4} *Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Nusa Cendana, Indonesia*

Abstract : *The gig economy trend is increasing and growing in the general public, including in developing countries, especially in a cross-border context. Technological advancements, the growth of the platform-based economy, and changing work patterns and preferences have made gig workers one of the subjects of concern for researchers and governments. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of gig economy workers is very important, especially in the context of developing countries such as Indonesia, with reference to several important issues such as examining income, job security, and social support. This study examines the income, job security, and social support experienced by gig workers, specifically drivers, in the city of Atambua, a cross-border region in Indonesia. Utilising qualitative methods and purposive sampling, the research involved informants from diverse backgrounds. The findings reveal that supplementary income serves as the primary motivation for individuals engaging in gig work. Additionally, the flexibility in both scheduling and tasks has garnered strong community support for gig workers in Atambua, as their roles contribute significantly to employment absorption. However, job security remains a critical issue, as it is not accounted for within the daily wages earned by these workers. This underscores a notable vulnerability within the gig economy in Atambua.*

Keywords : *gig economy; maxim online drivers; atambua.*

Copyright © The Author(s) 2025.

Lisensi Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Internasional (CC BY)

**INTRODUCTION**

The advancement of technology information has transformed numerous global living patterns, including in the context of occupation. Refers to what has been said by (Malik et al., 2021), (Vadavi & Sharmiladevi, 2024) elaborating that technology information has fundamentally transformed the global labor framework, characterized by temporary employment, time flexibility, and possibilities for freelance work provided by digital platforms. Since the gig economy has expanded so rapidly, the term "gig economy" is now generally acknowledged in a number of different countries. The gig economy is digital labor framework wherein firms engage individuals as temporary workers without long-term commitments, and individuals work independently (Taylor et al., 2023). The relationship between the company as an employer and an individual as a worker is managed using digital media (Montgomery & Baglioni, 2021; Nugroho et al., 2023). Such activities are frequently carried out using digital platforms or apps that connect workers (or service providers) with their customers or client (Malik et al., 2021). One of the most common instances is app-based transportation services like Uber, Grab, and Maxim (Bidin et al., 2021; Novianto et al., 2021).

* Corresponding Author: mariayani.rene@staf.undana.ac.id

Article History :

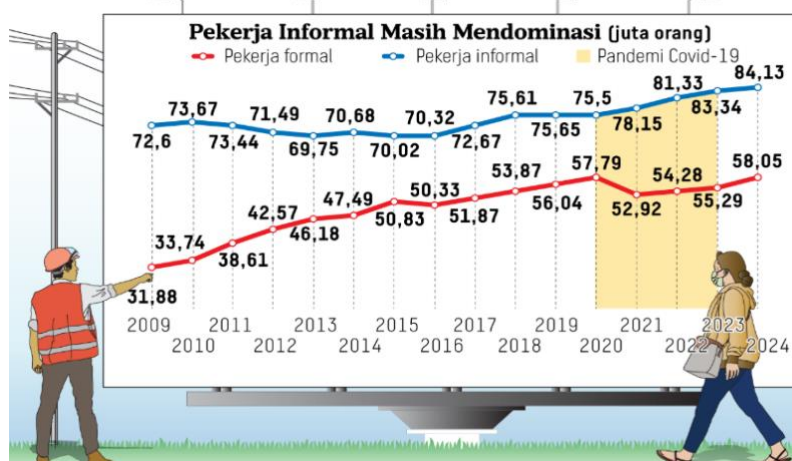
Received : (27052025)

Revised : (20072025)

Accepted : (27092025)

In developing countries, there is an increasing trend of structural change in employment towards informal employment, especially in the gig economy. According (Okunkova et al., 2023), developing countries have the highest total number of informal workers. This is also the case in Indonesia. Prasetyo, (2024) through Kompas daily, presents the number of Indonesian informal workers over time that continues to dominate the structure of labour, which continues to dominate the structure of employment, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Increasing number of informal workers in Indonesia



Source: Kompas daily (2024)

This means that the majority of Indonesia's population are informal workers, which is consistent with the findings of the Central Statistics Agency survey, reported in Sakernas (Subdit Statistik Ketenagakerjaan, 2024) which found that informal employment still dominates the employment structure in Indonesia, with 59.17% informal employment and 40.83% formal employment. With the high number of informal workers in Indonesia, there is a possibility that these people are freelancers. Furthermore, if we consider the information that was collected (Izzati, 2024) through Kata media, the number of informal workers in Indonesia is estimated to exceed 2.3 million people, consisting of 1.23 million who work in the transportation industry and around 1.1 million in the service sector. Sakti (2021) through Kompas Daily also presents data on the increase in the number of digital transportation platform partners in Indonesia, in 2018, the number of Indonesian transportation partners was 537 thousand people, which increased significantly in 2021 to 4 million people. The increase in the number of online transportation partners is also supported by the increase in ride-hailing companies in Indonesia, such as Grab, Gojek, Indrive, and Maxim. These ride-hailing companies have also been operating in other locations in Indonesia.

Taxi Maxim is an international ride-hailing company that provides online transport services. Maxim has been operating in Indonesia since 2018, offering services such as vehicle booking (by motorbike and car), goods delivery, food and merchandise delivery, cargo, cleaning services, and laundry. Maxim's services are currently available in more than 200 places in Indonesia, including in Atambua City in Belu Regency, NTT Province, which is a border city between Indonesia and Timor Leste. According to (Ngara, 2022) in Fajar NTT online media, the head of Maxim Atambua Subdivision said that the presence of Maxim's online transport service has the potential to significantly change Atambua economic situation. The new Maxim service in Atambua includes online transport for cars and motorbikes, delivery of goods, and food delivery. Maxim's ride-hailing service in Atambua currently has around 200 car and motorbike drivers, but only a few are actually operating. The research team obtained information from the drivers, as Maxim Atambua management was unable to provide information due to lack of authorization. Despite being considered capable of providing economic benefits, the rapid growth of online transportation companies in Indonesia as part of

the gig economy is not without problems. As stated by Novianto et al., (2021); Keban dan Hernawan, (2021) the increasing number of gig workers in Indonesia is not proportional to the increase in justice and welfare for gig workers. Furthermore, it is mentioned that gig workers are underpaid, work longer hours than usual, have no social security, and have no reasonable long-term income security (Nahar et al., 2022); (Joshi et al., 2024) Gig workers are exposed to higher economic risks than traditional workers, as they do not have access to social benefits (Kamarudin & Arif, 2024).

The expansion of online transportation companies in Indonesia, as a part of gig economy, while deemed capable of yielding economic advantages, as (Novianto et al., 2021);(Keban & Hernawan, 2021) have demonstrated, the gig economy in Indonesia is not without its challenges; the rise in the number of gig workers does not correspond with advancements in welfare and justice for gig workers. Moreover, it is observed that gig workers typically receive low payment, exceed normal working hours, lack social protection assurances, and face uncertainty regarding income sustainability in the long term (Nahar et al., 2022); (Joshi et al., 2024). Gig workers are more susceptible to economic risks than conventional workers due to their lack of access to these social benefits (Kamarudin & Arif, 2024).

In the past five years, numerous studies concerning the gig economy have been published, focusing on themes such as: the influence of the information technology revolution on the gig economy Mohanty & Jethy (2023); Mimi & Mani (2024); (Soni et al (2025), the flexibility and accessibility of the gig economy that offers opportunities for diverse groups, particularly women and students (Joshi et al., 2024), gig work that corresponds with the intrinsic traits of Generation Z workers (Basid & Atmaja, 2022) (Permana et al., 2023); (Kurian & Bindu Madhavi, 2024); (Osorio & Madero, 2025), ethical considerations and the well-being of gig workers (Lata et al., 2023); (Joshi et al., 2024)), and the distribution and characteristics of gig workers in Indonesia. The findings of this study specifically highlight various debates related to the gig economy, such as the economic impact and welfare of gig workers (Putri et al., 2023); (Ayu, 2024), limitations in social protection, regulation, and worker status (Yoel & Hasym, 2021) (Ran & Zhao, 2023); (Indra & Nawangsari, 2025), the impact of algorithms in controlling gig workers (Wood et al., 2019); (Muldoon & Raekstad, 2023);(Kadolkar et al., 2024);(Chen & Chen, 2025), comparisons between the gig economy and the formal economy (Kaine & Josserand, 2019); (Fourie, 2023) and the gig economy's sustainability and resilience (Basavaraj et al., 2023); (Sankararaman, 2024).

The various discussions indicate that there are still gaps in research on employee welfare, especially in regional studies. Research on the employment welfare of gig workers in regional areas still has many gaps that need to be addressed. Some of the main gaps include limited access to employment, inadequate social protection, limited education and training, and regulatory differences between urban and rural areas. Therefore, it is crucial to conduct more in-depth research in underserved areas to develop more inclusive policies and address worker well-being issues with a more holistic and relevant approach, particularly in the Indonesian context. Most research on the gig economy in Indonesia focuses on Java, which represents Eastern Indonesia (Malik et al., 2021; Nugroho et al., 2023). Therefore, studies focusing on specific regions in Eastern Indonesia, particularly border areas, remain limited, despite Eastern Indonesia having a unique context, especially in border areas with diverse economic and social dynamics (Asih et al., 2019; Permana et al., 2023).

This study explores more into the gig economy in Eastern Indonesia, specifically in Atambua City as a border area, by investigating the motivations of gig workers, in this case Maxim drivers in Atambua Belu Regency, and how this impacts their economy. Understanding of the motivations and welfare of gig workers in the context of the cross-border gig economy is still limited. This study will analyse the reasons why Maxim drivers participate in the gig economy, the nature of their work, and its economic consequences. In this study, we will explore the

income, job security, and social support received by gig workers. The results of this study are expected to provide a better understanding of the gig economy in a cross-border context. Furthermore, the findings from this study are expected to contribute to a better understanding of the gig economy in cross-border locations. This can be used as a starting point for developing more inclusive regulations that support gig drivers. These findings can also be used by stakeholders, such as local governments, to design various policy frameworks as a basis for managing the gig economy and also help businesses improve the working and economic conditions of gig drivers.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative approach, especially in the case study method, because it is carried out to understand more comprehensively the problem to be studied (Zainal, 2016); (Yin, 2017). The informants in this study were selected through a purposeful selection technique, in which the informants were selected on purpose because they were considered to be the ones who understood the research topic (Creswell, 2018). Informants in this study consisted of fifteen Maxim drivers, the manager of Maxim Atambua, the Head of Transportation Supervision of Belu Regency, three staff of the Belu Regency Transportation Office, two staff of the Belu Regency Investment and One-Stop Integrated Service (DPMPTSP), academic and political actors, and the public who use Maxim in Atambua City. Data for the study was collected through several methods starting from semi-structured interviews; we interviewed our informants either face-to-face or using WhatsApp online. We recorded and transcribed these interviews. By receiving the perspectives of different actors, we hope to be able to get a more diverse perspective and reduce the potential for any bias. We also do qualitative observation, where we observe the activities of Maxim drivers in Atambua as the main informants of the research. And to complete the data, we also collected qualitative documents in the form of public documents related to Maxim in Atambua, both from related agencies and from news reports through online media. The series of data collection methods are in accordance with what is recommended by (Creswell, 2018) regarding qualitative data collection procedures.

The data was analysed in a number of steps using NVivo 12 software. First, we classified the qualitative information collected during the interview process, with the aim of identifying descriptive patterns that we labelled and coded. We categorized the codes according to the shared meaning of the interview data (Boyatzis, 1998); (Wong, 2008). Second, we organised the code patterns we analysed into themes such as driver motivation and driver welfare to support a more comprehensive analysis of each theme. Thirdly, we analysed the identified themes and organised them into theoretical dimensions. To ensure the information we present is valid, we also conducted a series of data validity starting from ensuring the consistency of the coding process and paying attention to the analytical notes of each theme analysed so as to emphasise the objectivity of the analysis of the research results. Then also triangulate between various sources of data collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Motivation to be Maxim driver

Maxim has been operating in Indonesia since 2018. For the city of Atambua, Maxim began operating in 2022. Since its operation, more than 200 people have registered to become drivers, but at the time of data collection in the field, It was found that only 18 accounts were active. The large number of registered applicants shows that there is interest from the Atambua community to get engaged in this business. According to the informants, people in Atambua who have regular occupations, such as civil servants, also register as drivers, which is one of the reasons why only a small percentage of registered drivers actually complete their tasks. In

addition, it was found that even though unactive drivers, they register to get an account first. This phenomenon is intriguing because the enthusiasm of applicants registering as Maxim drivers shows their willingness to take advantage of and become part of Maxim. Fuchs (2008) defines motivation as "situations that describe human behavior and influence the direction, level, and type of change in patterns of human behavior and action." Understanding a person's desire to engage in freelance work, such as ride-hailing drivers, is critical in order to identify and analyze the elements that motivate individuals (informants from varied backgrounds) to take on or engage in freelance employment. According to the research, various factors motivate the Atambua people to become Maxim drivers in the gig economy.

1. Earn additional income

Increased public demands require the middle class to have more than one source of income. The community takes advantage of the various job opportunities offered to earn additional income, one of which is becoming a gig worker. This was also felt by the people of Atambua. Since Maxim Company has been operating in Atambua, they have shown their enthusiasm to participate by registering as Maxim drivers. Information from the drivers shows that their main motivation for becoming Maxim drivers is to earn additional income.

"Because I'm running a broiler business on the Malacca cross border Malaka" (1/D)

"I became a Maxim driver to make a side income because my parents take care of the field in the village (4/D)

"I joined this Maxim, to make a side income to help my parents, while I'm still in school" (5/D)

"I am an employee, but since maxim was available, I registered from the beginning, my income is enough to save money and also part of the capital to buy another vehicle" (12/D)

The informants explained that in addition to working as Maxim drivers, they also had other jobs that were their main source of income, such as managing rice fields, working as employees, and still being students. The expectation of earn additional income is a factor that motivates gig workers. Furthermore, it was mentioned that their income from their main job as farmers and employees is not enough to fulfil their needs for a month, especially for drivers who are married and have children. The management of Maxim Atambua also stated the Atambua community's motivation for becoming Maxim drivers.

"Of course, everyone wants to earn extra income, especially now that we have many needs. Indeed, one of Maxim's original intentions in Atambua City was not only to facilitate community mobilisation but also to provide additional income" (1/M)

Earn additional income as a motivation to become a Maxim driver is also reinforced by the social demands of the community, as stated by the informant:

"We live in this society; there are many necessities, both during marriage ceremonies and sorrowful events, so at least there must be additional income" (8/ D)

"I first joined to be Maxim driver from an offer from a friend, because he said the income was high enough, so i was interested, over the past few months, I've been able to save money to build a house"(14/D)

The Maxim drivers' goal to earn additional income indicates the gig economy's potential for the Atambua community. With the additional income earned, drivers are able to fulfil necessities in the community, such as a wedding or the death of a family member. The additional income also gives them the opportunity to save money to build a house and buy a vehicle.

2. Work-time flexibility

One of the main advantages of gig work is the ability to work with flexible hours. Gig workers have more control over their schedules, so they can organize their working hours and work locations as needed. This can help gig workers to balance work and personal life. The findings of a study on the gig economy among Maxim drivers in Atambua City also reveal that the flexibility of working hours is one of the factors motivating them to become gig workers, as stated by the informants:

“As Maxim drivers, we manage our own time, so there are no binding contracts. That's why we want to be Maxim drivers” (12/D)

“The work is easy, and we can set our own hours. If we want, we can work from morning until evening, but if we are tired, we can take a break.” (7/D)

“So, being an online Maxim driver is an easy job, if we want, we just need to activate the app early in the morning. But if we have other commitments, we can start in the afternoon or evening. This means that we can manage our own time.” (15/D)

When drivers in Atambua, whose main job is farming, choose to become Maxim drivers, they consider flexible working hours to be an added benefit. During flexible working hours, they can work at their main job or do other activities, so they can do both without interfering with each other. Farmers, for example, can use the Maxim app after working in their fields. Mungkasa,(2020) argues that there are various types of working flexibility: 1) Fixed working hours, a type of work flexibility that lets workers choose their own schedules while still fulfilling the company's 40-hour weekly minimum requirement, 2) Flexible working hours, a system that permits workers to put in different amounts of time each day as long as they fulfill the weekly requirement of 40 hours, 3) Variable working hours: under this arrangement, employees are free to choose their own working hours while the corporation establishes the working hours (Huda & Ekhsan, 2023). Referring to these three forms of working time flexibility, it is understood that gig work, especially for online drivers, has a different system of working time flexibility, where there are no specific standard working hours, and it is entirely up to the driver to determine their working hours. This is also the case for Maxim drivers in Atambua, who feel they have the authority and freedom to determine their working hours.

3. Work Flexibility

One of the most valuable aspects of the gig economy concept is work flexibility. For some, the gig economy is the future of work, giving them more control over their time and resources. Employees can choose projects that match their interests and skills, select their preferred workplace, and determine their own work schedule. This allows them to achieve a balance between work and personal life, which can be difficult to achieve in jobs with fixed working hours. The flexibility is also beneficial for those who wish to pursue further education or develop their own businesses. Flexible work is explained by Maxim drivers in Atambua with the following statement:

“I think being a Maxim driver is an easy job. After all, there aren't many rules. The only rule is that we can't carry more than seven passengers. If a sudden order comes in and we refuse it, we can't do that. We have to follow the route on the app. We can also decide for ourselves how many hours we want to work each day” (15/D)

“This job is easy; we can sometimes take days off, so calculate 20 working days in a month. That's not including money for petrol and vehicle maintenance.”(10/D)

Information from drivers shows that job flexibility is a factor that motivates them to become Maxim drivers. This data suggests that job flexibility is a factor motivating them to become Maxim drivers. When becoming a Maxim driver, no special knowledge or abilities are required. Easy-to-understand and non-binding rules, such as flexible work schedules, are also

considered because they allow drivers to set their own work hours and take time off. They generally have different working hours according to their individual conditions, as shown in Table 2. The flexibility of this job also allows them to do other work, as mentioned earlier. Drivers generally do Maxim as a side job to earn additional income because they already have a main job, so the flexibility offered by Maxim is very attractive and motivating for them.

The Implications of the Gig Economy on Individual Economies

Artificial intelligence and technological advances have provided humans with new opportunities, especially in the employment sector. The labor market has been transformed by a new system known as the gig economy. Various segments of society, both in developed and developing countries, are encouraged to join this system, including Maxim drivers in Atambua City. The advantages of additional income flexibility in location and working hours are the main motivations for gig workers.

Our analysis of the economic impact focuses on several aspects; first is a comparison between drivers' income from their main job and their income as Maxim drivers. Second, the working hours as a Maxim driver, and the last one is safety guarantees for drivers. These three aspects are expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the economic impact on drivers, not only in terms of income but also their well-being.

Table 1. Classification of Maxim drivers by income from their main job

Other jobs besides being a Maxim driver	Driver Age	amount	Marital Status	Income/Month
Farmers	30-35 years	4	Marriage and having children	1.000.000 - 2.000.000
Convenience store owner	30-35 years	2	Marriage and having children	1.000.000 - 2.000.000
Poultry farm	28-40 years	3	Marriage and having children	1.500.000 - 2.500.000
Student	17-20 years	4	Unmarried	-
Drivers of Rental Cars	30 years	1	Marriage and having children	2.000.000
ASN	38 years	1	Marriage and having children	3.000.000

Source: research documentation (2024)

As mentioned before, the opportunity to earn additional income is one of the main motivations for becoming a Maxim driver. This is confirmed by the fact that drivers' main income is still not enough to cover their daily needs, especially for those who are married and have kids. Meanwhile, it is known that the majority of Maxim drivers earn around IDR 200,000 in daily income from their work. This income fulfills the needs of drivers who are married with children as well as those who are not yet married, while also allowing them to save money. With a simple calculation, assuming that drivers work an average of 20 days per month, their income is 200,000 multiplied by 20 days = Rp 4,000,000. This amount is relatively high compared to the minimum wage in Belu Regency in 2024, which is IDR 2,186,826 (Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi NTT, 2024). Second, we identified the working hours of Maxim drivers in Atambua City. The results from 15 drivers interviewed indicated that the majority of them worked between 6 and 10 hours per day, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Length of time working as Maxim drivers in Atambua

work duration	Quantity
5-6 hours	5 people
6-10 hours	8 people
>10 hours	2 people

Source: research documentation (2024)

Drivers clarify that they do not always drive during their full working hours because there is a time lag between orders, even if the shortest working hours are five hours and the longest are more than ten. They either rest or engage in other activities during this period. Third, we identify the assurances for drivers' health and safety. Some drivers mentioned information about driver health and safety insurance.

"I personally don't know anything about health and safety insurance, because when I first registered, I didn't receive any clear information. A friend mentioned it once, but there was no follow-up" (2/D)
"at the beginning We got the information, but for the next stage I didn't understand how the administration process" (6/D)

Most drivers are unaware of the safety insurance provided by the company. Some drivers admit that they have received information about work safety insurance but do not understand the management process and how to claim. Drivers' lack of knowledge about work safety guarantees is also confirmed by an academic informant.

"For the safety of gig workers, especially online transportation drivers, this is still a problem in our country and also in several developing countries, because there are no regulations specifically addressing this issue" (1/A)

The findings of this study also indicate that the local government has not prioritized the safety of Maxim drivers in Atambua City. We have verified the licenses and regulations issued by the Belu Regency Government to Maxim, which operates in the area. However, our research into two street-level agencies, the Belu Regency Investment and Integrated Services Agency (DPMPTSP) and the Belu Regency Transportation Agency, shows that there are no regulations regarding Maxim in Atambua. Additionally, Belu Regency Investment and Integrated Services Agency (DPMPTSP) currently does not have specific data on corporate business permissions at the regional level.

Discussion

The passion of those registering to become Maxim drivers in Atambua demonstrates a high level of interest in this position. As highlighted (Ostoj, 2021); (Joshi et al., 2024) the gig economy platform has changed the structure of the labor market. It's also a sign that people in Atambua are trying to make more money by taking advantage of gig jobs like Maxim. This is one of the most common reasons for people in Indonesia Indonesia (Permana et al., 2023); (Ayu, 2024) and various cities in other countries, especially developing countries, to get involved in gig work (Mimi & Mani, 2024); (Jumbri et al., 2024);(Yang & Panyagometh, 2024).

The enthusiasm of the Atambua community for gig work such as being a Maxim driver is also encouraged by the change in public perception of Maxim drivers, who are no longer seen as ordinary motorbike drivers but as more intelligent due to their use of the app (Fielbaum & Tirachini, 2021);(Perez, 2023). This shows that online drivers are modern workers who are in line with the contemporary era, as seen in many other big cities. The motivation to earn additional income by becoming a Maxim driver also shows that their main income as farmers, ranchers, and civil servants still isn't enough to cover their living costs. The phenomenon of engaging in gig work for additional income also occurs in various other regions (Allon et al., 2023) (Fielbaum & Tirachini, 2021); (Permana et al., 2022) especially for those who have lower incomes (Jackson, 2024), Being a gig worker, such as a driver, is considered more convenient for fulfilling daily needs. On the other hand, online drivers in Atambua realize that they need additional income. To meet the costs of various traditional rituals in the community, such as weddings or funerals, having additional income is absolutely necessary. This phenomenon also happens in other areas in Indonesia (Putri et al., 2023); (Ayu, 2024).

Compared to their income from their main jobs, the majority of drivers admit that their income as Maxim drivers is sometimes higher, which has led some of them to have other financial ambitions such as building a house and owning a private vehicle as a sign of social success. This is a common phenomenon among Indonesia's middle class today (Ayu, 2024). Additional income is really important for middle class to cover their basic needs when those costs continue to rise (Faisal et al., 2019). They also can save money if have additional income (Dartanto et al., 2019). The second motivation is flexible working hours, which is one of the main advantages of gig work (Kaine & Josserand, 2019); (Siti Nur Aisyah Muhyi et al., 2023); (Joshi et al., 2024). For Maxim drivers in Atambua, flexibility in working hours is another motivation for becoming a driver. They are able to choose their own schedule and work from any location because they have control over their working hours. This facilitates the balancing of gig workers' personal and professional lives.

Employees who have flexible work schedules feel empowered to decide when they begin and end their workdays (Lehdonvirta, 2018). They consider themselves to be their own bosses and independent contractors (Wolf et al., 2025). Atambua Maxim drivers assert that they have the freedom to switch the app on and off whenever they think they have earned enough for the day or when they are exhausted. The findings of this study are consistent with those of Huda & Ekhsan (2023) who found that one of the variables influencing the job satisfaction of Gojek drivers in the Jabotabek is the flexibility of working hours. Drivers are free to choose their own work and time-off schedules (Fikri Aziz & Athoillah, 2023). Working time flexibility also has a positive impact on online transportation drivers, as it motivates them to work without feeling overburdened (Putra et al., 2022).

The flexibility of working hours also allows Maxim drivers to engage in a variety of other activities, such as picking up and dropping off children at school or participating in social activities such as family gatherings or traditional ceremonies, without feeling constrained by corporate rules or working hours, this situation is different for online drivers (Maxim) in Atambua City compared to gig workers in other places, according to Lehdonvirta (2018) who demonstrated that workers' authority over the flexibility of gig labor is limited by job availability and their degree of reliance. Furthermore, Reynolds et al (2024) found that gig workers who only depend on platform-based gig labour are more vulnerable to manipulation and typically do not have flexibility in their working hours.

Work flexibility is one of the gig economy's attractive features. Gig workers are free to choose the tasks, location, and hours of employment that best fit their skills and interests. This is the distinguishing characteristic between formal employment and gig work (Kaine & Josserand, 2019); (Fourie, 2023). Flexible working conditions, such as easy-to-follow tasks, unambiguous and unrestrictive work standards, and the ability to choose where they work, are another factor that motivates Maxim drivers in Atambua. The flexibility offered by Maxim also makes this job accessible to various groups of people. In Atambua, drivers come from various age groups, including students. Joshi et al.(2024) explain that the flexibility and economic opportunities offered by the gig economy provide opportunities for various groups, including students who are part of Generation Z, to work (Basid & Atmaja, 2022) (Permana et al., 2023); (Kurian & Bindu Madhavi, 2024); (Osorio & Madero, 2025). This flexibility is particularly helpful for those who plan to finish their school, launch their own businesses, or expand already-existing ones. For instance, Maxim Atambua drivers can keep operating Maxim while carrying out their main jobs.

It is crucial to remember that, despite its many advantages—such as workplace flexibility that promotes gig workers—other studies have also criticized this system of work, pointing out that management companies have positioned gig workers as partners, allowing them to evade fulfilling their basic rights (Keban, Hernawan, 2021). Gig economy refers to a system in which companies hire employees to work on short-term projects. Companies that use the gig economy

system can offer lower employment costs because they can hire individuals with the same qualifications as permanent employees without providing additional benefits such as health insurance (Yoel & Hasym, 2021); (Ran & Zhao, 2023), living expenses, and retirements benefits (Indra & Nawangsari, 2025).

Gig workers are often attracted to this type of work because of its flexibility and financial benefits, such as the opportunity to earn additional income. However, this can distract them from other factors, such as job security, legal protection, or even control over hidden and unrecognised work. Gig workers, particularly those from lower socioeconomic classes, often focus only on financial benefits (Jackson, 2024); (Singh & Awasthi, 2025). Similarly, Maxim drivers in Atambua City are motivated primarily by financial benefits. According to their income, Maxim drivers in Atambua earn relatively more than the minimum wage in Belu Regency in 2024 and their income from their main jobs, as explained earlier. This income provides for the necessities of both married and unmarried, while also enabling them to invest. The rise in income for Maxim drivers in Atambua City is in line with the argument put forward by Ayyubi & Asrofi (2023) that gig work often provides more dynamic prospects for additional income.

This study's analysis indicates that Maxim drivers in Atambua are not knowledgeable about health insurance and companies' obligations to employees. Even if they were aware of these issues, their limited knowledge and authority prevent them from fighting for their rights. Although some drivers have obtained information about work safety insurance through the app, they do not know how to claim it. The drivers' lack of knowledge is also a result of poor communication between Maxim Atambua management and drivers. Moreover, the government of Belu Regency still does not have a specific policy regarding the management of online transportation that can be used as a foundation to provide work safety for drivers. The existence of a policy can clarify the status of drivers, advocate for a more equitable and sustainable employment framework, increase legal certainty, and strengthen trust in the digital transportation industry (Christiyono et al., 2024).

According to (The SMERU Research Institute, 2023) there are two principles that can be used to provide protection for gig workers: simplification, which is an effort to ensure that social protection schemes, including social security, are well publicised and easily accessible, and collective action, which aims to ensure that stakeholders provide protection and assistance schemes to help reduce gig workers' vulnerability. The results of this study also show that Maxim drivers in Atambua are unaware of the existence of algorithmic management techniques that control and manage their work. They only focus on the convenience and authority to manage their work time and location provided by Maxim; this is because of their lack of knowledge. According to Wood et al.(2019), algorithmic management tends to offer flexibility and autonomy, but these control mechanisms can also result in underpayment, social isolation, irregular working hours, fatigue, sleep deprivation, and exhaustion. Muldoon & Raekstad (2023) explain that algorithms can facilitate new forms of domination by maintaining socio-technical systems in which corporations and management dominate workers. This algorithm is therefore a double-edged sword because it has the possibility to subtly strengthen the positive correlation between platform work flexibility and task performance through emotional trust but also subtly erode the positive correlation between platform work compensation and task performance through emotional trust.

The cross-border gig economy provides significant benefits to society, both for consumers of online driver services and the drivers themselves. For drivers, factors such as higher daily earnings than their regular income from their main job, flexibility in working hours, Ease of carrying out the job, simple and non-binding work norms, and the ability to choose their work location are what motivate them to engage in this industry. Even though it has an economic impact in the form of increased income, some aspects related to the welfare

of Maxim drivers in Atambua, such as safety guarantees, have not yet been fulfilled. This problem is exacerbated by a lack of communication with management and the non-existence of local government policies on online transportation management that can provide a basis for ensuring driver safety at work. Based on these issues, this study is expected to provide a starting point for local governments to develop policies that can serve as a legal basis for both the management of operating companies and the assurance of the well-being of drivers.

This study is still quite limited in its ability to provide a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the cross-border gig economy in eastern Indonesia because it is restricted to one city in the country's eastern border region and only looks at one ride-hailing company. Therefore, it is recommended that future researchers expand the scope of their research, both in terms of regional context and companies that manage the gig economy.

CONCLUSION

The cross-border gig economy provides significant benefits to society, both for consumers of online driver services and the drivers themselves. For drivers, factors such as higher daily earnings than their regular income from their main job, flexibility in working hours, Ease of carrying out the job, simple and non-binding work norms, and the ability to choose their work location are what motivate them to engage in this industry. Even though it has an economic impact in the form of increased income, some aspects related to the welfare of Maxim drivers in Atambua, such as safety guarantees, have not yet been fulfilled. This problem is exacerbated by a lack of communication with management and the non-existence of local government policies on online transportation management that can provide a basis for ensuring driver safety at work. Based on these issues, this study is expected to provide a starting point for local governments to develop policies that can serve as a legal basis for both the management of operating companies and the assurance of the well-being of drivers.

This study is still quite limited in its ability to provide a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the cross-border gig economy in eastern Indonesia because it is restricted to one city in the country's eastern border region and only looks at one ride-hailing company. Therefore, it is recommended that future researchers expand the scope of their research, both in terms of regional context and companies that manage the gig economy.

REFERENCES

- Allon, G., Cohen, M. C., & Sinchaisri, W. P. (2023). The Impact of Behavioral and Economic Drivers on Gig Economy Workers. *Manufacturing and Service Operations Management*, 25(4), 1376–1393. <https://doi.org/10.1287/msom.2023.1191>
- Asih, S. N., Sucahyo, Y. G., Gandhi, A., & Ruldeviyani, Y. (2019). Inhibiting motivating factors on online gig economy client in Indonesia. *2019 International Conference on Advanced Computer Science and Information Systems, ICACSIS 2019*. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ICACSIS47736.2019.8979703>
- Ayu, R. (2024). Role of Gig Economy Participation in Shaping Worker Economic Security in Indonesia. *International Journal of Sociology*, 8(3), 14–23. <https://doi.org/10.47604/ijs.2830>
- Ayyubi, M. S. Al, & Asrofi, D. A. N. (2023). Vulnerability And Well-Being Of The Gig Economy WorkersKerentanan dan Kesejahteraan pada Pekerja Ekonomi Gig. *National Conference of West Java Economiic*, 1–13. <https://wj.es.or.id/prosiding/index.php/cfp/article/view/23%0Ahttps://wj.es.or.id/prosiding/index.php/cfp/article/download/23/23>
- Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi NTT. (2024). *Upah Minimum Kabupaten/Kota (UMR) Sebulan (Rupiah), 2024*. <https://ntt.bps.go.id/id>
- Basavaraj, N., Foutz, N. Z., & Li, B. (2023). Resilience of Gig Economy during Economic

- Downturn: Insights from Location Big Data. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 1–48. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4553546>
- Basid, R., & Atmaja, J. (2022). *The Effect of Generation Z Workforce Characteristics on The Gig Economy with Work Life Integration As a Mediator*. <https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.31-3-2022.2320670>
- Bidin, A., Radzi, M. S. N. M., Harun, N., Salleh, K., & Hamid, N. ‘Ashikin. (2021). Legal Protections of Gig Workers in Employment. *Law, Politics & Society: The Unravelling of Malaysia and Indonesia Potentiality*.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development. In *Transforming Qualitative Information Thematic Analysis and Code Development*.
- Chen, J., & Chen, M. (2025). Humanized algorithms matter! From enabling social exchange factors to building affective trust mechanism for facilitating gig workers’ task performance. *Personnel Review*, 54(2). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-07-2024-0688>
- Christiyono, T. C., Tohari, M., & Suryandari, W. D. (2024). Reorientation of regulation to accommodate the status of online driver workers. *Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Science*, 4(2), 89–96. <https://doi.org/10.55324/ijoms.v4i2.1030>
- Creswell, J. W. (2018). Reserch Design Quslitative , Quantitative and Mixed methods Approaches. In *Sage* (Issue 9). <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Dartanto, T., Moeis, F. R., & Otsubo, S. (2019). Intragenerational Economic Mobility in Indonesia : A Transition from Poverty to Middle Class during. *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, 0(0), 1–57. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00074918.2019.1657795>
- Faisal, A. L. F., Sucahyo, Y. G., Ruldeviyani, Y., & Gandhi, A. (2019). Discovering Indonesian Digital Workers in Online Gig Economy Platforms. *2019 International Conference on Information and Communications Technology (ICOIACT)*, 554–559.
- Fielbaum, A., & Tirachini, A. (2021). The sharing economy and the job market: the case of ride-hailing drivers in Chile. *Transportation*, 48(5), 2235–2261. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11116-020-10127-7>
- Fikri Aziz, Z., & Athoillah, M. (2023). Analisis Pengaruh Fleksibilitas Jam Kerja, Upah, Usia, Jenis Kelamin, Dan Pendidikan Menjadi Pengemudi Ojek Daring Di Kota Malang. *Journal of Development Economic and Social Studies*, 2(3), 620–631. <https://doi.org/10.21776/jdess.2023.02.3.13>
- Fourie, D. (2023). The individual in the gig society: is the gig economy exploitative of the informal economy, or a means of empowerment? *Acta Academica*, 55(2), 154–169. <https://doi.org/10.38140/aa.v55i2.7725>
- Fuchs, A. (2008). Motivation. In *In: Kirch, W. (eds) Encyclopedia of Public Health*. Springer. https://doi.org/doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-5614-7_2238
- Huda, F., & Ekhsan, M. (2023). Pengaruh Fleksibilitas Kerja Terhadap Kinerja Driver Online Yang Dimediasi Kepuasan Kerja. *Dynamic Management Journal*, 7(3), 480–494. <http://dx.doi.org/10.31000/dmj.v7i3>
- Indra, & Nawangsari, S. A. (2025). Legal Protection for Gig Economy Workers from the Perspective of Labor Law in Indonesia. *Hakim: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Dan Sosial*, 3(1), 937–954. <https://doi.org/10.51903/hakim.v3i1.2289>
- Izzati, N. R. (2024). *Estimasi Jumlah Pekerja Gig Economy di Indonesia. 2019*.
- Jackson, B. A. (2024). Motivated by Money? Class, Gender, Race, and Workers’ Accounts of Platform-Based Gig Work Participation. *Rsf*, 10(4), 191–206. <https://doi.org/10.7758/RSF.2024.10.4.09>
- Joshi, A., Jain, S., & Gupta, P. K. (2024). Challenges and impact of the gig economy. *Sustainable Economies*, 2(2), 1–10.

- Jumbri, I. A., Yin Chin, T., Sharif, S. M., Ismail, A. F. M. F., Widjajanti, K., Kurnianingrum, D., & Karmagatri, M. (2024). Exploring Work Motivation in Malaysia's Gig Economy: A Study on Millennials' Involvement and Influencing Factors. *International Journal of Academic Research in Economics and Management Sciences*, 13(4), 231–252. <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarems/v13-i4/22970>
- Kadolkar, I., Kepes, S., & Subramony, M. (2024). Algorithmic management in the gig economy: A systematic review and research integration. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, December 2022, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2831>
- Kaine, S., & Josserand, E. (2019). The organisation and experience of work in the gig economy. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 61(4), 479–501. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022185619865480>
- Kamarudin, D., & Arif. (2024). Ekonomi Gig: Peluang Dan Tantangan Di Era Kerja Fleksibel. *Currency: Jurnal Keuangan Dan Perbankan Syariah*, 03, 362–373.
- Keban, Hernawan, N. (2021). Domestifikasi dan Beban Ganda Pekerja Perempuan dalam Ekonomi Gig di Indonesia. In *Menyoal Kerja Layak dan Adil dalam Ekonomi Gig di Indonesia*. <https://igpa.map.ugm.ac.id/2021/12/07/unduh-buku-menyaoal-kerja-layak-dan-adil-dalam-ekonomi-gig-di-indonesia/%0A%0A>
- Kurian, J. S., & Bindu Madhavi, N. (2024). Navigating the gig economy: exploring challenges and motivations for the wellbeing of Gen Y and Gen Z gig workers. *Cogent Psychology*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2024.2357458>
- Lata, L. N., Burdon, J., & Reddel, T. (2023). New tech, old exploitation: Gig economy, algorithmic control and migrant labour. *Sociology Compass*, 17(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.13028>
- Lehdonvirta, V. (2018). Flexibility in the gig economy: managing time on three online piecework platforms. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 33(1), 13–29. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.12102>
- Malik, R., Visvizi, A., & Skrzek-lubasińska, M. (2021). The gig economy: Current issues, the debate, and the new avenues of research. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 13(9). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13095023>
- Mimi, A., & Mani, L. (2024). Gravitating the Gig Economy for Reshaping the Careers Using Technological Platform in the Digital Age in an Emerging Economy. *Journal of Information Systems and Informatics*, 6(4), 3129–3161. <https://doi.org/10.51519/journalisi.v6i4.966>
- Mohanty, S., & Jethy, J. (2023). Digitalisation: an Enabler of Gig Economy. *International Journal for Research Trends and Innovation (Www.Ijrti.Org)*, 8(3), 333. www.ijrti.org
- Montgomery, T., & Baglioni, S. (2021). Defining the gig economy: platform capitalism and the reinvention of precarious work. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 41(9–10). <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-08-2020-0400>
- Muldoon, J., & Raekstad, P. (2023). Algorithmic domination in the gig economy. *European Journal of Political Theory*, 22(4), 587–607. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14748851221082078>
- Nahar, L., Jasmine, L., & Tim, B. (2022). *New tech , old exploitation : Gig economy , algorithmic control and migrant labour*. August, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.13028>
- Ngara, V. (2022). *Transportasi Maxim Siap Dukung Aktivitas Masyarakat Atambua*. Fajar NTT. <https://fajarntt.com/2022/12/28/transportasi-maxim-siap-dukung-aktivitas-masyarakat-di-atambua/>
- Novianto, A., Wulansari, A. D., & Hernawan, A. (2021). Riset: empat alasan kemitraan Gojek, Grab, hingga Maxim merugikan para Ojol. *The Conversation*, August.
- Nugroho, J., Hardian, V., Ismail, D. H., & Dwi Raharjo, J. S. (2023). Economic GIG In

- Indonesia: Challenges And Opportunities For Gen Z And Milenials. *Best Journal of Administration and Management*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.56403/bejam.v2i1.112>
- Okunkova, E. A., Kosorukova, I. V., Lazareva, T. G., Korolyuk, E. V., & Bogomolova, A. V. (2023). Global gig economy: prospects and key growth threats for developing countries. *International Journal of Work Innovation*, 3(4), 403–4017. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1504/IJWI.2023.128862>
- Osorio, M. L., & Madero, S. (2025). Explaining Gen Z's desire for hybrid work in corporate, family, and entrepreneurial settings. *Business Horizons*, 68(1), 83–93. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2024.02.008>
- Ostoj, I. (2021). The structure of gig workers in the global online gig economy by country of origin and its institutional foundations. *Ekonomia i Prawo*, 20(2), 337–351. <https://doi.org/10.12775/eip.2021.020>
- Perez, G. (2023). Digital Mobility Platforms : Alternative Paths for Labor And Income Plataformas de mobilidade digital : caminhos alternativos de trabalho e renda. *Revista Organizações Em Contexto*, 19(38). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15603/2176-0985/roc.v19n38p271-292>
- Permana, M. Y., Izzati, N. R., & Askar, M. W. (2023). Measuring the Gig Economy in Indonesia: Typology, Characteristics, and Distribution. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4349942>
- Permana, M. Y., Izzati, Nabiyla Risfa, & Askar, M. W. (2022). Measuring The Gig Economy in Indonesia: Typology, Characteristics, and Distribution. *Jurnal Manajemen Teknologi*, 21(3), 339–358. <https://doi.org/10.12695/jmt.2022.21.3.7>
- Prasetyo, A. (2024). Mengapa Ekonomi Gig Perlu Diatur di Indonesia? *Kompas Indonesia*.
- Putra, A. A., Hiam, F., & Kusumastutie, N. S. (2022). Studi fenomenologi kepuasan kerja pengemudi ojek online. *Mediapsi*, 8(1), 5–23. <https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.mps.2022.008.01.788>
- Putri, T. E., Darmawan, P., & Heeks, R. (2023). What is fair? The experience of Indonesian gig workers. *Digital Geography and Society*, 5(December), 100072. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.diggeo.2023.100072>
- Ram Singh, & Awasthi, S. (2025). The Status of Unorganized Workers in Digital Platforms (Gig Economy): Opportunities and Challenges. *Journal of Informatics Education and Research*, 5(2), 1737–1742. <https://doi.org/10.52783/jier.v5i2.2625>
- Ran, X., & Zhao, Y. (2023). Behind the flexibility: insufficient occupational injury protection of gig workers in China. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 11(6). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1117180>
- Reynolds, J., Quintero, D. F. P., Aguilar, J., & Kincaid, R. (2024). Work Schedules, Finances, and Freedom: Work Schedule Fit and Platform Dependence among Gig Workers on Amazon's Mechanical Turk Platform. *Socius*, 10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23780231241286933>
- Sakti, R. E. (2021). Ekonomi "Gig" dan Bom Waktu Ketenagakerjaan. *Kompas Indonesia*.
- Sankararaman, G. (2024). Gig Economy's Impact On Workforce Dynamics And Economic Resilience. *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(6), 1627–1634. <https://doi.org/10.53555/kuey.v30i6.5561>
- Siti Nur Aisyah Muhyi, Omar, S. I., & Adnan, S. F. (2023). the Drivers Force the Gig Workers Into Gig Economy: the Case of Malaysia. *Journal of Business and Social Development*, 11(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.46754/jbsd.2023.03.001>
- Soni, V. K., Sinha, E., Shinde, Y., & Jain, H. (2025). *Freelancing Platforms: Revolutionizing The Gig Economy* (Issue Icaai 2025). Atlantis Press International BV. https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-738-0_87
- Subdit Statistik Ketenagakerjaan. (2024). *Booklet Sakernas Februari 2024*. 16.

- Taylor, K., Van Dijk, P., Newnam, S., & Sheppard, D. (2023). Physical and psychological hazards in the gig economy system: A systematic review. *Safety Science*, 166(November 2021), 106234. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssci.2023.106234>
- Tim Peneliti The SMERU Research Institute. (2023). *Inovasi dalam Perlindungan Pekerja Ekonomi Gig*. 3.
- Vadavi, S., & Sharmiladevi, J. C. (2024). Analysing the evolution and patterns of the gig economy: a bibliometric examination of growth and trends. *Cogent Business and Management*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2424480>
- Wolf, A. B., Coelho-Lima, F., & Figueroa, M. (2025). ‘Be Your Own Boss?’ Explaining Variation in Worker Response to the Gig Economy’s Ideology in the Global North and South. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/bjir.12887>
- Wong, L. P. (2008). Data analysis in qualitative research: A brief guide to using NVIVO. *Malaysian Family Physician*, 3(1), 14–20.
- Wood, A. J., Graham, M., Lehdonvirta, V., & Hjorth, I. (2019). Good Gig, Bad Gig: Autonomy and Algorithmic Control in the Global Gig Economy. *Work, Employment and Society*, 33(1), 56–75. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017018785616>
- Yang, L., & Panyagometh, A. (2024). Factors influencing gig workers’ satisfaction and commitment in the knowledge service providing platforms based on the self-determination theory: The case study in China. *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*, 45(1), 289–298. <https://doi.org/10.34044/j.kjss.2024.45.1.29>
- Yin, R. K. (2017). Designing Case Studies. In *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods* (Sixth Edit). SAGE Publications Inc.
- Yoel, S. M., & Hasym, M. W. (2021). Healthcare Protection for Gig Workers: A Brief Case During Pandemic. *Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Law and Human Rights 2020 (ICLHR 2020)*, 549(Iclhr 2020), 404–409. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.210506.053>
- Zainal, Z. (2016). The Case Study as a Research Method. *Jurnal Kemanusiaan* 2007, January, 15–15. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473915480.n2>

How to Cite This Article:

Fallo, A. R., Pah, T.I.B.K., Rene, M.O., Long, B.L. (2025). *The Gig Economy Across National Borders: Motivations And Economic Impacts (A Study On The Individual Experiences Of Maxim Drivers In Atambua)*. JURNAL TRIAS POLITIKA, 9(2), 186 -X. <https://doi.org/10.33373/jtp.v9i2.7736>