STRENGTHENING THE GIG ECONOMY: FUTURE OF DIGITAL LABOR WORKFORCE PLATFORM POST-COVID-19

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Abstract: COVID-19 crisis has affected most industries, companies, and businesses. This phenomenon became a major concern of the people as they start to lose their job thus pushing them to involve in the gig economy for survival. About 2.2 million gig workers in Malaysia have already registered with the Malaysian Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC). The government has allocated RM75 million to promote the gig economy and provide a social safety net for workers in the informal sector to support the aspiration of the National Agenda that is Sustainable Development Goals. The prospect of the gig economy has transformed the traditional workforce platform into a new platform that has a very high potential as it can create job opportunities, capacity enhancement, and expand a new field of the labor force in several sectors. The growth of the gig economy, typified by online platforms and isolated independent workers, poses fundamental challenges to traditional models for regulating work and setting minimum standards. This causes the government and employers to reshape the best way to approach employment in the future. Hence, this research aims; i.to examine current practices of the gig economy, ii. to analyze the existing digital labor policy initiatives for the digital labor workforce, iii. to recommend a framework of digital labor workforce platform to strengthen the gig economy as to create a decent working condition framework of the digital labor workforce soon will benefit citizens and the country. Hence, this research can fulfil Goal No 8 of Sustainable Development Goals that are promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.

Keyword: COVID-19, Gig Economy, Decent work, Sustainable Development Goals

Introduction

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic scenario, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy), Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed announced that the 12th Malaysia Plan (12MP) will emphasize people's welfare, social protection, and people-centred initiatives. The pandemic has had a severe impact on the country's economy, with up to 20% of M40 households, or around 580,000 households, now falling into the B40 income bracket. The government will examine several rules that did not appear to be an issue previously but are now problematic, particularly for those who live in rural regions, do not have social security and are self-employed, and others who work in the gig economy without benefits. The growing importance of the gig economy was recognized in the Budget 2021 report. According to a 2019 research by the Employees Provident Fund (EPF), roughly four out of ten Malaysian workers would be gig workers in the next five years, which is double the worldwide average (The Edge Market, 2021). The gig economy is expected to remain high due to the pandemic COVID-19 because the industries that are particularly involved in digital-based services saw an increment even the unemployment rate jumped to 3.9% in March 2020 in Malaysia. The adaption and adoption rate to the gig economy currently has been tremendous by all levels of businesses, as well as individuals (Azman, 2020). The Malaysian government has realized that the growth of the digital economy a few years ago as new economic growth and became the main national agenda as a part of the 12th Malaysia Plan. It was reported that the digital economy has contributed 18.5% of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020 (Hong, 2020). This

scenario has pushed the government to allocate a budget in the National Budget 2020 blueprint that aims to promote growth through the digital economy. The allocation of budget are as follows (Hong, 2020; Bernama, 2020):

1. An investment of RM21.6 billion to develop the necessary infrastructure for Digital Malaysia with help from the private sector, where approximately half of the cost would be borne by the government

2. The government would also introduce the 5G Ecosystem Development Grant worth RM50 million to accelerate technological development by companies in the wake of the 5G technological advancement globally

3. RM20 million to the Malaysian Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) to develop local champions in creating digital content such as e-games, animation, and digital arts.

4. The government also planned to set up 14 one-stop Digital Enhancement Centres in all states to facilitate access to financing and capacity building for businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises with an allocation of RM70 million, he said.

5. RM10 million has been allocated to MDEC to train micro-digital entrepreneurs and technology experts

The outbreak of the pandemic COVID-19 requires the workers to adopt new skill sets needed to work in jobs that emerge because of increased datafication, robotization, and automation (Habraken & Bondarouk, 2017). The notion that automation is eliminating and/or changing jobs suggests that human resources management activities could be increasingly important in helping employees to remain employable (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014). However, other indirect changes may influence human resources (HR) function in ways that make it less important. The change brought about by the rise of online labor platforms may fundamentally change work relationships by crowdsourcing jobs to independent contractors or so-called gig workers that are 'hired' on-demand (Boons, Stam, & Barkema, 2015; Nakatsu, Grossman, & Iacovou, 2014). Online platforms implement HR practices to maintain 'relationships' with their workers and to motivate, develop, and retain the quality of their on-demand workforce. The organizations that are currently considering how to transform their HR function in light of these developments in digitization are also pro-actively influencing public policy. In a digitized world where work is crowdsourced to freelancers via online platforms, many aspects of current government policy regarding labor laws and regulations have become obsolete or inadequate. Consequently, platform firms that are implementing new HR practices are challenged to think more proactively about the future of work (relations) and labor laws.

The main problem regarding the growth of the digital economy is about the welfare and social safety of the gig-workers. The recent spate of welfare and social safety of gig-workers have garnered much media attention as shown in these headlines:

1. Gig Economy: Improving the welfare of gig workers requires a more targeted approach – The Edge Market, 26 July 2021

2. The Covid-19 crisis is hurting Asia's gig economy workers and they want the government to help – This Week in Asia, 16th March 2020

3. MCO puts a spotlight on gig economy – The Star, 30th April 2020

4. Gig economy to emerge as essential employment sector – The Malaysia Reserve, 14th July 2020

5. Growth of the gig economy – New Straits Times, 26th February 2020

6. Socso to act against cabbies, e-hailing drivers yet to contribute to social security scheme – Malay Mail, 15th August 2019

7. Socso to act against cabbies, e-hailing drivers yet to contribute to social security scheme – New Straits Times, 11th July 2018

8. Govt to regulate e-hailing industry starting tomorrow – New Straits Times, 28th January 2020

9. Enhancing output of gig workers by providing a social safety net – The Stars, 6th June 2020

10. Gig Workers Are Here to Stay. It's Time to Give Them Benefits- Harvard Business Review, 3rd July 2020

11. Is it time up for the gig economy? – World Economic Forum, 22nd July 2019

All these issues showed that the government still lacks policies related to the social welfare and security of the gig-workers. The government should take into consideration the issues to protect the gig-workers by providing a just and fair workforce for them. The output of this study is proposing a digital labor workforce framework that can overcome the injustice of the social welfare and security gig-workers. Besides this framework give an insight to the government to formulate a comprehensive digital economy workforce policy for gig-workers protection. This study is important to fulfil Goal 8 of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) which are promoting decent works in the digital world and thus assist the government to strengthen the digital economy because it is a new source of the country's economic growth.

Literature Review

This section provides a background overview of the literature, which consists of three (3) components that address several key themes, which are gig economy practices, digital labor workforce and digital labor policy initiatives.

Gig Economy practices

The Gig economy referred to a company that engaged contract workers for a temporary period or project-based jobs, instead of hiring them for permanent positions. It involves the exchange of labor for money between individuals or companies through digital platforms via mobile work on-demand via apps on a short-term period and payment by task basis (BIES, 2018). One of the main differences between a gig and traditional work arrangements, however, is that a gig is a temporary work engagement, and the worker is paid only for that specific job. The people who participate in the gig economy is purposely earn additional income, try out for the experience, and have a career that offers flexibility. They also can be divided into two groups which are labor providers and a good provider. Labor provider here refers to the lower-income worker, less educated, and rely more on gig work income to survive because of trouble to find a permanent job such as driver, delivery man, etc. While a good provider is a higher income group of workers, more educated, and do not heavily depend on gig work income as they already have another full-time job such as craftsmen, clothing retailers, artists, and so on (Istrate E. & Harris J., 2017).

The gig economy will benefit the consumers as they will be provided with a variety of options services for them to choose. The same goes for organizations, which also can increase flexibility and improve efficiency by lowering the cost of doing business (New Straits Times, 2020). In addition, according to Roseman A. (2018), the gig economy become alternative employment especially during an economic recession, whereby most of the employees lose their jobs, layoffs, and wage cuts. Therefore, they started doing part-time jobs or freelancers to survive.

Digital Labor Workforce

The rapid changing of technology gives an impact on the sphere of work and the young generation's view of life. Previously, people hunted for good contract works, permanent jobs, fixed salaries, and career stability to survive, but nowadays, the current generation is more concerned with flexibility and freedom in their careers. Hence, the concept of digital labor or digital gig work became popular. Digital labor refers to a form of work that can be performed and delivered digitally via online platforms. Workers may work from anywhere in the world, as long as they have a reliable Internet connection. Individuals, as contractors registered with the platform to complete their tasks (Meyer et all, 2017). They include both web-based platforms, where work is outsourced through an open call to a geographically dispersed crowd ("crowd work"), and location-based applications (apps) which allocate work to individuals in a specific geographical area. After registering with a digital platform, workers

can choose a ton of jobs to place the bid. Once hired and completed the job, the payment will be transferred to the bank account. In short, the digital labor workforce is a free-market system where the transactions are task-based and the workers work independently without being bound to long-term contracts with any company. The best part of a freelancer, they freely work from anywhere or anytime they wish and get the agreed payment. Being a digital labor workforce guarantees no pressure at working time, and workers can choose any job that suits that skill and expertise. The most popular digital platform among digital labor especially for high skill jobs is or Upwork, AMT, Clickworkers, CrowdFlower, and 99designs. While Grab car, Grab Food, Food Panda, Airbnb are popular for a low skill job contractor. The digital platform allows many people to become self-employed, using crowd working tasks and contracts as a base for their income. Besides, independent contractors can shape their work-life balance actively and can choose freely how many contracts they accept, which can be a big motivation for crowd workers (Kaufmann et al. 2011).

According to the World Bank study in 2013, there were 48 million registered crowd workers of which about 4.8 million were active (Kuek et al. 2015). It is projected that by 2020, crowd working will generate gross services revenue in the range of $15 billion to $25 billion (Kuek et al. 2015). In Malaysia, the gig economy has grown by 31% in 2017 based on Employees' Provident Fund's (EPF) figures. This has surpassed the conventional workforce. Aside from that, the World Bank also shared that about 26% of the Malaysian workforce are freelancers and the number is growing (Nisya Aziz, 2020). The idea of pursuing digital jobs manifested as a key policy priority with the 2012 launch of the strategic program 'Digital Malaysia', described as 'the nation's vision to forge ahead in embracing the global digital revolution, that will propel the nation into high-income status with digital technology as its critical enabler' (Digital Malaysia, 2013: 58). One of the five pillars of 'Digital Malaysia' is the program 'Microsourcing for the B40s' intended to enable the bottom 40 per cent income earners to leverage microwork and online freelancing for sustaining a living. The official target is to enable 340,000 microworkers to generate a contribution to the Malaysian economy of MYR 2.23bn (about US$0.5bn) yearly by 2020. (Graham, 2017)

Work on digital labor platforms provides workers with the opportunity to work from any place, at any time, and take up whatever jobs suit them. However, there are also some risks from engaging in such work. In the gig economy's nature, digital labor isn't recognized as an employee. Currently, most crowd work is not subject to labor regulations, so that workers have little control over when they will have work or their working conditions. They also have limited options for recourse in cases of unfair treatment. On top of that, most of the digital platforms classifying workers as "independent contractors", platforms are trying to remove themselves from any legal and social responsibility to them, including minimum wages (De Stefano, 2016). The main concern of digital labor includes the issues of worker misclassification in a digital platform, exploitation of labor, reducing bargaining power, lack of social security system for workers in the gig economy that are not considered employees, and government intervention to promote decent works in the digital platform (Artecona et all, 2017).

The International Labour Organization (ILO) survey showed that lack of social protection was a real concern. Social protection coverage was inversely related to the individual's dependence on crowd work – workers who are more dependent on crowd work are also more likely to be unprotected. Individuals for whom crowd work is the main source of income (i.e. those who do not have another job) have little protection, especially concerning pensions or retirement plans. Based on a study made by the Department of Statistic Malaysia (DOSM) and Khazanah Research Institute in 2017, 66% of the freelancer in Malaysia didn't have a retirement plan, and 33% didn't have a personal financial plan, and another 55% has less than 3 months' financial buffer. On top of that, freelance also faces problems with securing a loan or getting a mortgage because the old credit models don't treat gig workers and digital labor in the same light as full-time employees. Although they have a good history of earning and stable income from the digital platform, their options get reduced. It shows that having an income stream is not enough. The digital labor or gig workers need to have a safety net for the long run and social protection needs to be adapted to the changing nature of work. Another concern for the workers surveyed was the rejection of their work, which many deemed unfair. Nearly nine out of ten had had work rejected, for which they were not paid. (McInnis et al. 2016). Rejected work could also affect workers' rating on the platform and their ability to get more work in an already competitive

environment. Often, little or no justification was given for rejections and few options were made available for recourse.

Protests and litigation by people who work on digital platforms are on the rise and are happening in every region of the world. In the United States, there are several cases in which crowd workers and gig workers have sued their platform providers to retroactively demand the minimum wage they would have been entitled to as regular employees. There was a prominent lawsuit against CrowdFlower and Uber (see Cherry 2016; Seiner 2017). A study by PayPal in 2018 revealed that 58% of freelancers in four Southeast Asia markets (Singapore, Philippines, Indonesia, and Vietnam) have experienced not being paid because they aren't being taken seriously by clients (Nisya Aziz, 2020). While in Malaysia, many of the FoodPanda riders voiced complaints regarding the new payment scheme abolishes the system of paying riders per hour, unfair treatment, lack of financial safety nets such as Employees Provident Fund (EPF) or Social Security Organisation (Socso), and even suspension or bans if riders cancel deliveries that are out of their reach.

Digital labor policy initiatives

The issues in the digital labor workforce must be tackled accordingly. The right of the worker must be protected. This section will examine the digital labor policy initiatives taken by the government around the globe on gig workers.

1. United States of America (State of California, USA)

California recently had enacted a new law requiring companies like Uber and Lyft to treat their workers as employees, not as independent contractors. As mentioned in the New York Times, workers must be designated as employees instead of contractors if a company exerts control over how they perform their tasks or if their work is part of a company's regular business. The law has seemed to prompt some gig companies to make pre-emptive changes to their services. DoorDash company recently began offering accident insurance for workers injured on the job.

2. United Kingdom

In the UK, UK Employment Law required the employer to tell the gig workers details of their rights on the first day in a job, including eligibility for paid and sick leave. Not only that, but gig workers also have the right to request a more predictable hour. Mean that, digital labor also has a right to do 'over-time and get paid accordingly like a full-time worker. They also entare itle for holiday, even they are a freelancer and calculated holiday pay based on 52 weeks' work.

3. European Union

In the EU, one approach could bring existing legislation such as the General Data Protection Regulation. This act is to bear on controversial practices, such as uncontestable non-payment. At the international level, in January 2019 the ILO's Global Commission on the Future of Work called for the "development of an international governance system for digital labor platforms that sets and requires platforms (and their clients) to respect certain minimum rights and protections" (ILO 2019). Such an international governance system could set minimum standards as well as develop the infrastructure necessary for facilitating payments to social security systems. It could also establish a representative board to adjudicate disputes between platforms, clients, and workers. Besides, the UK also comes out with EU Gig Economic Law. This law focuses on increasing transparency for those in 'On-demand' Jobs (Uber, Deliveroo etc). It also covered compensation for cancelled work. They are the cases where the platform provided simply rejected or cancelled work and cause no payment to the workers. By having this Act, platform providers will extra careful when dealing with gig workers.

4. Indonesia

In Indonesia, Gojek company recently had launched an earnings protection insurance scheme for its drivers. Under this scheme, drivers will be covered for up to 21 days of medical leave and 84 days of hospitalization leave. The efforts taken by Gojek show that they start to acknowledge gig workers as an employee and necessary initiative should be imposed on promoting a decent working environment.

5. Malaysia

According to a study by AmBank Research, an estimated 37,260 were laid off in the first 10 months of 2019. Employees who lost their job turned to gig platforms such as Grab and Food Panda for survival. When the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, more workers lost their jobs and switched to platform gigs. Malaysia Government is concerned about gig workers who were affected, and as a result, RM 25 million was given to Malaysia Digital Economy Development (MDEC) to develop the Global Online Workforce (GLOW) program. GLOW aims to provide training to Malaysians to generate income through online platform assignments. Apart from that, Malaysia also promotes the gig economy by introducing a digital platform that can encourage people involved in a gig economy called *e-rezeki*. In *e-rezeki*, people will get a digital job based on their skills. Indirectly it can assist people who lost the job to survive. Besides, the government recognizes that gig workers are technically self-employed and have no formal mechanism for making savings for the future. Therefore, the government through the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) introduced *i-Saraan*. The government has allocated RM 50 million to this scheme, and registered gig workers will enjoy the benefits. Even though *i-saraan* is a voluntary contribution, but gig workers registered in the scheme will receive the same benefits as full-time KSWP members. It also aims to encourage gig workers to save and have their savings. Besides i-Saraan, the government also introduced the SOCSO Generator Program. This program is government assistance to gig workers through the National Economic Regeneration Plan (PENJANA). The purpose of this program is to ensure the social safety of people who are self-employed and involved in economic gigs. The Government will contribute a contribution of RM 232.80 to the Self-Employed Social Security Scheme (SKSPS) under Plan 2 and the protection period is for one year. The benefits provided by SKSPS SOCSO include Medical benefits, Permanent Disability Benefits, Corpse management benefits, and so on. Initiatives taken by the Malaysian government are good to look after the welfare of gig workers. However, Malaysia must formulate a holistic policy to protect the right of gig workers who have no employer in the long term

Methodology

The discussion of this conceptual paper was developed by using the scoping review of the literature through the secondary data collection method. This type of data collection technique is also known as the library research method. It refers to theoretical proof obtained from previous studies by other researchers. According to Yvonna and Guba 1985, based on this theoretical research, a conceptual framework or hypothesis that represents the overall writings of the research can be structured. It also refers to explanations that exist in the form of documents and records, even though this category is only used occasionally. Therefore, by using this method, the researcher would obtain important data from books, journals, documents, manuscripts, papers, proceedings and internet sources on information related to the researcher's study and analyze by using content analysis. For this paper several keyword search strings were used ***gig economy*, *gig economy practices*, and *digital labor workforce***. The literature search was performed in several website Scopus and Science direct search. The initial search came out with 56 articles from (SCOPUS) and 14 (Science Direct) articles. However, 50 articles were removed due to their premature results and anecdotes or were not discussing the gig economy practices and the framework of the digital labor workforce. Some of the articles were also found incomplete, or the full articles are not accessible, have a broken link and overlapped. Metadata incomplete, Therefore, the final paper is to be reviewed down to 20 articles supported with the several newspapers, proceedings, documents and reports.

Discussion

Revisiting a framework of Digital Labor Workforce

The prospect of a gig economy in the amidst of pandemic has brought attention to all of the countries. Not only that Malaysia has the benefit of looking at what other countries have done and evaluating the subsequent effects. In Geneva, when couriers were mandated to be treated as employees, UberEats could not absorb every courier and, as a result, 77% of independent couriers lost access to the platform and an income opportunity. Meanwhile, the UK Supreme Court recently ruled that Uber drivers must

be classified as "workers" and not "self-employed". This means they are entitled to rights including minimum wage, working time protections and holiday pay as per the UK law. The impact of this decision is difficult to determine since it is still early and, with Covid-19 still on the horizon, only time will tell how this plays out. It is commendable that the Malaysian government is taking the initiative to improve the welfare of gig workers. As the future of work is evolving, it may be worth testing out new policy approaches with a pilot group before scaling up. This may be more useful than introducing a broad policy that relies on the same fundamental assumptions of a typical employer-employee dynamic, which would not work for the gig economy. Stakeholders should join forces to improve the welfare of gig workers while preserving the flexibility we know they value (The Edge Malaysia, 2021).

Moreover, according to the report of the International Labor Office, 2018, in order towards decent work in the online world there are 18 criteria to ensure decent work on the digital labor platform. The criteria are as bellows;

1. Addressing employment misclassification.

2. Allowing crowd workers to exercise their freedom of association and collective bargaining rights.

3. Applying the prevailing minimum wage of the workers' location.

4. Ensuring transparency in payments and fees assessed by the platform.

5. Ensuring that independent workers on the platform have the flexibility to decline tasks.

6. Covering costs of lost work in case of technical problems with the task or platform.

7. Establishing strict and fair rules to govern non-payment.

8. Ensuring that terms of service agreements are presented in a human-readable format that is clear and concise.

9. Informing workers on why they receive unfavourable ratings.

10. Establishing and enforcing clear codes of conduct for all users of the platform.

11. Ensuring that workers can contest non-payment, negative evaluations, qualification test outcomes, and accusations of code of conduct violations and account closures.

12. Establishing a system of client review that is as comprehensive as the worker review system.

13. Ensuring that task instructions are clear and validated before the posting of any work.

14. Enabling workers to be able to view and export a complete human- and machine-readable work and reputation history at any time.

15. Allowing workers to continue a working relationship with a client off the platform without paying a disproportionately large fee.

16. Ensuring that customers and platform operators respond to worker communications promptly, politely, and substantively.

17. Informing workers of the identity of their customers and the purpose of the work.

18. Ensuring that tasks that may be psychologically stressful and damaging are marked by platform operators in a standard way.

Besides, the report also recommends three criteria for adapting social protection systems so that crowd workers have access to social protection coverage:

1. Adapting social insurance mechanisms to cover workers in all forms of employment, independently of the type of contract.

2. Using technology to simplify contribution and benefit payments.

3. Instituting and strengthening universal, tax-financed mechanisms of social protection.

Above all eighteen (18) criteria and an additional three (3) criteria for social protection will be the main indicator to evaluate the current decent work condition digital platform in Malaysia and propose

the best checklist of applications that suited Malaysia's digital labor framework. This is because as for now, the Malaysian Government still doesn't have any policy or regulation on gig workers. Malaysia realizes the importance of a holistic policy to protect the right of gig workers thus introducing *i-saraan* and PENJANA-GIG to protect the social welfare of the gig workers in case unfortunate even happen to them such as accidents that lead to death, total permanent disablement and temporary total disablement. However, the protection in PENJANA-GIG only lasts for one year. It is only short-term protection to the gig workers and their social safety is still no guarantee. Besides that, most countries in this world also don't have a clear framework for the digital labor workforce compared with the framework for conventional employment. That is the reason why the exploitation of gig workers still happened. Apart from that, it is important to observe the implication for the employer side as well. Since people work based on tasks and jobs, once the job is done, the relationship with the employer will vanish. The employer also has to face if the workers will easily quit and they have to manage risk for training the staff and finding a replacement. However, the current trend shows that they are a group of workers loyal to the employer. An example likes Grab drivers, FoodPanda riders. They work like permanent staff but are unable to enjoy the benefits under the Employment Act. or Labor contracts like full-time workers. Some companies provided social protection to the workers. Gojek in Indonesia recently had launched an earning protection scheme for its drivers. Under this scheme, drivers will be covered for up to 21 days of medical leave and 84 days of hospitalization leave.
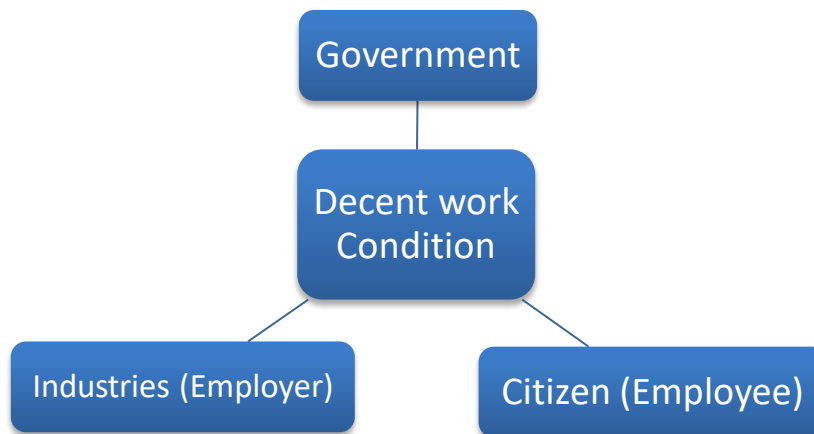

Figure 1 Framework Digital Labor Workforce - Adapted from Berg, J.M Furrer, E Harmon, U Rani, and M.S. Silberman (2018), *Digital labour platforms and the future of work: Towards decent work in the online world*, Geneva: ILO

Figure 1 above shows the framework of the digital labor workforce. The significance of this framework is the element to ensure decent work conditions for the digital workforce hence it is insightful to establish a checklist of application criteria for decent work conditions. These indicate the environment of decent working can only be established from the three parties' commitments and roles, which are government as a regulator, companies as providers, and citizens as workers.

Conclusion

In a conclusion, the urgency of the future of the digital labor workforce is to establish a decent working environment that contributes to a good relationship that can facilitate all parties which companies as providers and citizen as workers and the role of the government as a mediator to regulate and mainstream the regulation of digital labor so that companies will adopt easily the digital labor work process at the same time the citizen welfare also will be protected. It is important to strengthen government policy of digital labor to align with the Sustainable Development Goals No 8 which promotes sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. Moreover, this paper will provide further recommendations on how the policy for gig workers can be refined as according to the Budget 2021 report, it noted the increasing relevance of

the gig economy. In addition, the Employees Provident Fund's (EPF) 2019 study estimated that nearly four in 10 of the Malaysian workforces would be gig workers in the next five years. Therefore, this paper will provide further avenues on perspective to embark on very important aspects on the policies of the gig economy should account for the future of work instead of merely transposing the older framework. The framework needs to be revisited especially by looking to the several targeted groups for example especially for people with disabilities and the B40 (bottom 40% income group), the gig economy has provided access to fair, sustainable and productive means of earning a living with low barriers to entry. Hence, policies on the gig economy should factor in the preferences of such workers. Other underlying problems can be addressed through a more targeted approach. Additionally, the gig economy should not be looked upon as a homogeneous group. Some people view it as an occupation that suits their lifestyle for a long period, while others see it as a short-term work to save toward their financial goals like paying off student loans, paying for a wedding, or buying a house which are only for temporary purposes. Due to that, the Malaysian government need to be more responsive in addressing the issues as well as to become a strong welfare state. The essential priority of the government is to put extra commitment to promote a comprehensive policy framework and facilitating the upskilling of gig workers.

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