

Digital capitalism and young people's work patterns: The dynamics of side jobs among Indonesia's gen Z

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Abstract

This study investigates the contradictions of side jobs and the gig economy among Generation Z in Indonesia. Although this sector is considered to offer flexibility, independence, and diverse career development opportunities, the reality in the world of work shows tension between expectations of freedom and unstable working conditions. This study applies a qualitative approach with a systematic literature review design. Data was obtained through the synthesis of accredited journal articles and reports from reliable research institutions published between 2020 and 2024. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis methods to identify patterns of experience and structural contradictions that have been noted in the literature. The findings show that the promised flexibility and autonomy are often illusory. Fluctuating income, lack of social security, and dependence on non-transparent platform algorithms create a situation of "pseudo-autonomy." These conditions lead to economic vulnerability and psychosocial pressures, such as anxiety, stress, and feelings of alienation due to prolonged job uncertainty. These results confirm that the welfare of Gen-Z gig workers needs to be evaluated from various dimensions, not only based on income but also psychological and social aspects.

Keywords: Digital Capitalism, Generation Z, Gig Economy, Pseudo-Autonomy, Multidimensional Well-Being.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menyelidiki kontradiksi pekerjaan sampingan dan ekonomi gig di kalangan Generasi Z di Indonesia. Meskipun sektor ini dianggap memberikan fleksibilitas, kemandirian, dan peluang pengembangan karier yang beragam, kenyataan di dunia kerja menunjukkan adanya ketegangan antara harapan akan kebebasan dan kondisi kerja yang tidak stabil. Penelitian ini menerapkan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi literatur sistematis. Data diperoleh melalui sintesis artikel jurnal terakreditasi dan laporan lembaga riset terpercaya yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2020 hingga 2024. Analisis data dilakukan dengan metode analisis tematik untuk mengenali pola pengalaman dan kontradiksi struktural yang telah dicatat dalam literatur. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa fleksibilitas dan otonomi yang dijanjikan seringkali bersifat ilusi. Pendapatan yang fluktuatif, ketiadaan jaminan sosial, serta ketergantungan pada algoritma platform yang tidak transparan menciptakan situasi "pseudo-otonomi." Kondisi ini menimbulkan kerentanan ekonomi dan tekanan psikososial, seperti kecemasan, stres, dan perasaan terasing akibat ketidakpastian kerja yang berkepanjangan. Hasil ini menegaskan bahwa kesejahteraan pekerja gig Gen-Z perlu dievaluasi dari berbagai dimensi, tidak hanya berdasarkan pendapatan tetapi juga aspek psikologis dan sosial.

Kata kunci: Kapitalisme Digital, Generasi Z, Ekonomi Gig, Pseudo-Otonomi, Kesejahteraan Multidimensional.

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1. Introduction

The phenomenon of side jobs has become an inevitable financial reality for Gen Z in Indonesia. The latest data from the IDN Research Institute shows that 65% of young people aged 18-25 are actively seeking at least one source of income outside of their main job (La Ode, 2022). This wave of engagement is inseparable from the digital native nature that characterizes this generation. Reports note that internet coverage in Indonesia has reached 79.9%, with Gen Z being the most active users, spending an average of more than 8 hours a day online (Asmarantika et al., 2022). This condition creates an ideal technical foundation for the development of the platform economy, where smartphones are transformed into 'mobile offices' that provide access to various flexible work opportunities. Data from prominent gig economy platforms also confirms this trend; for example, Gojek's internal report shows that over 50% of their new driver partners in the first quarter of 2024 were under 26 years old, reflecting a significant surge in Gen Z participation in pursuing alternative economic opportunities.

The gig economy phenomenon that attracts Gen Z's attention is driven by a combination of technological, economic, and socio-cultural elements. Easy access to technology through digital platforms serves as the main trigger that transforms mobile phones into "portable offices" and allows individuals to start businesses with few obstacles. Additionally, economic pressures such as inflation and competition in the formal job market are driving individuals to seek alternative sources of income, while socio-cultural demands for flexibility, freedom, and "diverse careers" make this employment model more aligned with Gen Z values than traditional, rigid jobs (Barhate & Dirani, 2021).

Conceptually, this situation can be seen as the emergence of a "precariat" group that lives in uncertainty but is driven by desires that go beyond mere financial considerations. This phenomenon aligns with the idea of the "Passion Economy," where Gen Z is not only seeking income, but also using platforms to convert their skills and interests into opportunities to make money, thereby redefining the meaning of work and success in the digital world (Ain et al., 2024). However, behind this attractive concept lies a gap between internal motivation and algorithmic reality. The hope for freedom is often hindered by the hidden control of the platform system. The independence they dream of often becomes an illusion when income is uncertain and an individual's digital career future is highly dependent on platform policies that can change without notice.

The narrative regarding uncertainty in the gig economy is still dominated by conventional economic approaches that emphasize objective indicators such as income and job security. Previous studies, including one by Sitorus and Kornitasari, have indeed shown that financial stability is a major factor in the welfare of gig workers (Sitorus & Kornitasari, 2024). However, this approach tends to be positivistic and reductionist, thus failing to explore how workers themselves interpret the experience of uncertainty in their daily lives.

Thus, there is a lack of research on subjective meaning-making and generational identity construction in the gig work experience in Indonesia. This study attempts to fill this gap by adopting a qualitative approach to explore more deeply how Indonesian Gen Z understands, rationalizes, and negotiates job uncertainty in the context of their personal, social, and cultural values. This approach allows for the disclosure of narratives, symbols, and dynamics of experiences that cannot be reduced to quantitative variables alone.

This study analyzes the dynamics of Gen Z gig workers' well-being in Indonesia by emphasizing socio-cultural and psychosocial dimensions, not only material aspects. The aim is to analyze the meaning of work, factors of subjective well-being, and the paradox of flexibility and vulnerability in the digital age. Its contributions include enriching the theoretical framework of multidimensional well-being, providing contextual empirical evidence from Indonesia, and recommendations for more responsive digital labor policies.

2. Literature Review

The Economy of Gig and Uncertainty Theory

In recent years, the term “gig economy” has emerged in discussions about modern employment. In general, the gig economy refers to a labor market system characterized by project-based or short-term work, without a permanent employment contract between workers and employers. As explained in the Indonesian Economic Journal, gig workers are defined as individuals who work independently in the service sector, such as transportation and warehousing, who utilize the internet, particularly online market applications, in their work processes (Natalia et al., 2023). On the other hand, Yasih adds that the gig economy relies on temporary and flexible labor to provide various services through digital applications (Yasih, 2023). This work model provides a certain degree of freedom and autonomy, but at the same time eliminates the traditional structure of stable employment relationships.

This characteristic of flexibility often conflicts with the reality of “uncertainty” or vulnerability faced by gig workers. The concept of uncertainty describes the inherent uncertainty and vulnerability of their work. This vulnerability manifests itself in several ways. First, through the absence of basic social security such as health insurance, pensions, or severance pay that are usually provided by formal employment. Second, their income is highly volatile and unstable, depending on demand, seasonality, and platform algorithm policies. Third, there is an unequal working relationship. Gig workers are often classified as “partners” or “micro-entrepreneurs,” which obscures the working relationship and shifts all operational risks (such as vehicle maintenance) from the company to the workers themselves, as criticized by (Yasih, 2023).

In shaping this dynamic, digital platforms play an important role not only as a link between service providers and consumers, but also as work managers through algorithmic systems. Platforms such as Gojek or Grab not only provide applications, but also regulate, monitor, and evaluate worker performance directly through rating systems, automatic fare setting, and order allocation settings. This algorithm-based

management creates a new form of managerial control that feels impersonal but is highly influential. On the one hand, this provides the illusion of autonomy because workers can choose when to go “online.” On the other hand, algorithms actually have a major influence on a person's income, level of work pressure, and even job security, while workers often have no room for negotiation or transparency regarding how the algorithms work. Therefore, digital platforms are more than just passive intermediaries; they are central actors that disrupt conventional working relationships and reinforce structures of vulnerability in the gig economy.

Generation Theory and Characteristics of Gen Z

As historians William Strauss and Neil Howe have pointed out, each generation emerges and grows up in a unique historical context that shapes their personalities, values, and collective responsibilities in society (Andrałojć, 2024). Gen Z, born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, grew up amid significant events such as the 2008 global financial crisis and the widespread digital revolution. This context has shaped them into a practical, agile generation that is highly sensitive to uncertainty. They are accustomed to disruption, so they naturally become pioneers of resilience and a more realistic mindset in viewing the future compared to previous generations.

As a digital generation, Gen Z was born and raised in an era where the internet and electronic devices have become an integral part of their daily routines (Ramadhani & Khoirunisa, 2025). For them, technology is not an additional tool, but an extension of themselves. These digital skills result in high values in terms of autonomy and flexibility. They are accustomed to learning independently through online tutorials, finding solutions quickly, and wanting complete control over their time and how they work. Their pattern of consuming information is also very fast, concise, and visual; they like content that gets straight to the point, such as that found on social media and short video platforms. These values are then clearly reflected in their expectations of the world of work.

For Gen Z, a career is not just about salary or position, but a search for meaning. They want to feel that their work has an impact and is in line with their personal values. The concept of a lifelong career at one company is outdated. They envision a career portfolio: a collection of experiences, projects, and side activities that enrich their skills and professional identity (Subiantoro, 2024). Similarly, work-life balance is also very important. The boundaries between work and personal life must be clear. Flexibility in location and working hours is no longer just an added perk, but a necessity to support their productivity and mental health.

By understanding Gen Z's historical roots, digital characteristics, and career aspirations, both educational institutions and the workplace can be better prepared to welcome them. Gen Z is not just the next generation but agents of change bringing new values about the meaning of work, flexibility, and the importance of life balance an inevitable transformation toward a more humane and sustainable future of work.

3. Research Method

This study applies a qualitative approach with a systematic literature review design. Unlike conventional narrative reviews, this methodology was chosen because it facilitates researchers in identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing results from various sources in a structured and transparent manner (Niam et al., 2023). This design is well-suited to the research objective of understanding the complex phenomenon of Gen Z's involvement in the gig economy, particularly in Indonesia, without requiring time-consuming and costly primary data collection. The type of research conducted is descriptive qualitative, focusing on a systematic and in-depth description of the phenomenon based on the collected data, not to test hypotheses, but to understand the dynamics and patterns that emerge from the themes studied (Safarudin et al., 2023).

In this study, all data used is secondary data derived from reliable literature and documents. These sources include: Research articles from accredited national journals (minimum Sinta 2-4) and high-quality international journals related to the topics of the gig economy, Gen Z, and digital work platforms; Study reports from trusted institutions such as the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), IDN Research Institute, McKinsey Global Institute, Katadata, We Are Social, and the World Bank published between 2020 and 2024; News and reports on the digital economy from reliable media outlets that provide the latest information on the development of the digital economy in Indonesia.

The literature search strategy was conducted using academic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and Portal Garuda. The keywords used were a combination of: ("Generation Z" or "Gen Z") and ("gig economy" or "side jobs" or "platform workers") and ('Indonesia' or "developing countries"). The search was also expanded by tracing the reference lists of key articles to find other relevant sources (snowballing technique).

To ensure the quality and relevance of the information, the following inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied: (1) Inclusion Criteria: Articles published in scientific journals that have undergone a peer review process or official reports from trusted institutions. The main focus of the article discusses the gig economy, platform-based work, or the phenomenon of side jobs. Relevant to the characteristics, motivations, or conditions of Gen Z (born 1995-2012) as workers. Published between 2020 and 2024 to ensure the information is up to date. Available in Indonesian or English and accessible in full text format. (2) Exclusion Criteria: Opinion pieces, non-scientific essays, or articles that do not include clear data or methodology. Articles that only discuss the gig economy in general without touching on aspects of employment or worker welfare. Articles that cannot be accessed in full despite attempts to search for them through library services.

The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis techniques based on the six-stage framework proposed by Braun & Clarke (2006) in their book (Nurislaminingsih & Heriyanto, 2024). The analysis process was carried out using a flexible but structured approach, focusing on three main aspects that had been

determined in advance in accordance with the research objectives: motivation, including factors that encourage Gen Z's involvement in the gig economy, both economic and psychological factors; economic independence, which examines the ability of individuals to create and manage their livelihoods through digital platforms; psychosocial well-being, covering the dynamics of mental health, social relationships, and the formation of work identity. In addition to these three main themes, the researchers were also open to new themes that might emerge inductively from the literature.

The analysis process involved repeated reading, coding, grouping codes into themes, and collaborative review and definition of themes by the research team to ensure the validity of the findings.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Research results

Profile and Motivation of Gen-Z in the Gig Economy

In global and domestic literature reviews over the past five years, there are two main patterns of motivation for Generation Z when entering the gig economy. On the one hand, their involvement is a response to structural economic pressures, such as rising living costs and limited formal employment opportunities. On the other hand, the gig economy also serves as a means of identity expression and self-actualization for young people who grew up as digital natives. There are at least 4-6 major empirical studies that reinforce these findings. Data from the IDN Research Institute, for example, shows that 65% of Indonesian youth aged 18-25 are involved in side jobs, while a report by Asmarantika et al. (2022) confirms internet penetration of 79.9% with Gen Z as the most active users (La Ode, 2022). Research conducted by Kuriana and Madhavi specifically identifies dualistic motivations among Gen Z gig workers, and a study by Subiantoro confirms their preference for portfolio career patterns (Kuriana & Madhavib, 2024) (Subiantoro, 2024).

Key findings from various literature indicate that Gen Z's motivation is dualistic: it includes external motivation in the form of financial sustainability and internal motivation in the form of a desire for autonomy, self-actualization, and identity manifestation. Interestingly, the tendency to have a portfolio career is stronger than the traditional linear work orientation among this generation, with digital literacy as the main enabler of their involvement in the gig economy. A more in-depth analysis of various literature sources in this study reveals a new finding that, in the Indonesian context, internal and external motivations do not stand as two separate poles, but rather support each other dialectically. Economic pressures have become a trigger that encourages the exploration of self-identity through digital work, so that Indonesian Gen Z does not view the two as a dichotomy, but rather as a spectrum of experiences integrated into their work activities.

The Reality of Economic Independence: Between Diversification and Uncertainty

A review of the literature on informal workers and the gig economy shows that income variation is often seen as a tactic for reducing economic risk. However, behind this tactic, many studies highlight the income volatility trap and the lack of social protection experienced by workers. The concept of “precariat” introduced by Guy Standing provides an important theoretical framework for understanding the structural position of these vulnerable gig workers (Yasih, 2023). Approximately 5-7 empirical studies and national reports confirm these findings. Data from the Central Statistics Agency shows high income uncertainty in the informal sector, which includes the majority of gig workers (BPS, 2024). Research from the IDN Research Institute notes that 42% of respondents rely on side jobs for 30-50% of their monthly income (La Ode, 2022). Research by Kuriana and Madhavi confirms the limited access to social security among gig workers, while studies by Sitorus and Kornitasari also support the picture of structural vulnerability inherent in gig workers in Indonesia (Kuriana & Madhavib, 2024) (Sitorus & Kornitasari, 2024).

From a synthesis of various literature, a dominant pattern emerges that although income variation increases short-term cash flow, the absence of social security actually increases long-term economic risk for workers. High dependence on ever-changing platform policies further weakens their economic stability. Furthermore, classifying workers as “partners” or “micro-entrepreneurs” systematically shifts various operational risks, such as vehicle or work equipment maintenance, from the platform company to the workers themselves (Yasih, 2023). A deeper analysis in this study finds a new phenomenon that can be called “pseudo-diversification.” This phenomenon refers to a situation where workers have more than one source of income, but all of these sources are still based on digital platforms with a uniform risk structure. In other words, the variation does not actually reduce systemic risk because the sources of income are within the same algorithmic ecosystem. A worker may serve as a Gojek driver, a Shopee merchant, and a freelancer on various digital platforms, but all three activities remain subject to similar algorithmic logic: dependence on rating systems, unpredictable fluctuations in demand, and platform policies that change without notice or negotiation.

Financial Reality: Between Diversification and Uncertainty

Over the past decade, global studies on the gig economy have consistently shown that algorithmic control creates an illusion of freedom for workers. The concepts of algorithmic management and the digital panopticon have become the main framework for understanding the unequal power relations between platforms and workers. Classic research by Wood and colleagues introduced the term “pseudo-autonomy,” which was later reinforced by the findings of Glavin and Schieman, who discovered a strong relationship between platform work and symptoms of mental health problems (Wood et al., 2018)(Glavin & Schieman, 2022). In the Indonesian context, research by Asrori and his team also confirmed the existence of similar algorithmic control (Asrori et al., 2025).

The polarized findings that dominate various studies show that the autonomy experienced by gig workers is procedural, not structural. They do have the freedom to choose their working hours (“when” they work), but they have no control over fundamental aspects such as rate setting, work regulations, and order distribution, which are entirely determined by algorithms. This algorithmic uncertainty has been shown to increase chronic stress among workers, while the rating system creates continuous performative pressure. Dependence on algorithms ultimately results in a new form of vulnerability not experienced in traditional work patterns. An in-depth analysis of various literature in this study reveals a new finding that, in the context of Indonesian Gen Z, psychological pressure stems not only from platform algorithms but also from the digital social expectations that have developed in their environment. The need to maintain personal branding and online reputation in front of social networks adds a new dimension of pressure. Thus, the psychological burden faced by Gen Z gig workers is twofold: structural, stemming from platform algorithmic control, and cultural, rooted in social media pressure and expectations in their digital social environment. This creates a layer of performative pressure that has not received much attention in previous literature.

4.2. Discussion

The Passion Economy Paradox: Freedom versus Algorithmic Control

The concept of the passion economy, which has been widely discussed in various contemporary works, presents an optimistic view that individuals can freely earn money from their interests and talents through digital platforms (Herari & Waluyo, 2023). However, behind this optimistic view, recent research shows a decline in worker autonomy due to increasingly sophisticated algorithmic control. There are at least five major theoretical and empirical studies that support this paradox. Asrori and colleagues note how algorithmic control operates on Indonesian platforms, while Wood and colleagues introduce the term pseudo-autonomy as a characteristic of the gig economy. Herari and Waluyo also offer criticism of the dark side of the passion economy that they explore (Asrori et al., 2025)(Wood et al., 2018)(Herari & Waluyo, 2023).

In general, the findings show that although workers' initial motivation for entering the gig economy is intrinsic, driven by passion and a desire for self-actualization, algorithmic control gradually changes this motivation to become more extrinsic. Workers begin to operate because they are triggered by incentives, concerns about assessment, or fear of system penalties such as account deactivation. In this context, the passion economy becomes vulnerable to covert exploitation, as workers feel they are ‘working for love’ but at the same time have to follow platform mechanisms that are often not in their favor. Recent findings from this study show that the decline in autonomy occurs gradually (gradual autonomy erosion) by forming a distinctive path. In the early stages, workers feel euphoric about their freedom and excitement at being able to work according to their interests and passions. However, as their income dependence on the platform increases, algorithmic control begins to dominate and workers feel the real limitations of their autonomy. This pattern reflects a trajectory of

motivational shift that has not been widely discussed in Indonesian literature: from strong intrinsic motivation in the early phase, shifting to controlled extrinsic motivation in the middle phase, and ultimately leading to physical and mental exhaustion (burnout) if this imbalance continues in the long term.

Fragile Independence: New Dependence on Digital Platforms

One of Gen Z's main goals in participating in the gig economy is to achieve financial independence and break free from dependence on formal employment, which is considered restrictive. However, existing literature shows that the independence that is formed is paradoxical. Most studies conclude that the gig economy actually creates uncertain jobs, characterized by low labor protection. The concept of “precariat” is a relevant theoretical framework for understanding the structural position of these vulnerable gig workers (Yasih, 2023). Research conducted by Hendrian highlights how platform workers face high job insecurity due to the absence of long-term contracts (Hendrian, 2025). Meanwhile, research by Natalia et al. shows that the welfare of gig workers is greatly influenced by market demand fluctuations and internal platform dynamics (Natalia et al., 2023). Yasih sharply criticizes the classification of “partner” status, which systematically disadvantages workers (Yasih, 2023).

The most prominent findings from various studies confirm that income uncertainty is a key feature of the gig economy, caused by unpredictable fluctuations in demand and changing algorithm policies. The lack of legal protection further exacerbates the situation, as the status of workers as “partners” means they do not have the normative rights of formal workers. As a result, the work identity of gig workers becomes blurred: they are not fully recognized as independent entrepreneurs, but they also do not receive the protection afforded to formal workers.

Further analysis in this study reveals new findings that Gen Z workers tend to internalize uncertainty as a “normal risk of the digital generation.” In other words, the vulnerability they experience is not always perceived as a form of exploitation. This phenomenon can be referred to as the normalization of uncertainty, where income uncertainty and the absence of social security are considered a natural consequence of choosing a flexible work style. This indicates a gap between the objective reality and subjective perceptions of well-being. A worker may subjectively feel “sufficiently independent” and “free,” even though objectively they are in a structurally vulnerable position. This finding is important because it shows that advocating for gig worker protection policies is not enough to simply present objective data on vulnerability, but also needs to touch on workers' subjective awareness of their position.

Towards a Holistic Understanding of Gen Z Well-being in Indonesia

Literature on modern work well-being increasingly highlights the need for a multidimensional approach, encompassing more than just economic dimensions, but also psychological and social elements. In the context of platform workers, this approach becomes increasingly important given the complexity of work experiences that cannot be viewed solely from income indicators. Natalia et al. point out the limitations of approaches that emphasize only economic aspects in understanding the

well-being of gig workers (Natalia et al., 2023). Hendrian emphasizes the significance of the dimension of work identity, which has been neglected (Hendrian, 2025). Meanwhile, Wood et al. and Glavin and Schieman specifically highlight the psychological dimensions affected by algorithmic control (Wood et al., 2018)(Glavin & Schieman, 2022).

The prevailing pattern of findings shows that even high income does not automatically guarantee complete well-being. Workers with fairly good incomes can experience psychological vulnerability due to constant uncertainty. Social relationships tend to diminish in individualistic platform work patterns, while work identity becomes unstable because it depends on fluctuating algorithmic recognition. Based on a synthesis of these findings, this study proposes a new concept called “Digital-Dependent Wellbeing.” This concept refers to the condition of gig workers' wellbeing being highly determined by their algorithmic performance and digital reputation.

In this framework, welfare is not only determined by income, but also by visibility in the platform system (how often their accounts appear in consumer searches), consumer ratings and reviews, and compliance with various platform metrics that are often not transparent. As a result, well-being becomes unstable and beyond the control of workers, as it is determined by algorithmic mechanisms that are difficult for them to understand, let alone negotiate. These findings expand our understanding of well-being in the digital age, where algorithmic recognition emerges as a new and crucial psychological resource, yet one that is highly unstable. Thus, efforts to improve the well-being of gig workers are not sufficient by merely increasing their income; they must also address how their position within the platform's algorithmic ecosystem can be strengthened and protected.

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis and findings contained in this study, it can be understood that Gen Z's participation in side jobs and the gig economy in Indonesia reflects a structural contradiction between aspirations for freedom and the reality of vulnerability. First, Gen Z's motivation for involvement is dual: on the one hand, it is driven by economic pressures as a survival strategy; on the other hand, it is a search for autonomy, self-actualization, and meaning in work. These two motivations reinforce each other in the Indonesian context, rather than being separate dichotomies.

Second, the reality of financial independence is paradoxical. This study found a phenomenon of “pseudo-diversification” in which workers have multiple sources of income but remain tied to a homogeneous algorithmic ecosystem, thereby failing to truly reduce systemic risk. Income uncertainty and weak social security create structural vulnerability that threatens long-term welfare sustainability. Third, from a psychosocial perspective, Gen Z gig workers face “pseudo-autonomy”: procedural freedom in choosing working hours but without structural control over fundamental aspects of the job. The psychological pressure is twofold, stemming from the algorithmic control of the platform and digital social expectations to maintain an online reputation.

This study found a shift in motivation from intrinsic to extrinsic as dependence on platforms increases, as well as the normalization of vulnerability, where uncertainty is considered a reasonable risk among the digital generation. The concept of “Digital-Dependent Wellbeing” is proposed to understand the conditions of wellbeing determined by algorithmic performance and digital reputation.

The theoretical implication of this research is the enrichment of the multidimensional wellbeing framework by incorporating the algorithmic dimension as a new determinant of digital workers' wellbeing. The practical implication is the need for adaptive social protection policies, platform algorithm transparency, and critical digital literacy programs that help workers understand and negotiate their position in the platform ecosystem.

This study has limitations as a literature review that does not reflect the direct experiences of workers. Further research is recommended to conduct digital ethnographic studies or in-depth interviews to explore more deeply how Gen Z negotiates their identity and well-being amid the uncertainty of the gig economy.

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