

Stoicism as a Conceptual Coping Strategy for Gig Workers: A Literature Review

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Abstract

Across diverse gig sectors—including transportation, household services, digital freelancing, and online marketplace sellers—recent studies reveal a universal pattern of precarious work: volatile income, opaque algorithmic control, dependence on customer ratings, social isolation, and self-borne risks and costs. These recurring conditions contribute to significant psychological strain among gig workers in Indonesia and across Asia. Stoic philosophy, however, offers a coherent framework for coping with such instability through principles that emphasize the dichotomy of control, rational acceptance of uncontrollable events (*amor fati*), and cultivation of an inner citadel of resilience. Contemporary psychological literature further connects Stoicism with established approaches such as cognitive-behavioral therapy and mindfulness-based interventions. Using a conceptual literature-review approach, this study maps Stoic principles—*aretē*, the dichotomy of control, *premeditatio malorum*, *prosoche*, and *oikeiōsis*—as coping strategies for the psychological and social challenges of gig work. For instance, the dichotomy of control provides a framework for managing uncertainty in job allocation and ratings, while *premeditatio malorum* prepares workers mentally for abrupt algorithmic shifts. The synthesis highlights that Stoic self-regulation naturally extends toward altruistic resilience and social solidarity (*oikeiōsis*), aligning with peer-based coping and collective efficacy. The unique contribution of this study lies in advancing Stoicism as a novel conceptual pathway for coping in the gig economy—complementing existing strategies rooted in peer support and traditional spirituality, and setting an agenda for future empirical and policy-oriented inquiry.

Keywords: Gig workers, gig economy, psychological well-being, coping strategies, stoicism, resilience.

1. Introduction

The gig economy has significantly reshaped modern labor markets, accelerating the global transition from stable employment toward task-based and short-term contractual work. Research shows that its defining feature is digital mediation: software systems now organize and monitor transactions that were previously managed by human supervisors (ILO, 2018; Srnicek, 2019; Wood et al., 2019). In these platforms, workers—legally categorized as independent contractors—are governed by algorithmic management. Algorithms allocate tasks, track performance, and evaluate ratings to determine workers' continued access to income opportunities (Kadolkar et al., 2025; Lee et al., 2015;

Meng et al., 2024). Although algorithmic oversight improves efficiency, it also constrains worker discretion and heightens opacity, fueling concerns about digital surveillance and managerial control. As a result, algorithmically mediated gig labor deepens employment precarity and reinforces power asymmetries between platforms and workers. This imbalance is emphasized in sociological studies (Kalleberg, 2018; Vallas & Schor, 2020) and acknowledged by the International Labour Organization as a central challenge to decent work in the digital age (ILO, 2021).

Comparable empirical studies in emerging and high-income economies alike show that platform expansion typically outpaces regulatory adaptation. These institutional gaps, observed in multiple regions, illustrate how algorithmic mediation reshapes the employment contract itself, producing the hybrid status that sociologists describe as the “digital precariat” (Muhyiddin et al., 2024; Tobing, 2024). Together, these studies exemplify how digital labour platforms institutionalize precarity across diverse economic systems, providing a structural backdrop for understanding the psychosocial strain discussed below.

Across multiple labour markets—including recent empirical studies in Indonesia—platform growth has been accompanied by protection gaps and blurred employment status (Annazah et al., 2023; Muhyiddin et al., 2024; Tobing, 2024). This architecture of precarity and algorithmic control is not merely economic; it also generates significant psychological strain, as income volatility and irregular work schedules consistently correlate with heightened stress, anxiety, and reduced mental well-being among gig workers (Glavin & Schieman, 2022; ILO, 2021; Matilla-Santander et al., 2025). These financial and scheduling pressures are intensified by algorithmic management, including persistent monitoring, unclear performance metrics, and the risk of deactivation foster mistrust and emotional exhaustion (Alacovska et al., 2024; Kadolkar et al., 2025; Lang et al., 2023; Van Zoonen et al., 2025). Social isolation and the erosion of work–life boundaries from ‘always-on’ connectivity further intensify these pressures (Antunes et al., 2023; Bérastégui, 2021; Mdhluli, 2025). Together, these dynamics reveal that gig workers face a distinct, multi-dimensional psychosocial burden built into the very architecture of the platform economy.

Although attention to workers’ well-being in the gig economy has increased, coping responses among platform workers tend to remain fragmented and situational. Many adopt short-term, task-specific tactics—such as emotion regulation, avoidance, or compliance—to manage stress associated with algorithmic control and unstable workloads (Griesbach et al., 2019; Kellogg et al., 2020). These approaches may provide temporary relief but seldom develop into coherent or enduring frameworks that sustain psychological stability. Coping efforts often depend on external reassurance from peer networks or online communities, which can inadvertently reinforce dependence on the same precarious structures they seek to mitigate (Rosenblat & Stark, 2016; Vallas & Schor, 2020). This pattern suggests that individualized and externally reliant repertoires—while adaptive in the short term—offer limited protection against the broader insecurities embedded in platform labor.

In line with these observations, Wendra et al. (2024) argue that coping strategies, though commonly activated by job demands, do not appear to substantially foster thriving because they remain reactive to external pressures rather than grounded in internal psychological resources. Their findings indicate that gig workers’ well-being is more strongly associated with inner capacities—such as self-

efficacy, hope, and resilience—than with situational coping efforts. Similarly, Wong et al. (2021) show that resilience among digital labourers can be strengthened through proactive job crafting and self-regulatory practices, further underscoring the importance of cultivating internal psychological mechanisms. Taken together, these insights suggest that existing coping frameworks, focused mainly on short-term stress regulation, may be insufficient to support lasting psychological growth. Accordingly, this review aims to conceptually examine how Stoic principles can serve as coping strategies for the psychological and structural challenges faced by gig workers. By integrating Stoic philosophy with contemporary coping theory, this review contributes to the theoretical enrichment of resilience studies and offers a value-based framework for understanding well-being in precarious labor contexts. A conceptual shift toward approaches that develop internal stability and rational self-command therefore warrants further consideration. Stoicism offers a promising direction by emphasizing self-control, endurance, and purposeful acceptance—qualities that align with the internal resources empirically linked to thriving in precarious work contexts. The following section outlines the conceptual scope and interpretive approach adopted in this review.

This review conceptually examines how Stoic principles can serve as coping strategies for the psychological and structural challenges faced by gig workers. By integrating Stoic philosophy with contemporary coping theory, it contributes to the theoretical enrichment of resilience studies and offers a value-based framework for understanding well-being in precarious labor contexts. Stoicism offers a promising direction by emphasizing self-control, endurance, and purposeful acceptance—qualities that align with the internal resources empirically linked to thriving in precarious work environments. This conceptual focus sets the foundation for the interpretive synthesis described in the following section.

2. Research Method

This study employs a conceptual literature-review approach designed to interpret Stoic philosophy as a psychological coping framework for gig-economy workers. No primary data collection was conducted; instead, an integrative synthesis method was used, combining philosophical reasoning with findings from recent empirical research. The analysis draws purposively on peer-reviewed journals, scholarly books, and organizational reports published between 2015 and 2025 that relate to three intersecting domains:

1. coping theory and psychological resilience,
2. psychosocial dynamics of gig work, and
3. Stoic philosophy as a system of self-regulation and moral endurance.

Literature was selected for conceptual relevance and analytical depth rather than statistical representativeness. The synthesis identified theoretical convergences between Stoic moral disciplines and empirically documented coping challenges among platform workers. Each Stoic principle was then mapped to a corresponding coping dimension—motivation, cognition, anticipation, attention, and social connection—to build an integrative conceptual model linking Stoic reasoning with contemporary resilience theory. This approach emphasizes interpretive coherence and theoretical integration, aiming to construct a conceptual framework that can guide future empirical and policy research on worker well-being in the digital economy.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Conceptual Background

3.1.1. Nature of Gig Work and Mental Strain

The recent expansion of platform-mediated labour has reconfigured employment relations by embedding managerial functions in software systems. Rather than supervising through human managers, platforms govern task allocation, performance tracking, and access to future work via algorithms, thereby restructuring the locus of control in the employment relationship (Vallas & Schor, 2020). Cross-regional analyses confirm that digitally embedded management systems concentrate control while dispersing accountability. Field research across transportation, delivery, and online freelancing shows workers' extended hours, income dependence on algorithmic evaluation, and minimal access to social protection (Annazah et al., 2023; Muhyiddin et al., 2024). These empirical regularities illustrate how algorithmic governance standardizes precarity across otherwise distinct institutional settings.

Autonomy within this configuration appears largely nominal: while workers may choose when to work, their economic security often remains closely tied to matching and evaluation systems that often lack transparency. The sociological literature situates these dynamics within a longer trajectory of precarious employment, emphasizing uncertainty and the shifting of risk from firms to workers (Kalleberg, 2018). This pattern of risk transfer is observable not only in advanced economies but also within Indonesia's urban labour markets. Using data from West Java Province, Al Ayyubi and Asrofi (2024) report that gig workers represent a relatively large share of the regional workforce yet remain highly susceptible to income reduction and job loss during crises. Their findings indicate that economic insecurity among Indonesian gig workers is structurally embedded, with weaker financial resilience and limited capacity to absorb shocks compared with formal employees. These local results reinforce international evidence portraying the gig-work model as one that systematically externalizes vulnerability to individuals. Recent comparative syntheses show that these design features—algorithmic coordination, opaque evaluation, and individualized risk—manifest across contexts and income levels, forming a transnational architecture of control (Muhyiddin et al., 2024; Tobing, 2024).

Building on this sociological critique, a public-health perspective detailed by Vignola et al. (2023) analyzes how these very design features—algorithmic management, often involving opaque evaluation mechanisms—degrade key determinants of occupational health. Their evidence synthesis indicates that platforms can exacerbate work intensity and income volatility while eroding psychosocial resources like perceived fairness, autonomy, and trust, thereby creating structurally embedded stressors that harm worker well-being. At the level of mental-health outcomes, a UK-wide survey evidence shows that gig workers report poorer mental health and lower life satisfaction than full-time or part-time employees, though not as poor as the unemployed; importantly, mediation analyses attribute much of this disadvantage to elevated loneliness and financial precarity among gig workers (Wang et al., 2022). This finding links platform-work arrangements to downstream psychological outcomes via identifiable social and economic channels rather than attributing effects to self-selection.

Studies of algorithmic control further connect platform governance to strain pathways. Research on food-delivery work describes how automated assignment, performance dashboards, and rating-based discipline reduce discretion while encouraging continuous self-monitoring to maintain algorithmic favour (Griesbach et al., 2019). Ethnographic work on ride-hailing documents information and power asymmetries that leave drivers uncertain about the criteria shaping ratings and deactivation risks, reinforcing vigilance and dependency on customer evaluations (Rosenblat & Stark, 2016). These mechanisms—reduced decision latitude, performance ambiguity, and externalized validation—map onto classic job-strain models and are consistent with observed stress responses. Recent empirical studies also examine the affective consequences of perceived algorithmic control. Survey evidence from platform workers indicates that stronger perceptions of algorithmic control are associated with heightened burnout and eroded work engagement, suggesting that technological monitoring and evaluation systems can function as chronic stressors rather than neutral coordination tools (Lang et al., 2023). Complementary research in platform contexts finds that algorithmic management—including rating systems, penalties, and nudges—can precipitate stress and maladaptive responses when workers experience decisions as opaque or unfair (Zhang et al., 2023).

Beyond control, psychosocial risk reviews identify additional structural hazards: income volatility, irregular schedules, limited social support, and isolation. A systematic review conducted by a European research institute synthesizes evidence that platform work is associated with depressive symptoms, anxiety, and sleep disturbances, and argues that these risks are linked to how gig work is organized and managed rather than to task content alone (Bérestégui, 2021). This is consistent with broader labour-market syntheses in which precariousness is characterized by uncertainty and instability borne by workers (Kalleberg, 2018). Adding to this body of evidence, Indonesian studies also confirm the psychosocial impacts of gig work on mental health. A survey of 387 gig workers in North Sumatra revealed that lower perceived work support and heightened stress significantly reduced mental health and resilience levels (Siregar & Panjaitan, 2025). These findings demonstrate that the relationship between work environment and psychological well-being observed internationally also applies to Indonesia's growing gig economy, underscoring the need for coping frameworks that cultivate internal resources to sustain well-being amid persistent precarity.

Taken together, the literature converges on three interrelated features of the gig-work environment that matter for mental health. First, economic insecurity—manifest in volatile earnings and unstable schedules—undermines perceived control and elevates worry; survey evidence directly links these factors to lower well-being among gig workers (Al Ayyubi & Asrofi, 2024; Wang et al., 2022). Second, algorithmic governance—encompassing opaque evaluation, rating dependence, and automated penalties—constrains discretion and sustains vigilance, with empirical associations to burnout and reduced engagement (Griesbach et al., 2019; Lang et al., 2023). Third, social disconnection—stemming from individualized, app-mediated interactions—erodes informal support, with reviews highlighting loneliness as a consequential mediator (Bérestégui, 2021; Siregar & Panjaitan, 2025; Wang et al., 2022).

In aggregate, these findings portray gig work as a system that systematically externalizes economic and psychological risks to workers, producing a distinctive constellation of stressors.

Empirical studies addressing contractual ambiguity (Muhyiddin et al., 2024; Tobing, 2024) and work-hour intensity (Annazah et al., 2023) support this interpretation of gig work as a globally standardized architecture of precarity. The subsequent subsection introduces Stoic philosophy as a conceptual basis for coping strategies oriented toward internal stability and rational self-command in precisely such contexts.

3.1.2. Stoic Philosophy and Psychological Parallels

Stoicism offers one of the earliest comprehensive frameworks for emotional self-regulation and ethical resilience. Developed by philosophers such as Epictetus, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius, the school taught that suffering arises not from external events but from the judgments individuals attach to them. This cognitive premise—“people are disturbed not by things but by their opinions about things” (Epictetus, c. 108 CE/2012)—directly anticipates the core of modern cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) and emotion-regulation theory. In contemporary psychology, the same logic underpins cognitive appraisal models (Beck, 1979; Gross, 2015), self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and studies of integrative emotion regulation (Benita et al., 2020). Each emphasizes that adaptive coping requires reflective interpretation, autonomous motivation, and rational choice.

For gig workers, whose employment is characterized by uncertainty, performance surveillance, and limited social protection (Muhyiddin et al., 2024; Tobing, 2024), such a philosophy provides not escapism but an actionable discipline. Stoicism reframes coping as moral and cognitive training: the cultivation of stable internal resources—judgment, perspective, foresight, attention, and social concern—that sustain well-being amid precarity. The following five Stoic principles—virtue (*aretē*), the dichotomy of control, *premeditatio malorum*, *prosoche*, and *oikeiōsis*—are interpreted here through empirical psychology to illustrate Stoicism’s continuing validity as a conceptual coping system.

a. Virtue and Purpose (*Aretē*): Eudaimonia as Value-Based Flourishing

At the foundation of Stoic ethics lies the conviction that virtue—the excellence of reasoned moral agency—is the only true good (Annas, 1995). External conditions such as wealth or social approval are “indifferent” because they do not determine moral worth. To live well is therefore to act in accordance with reason and integrity. Modern positive psychology and motivational research echo this orientation. Studies distinguish hedonic well-being, focused on pleasure, from eudaimonic well-being, centred on meaning and self-development. Vittersø and Sørholt (2011) demonstrated that pleasure predicts momentary happiness, whereas personal growth predicts lasting engagement. Likewise, Huta and Ryan (2010) found that striving for excellence and contributing to others produces greater vitality than pleasure seeking. Consistent with Sheldon’s (2016) argument that eudaimonia should be understood as a predictive mode of functioning rather than a separate form of well-being, the Stoic concept of virtue is here interpreted as a process of rational goal striving that promotes enduring psychological stability

Robertson (2020) interprets Stoic virtue as a learned skill—a rational capacity to evaluate impressions and choose actions consistent with one’s values. This notion parallels self-determination theory (SDT), in which autonomy, competence, and relatedness constitute essential

psychological needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000). When these needs are satisfied, behaviour becomes self-endorsed rather than externally controlled. For gig workers, orienting performance around inner standards—reliability, fairness, and professionalism—rather than fluctuating ratings or bonuses fulfils the Stoic demand for virtue while meeting SDT’s criteria for intrinsic motivation. Empirical research confirms that value-congruent work motives correlate with resilience and job satisfaction even under insecure employment (Kavčič et al., 2022). Thus, aretē offers a philosophically and empirically grounded answer to the moral disorientation produced by digital labour.

b. The Dichotomy of Control: Cognitive Boundaries and Autonomous Regulation

Epictetus begins his *Enchiridion* with a distinction that defines Stoic therapy: some things are within our control—our judgments, intentions, and desires—and others are not—external events and the actions of others. The task of wisdom is to direct effort exclusively toward the first category. This separation is not fatalism; as Robertson (2020) clarifies, Stoic acceptance is an active rational engagement with reality, focusing energy where reason shows influence is possible.

Empirical psychology identifies similar processes. Benita et al. (2020) demonstrated that integrative emotion regulation—open acceptance of experience and willingness to engage constructively—predicts well-being through satisfaction of basic psychological needs, whereas suppression leads to frustration. In neuroscience, Wittmann et al. (2025) describe volitional freedom as “second-order self-regulation,” a cognitive mechanism closely resembling the Stoic faculty of *prohairesis*. Together these findings validate Stoic control as a measurable form of autonomy.

For gig workers, the dichotomy of control functions as a psychological boundary that restores agency. Algorithmic fluctuations, client moods, and market demand are uncontrollable; punctuality, honesty, and effort are not. Recognizing this distinction reallocates mental energy from futile rumination to purposeful action. Studies of work locus-of-control show that such internal orientation buffers stress and reduces burnout (Kusumadewi et al., 2023; Wilski et al., 2015). The Stoic, therefore, exemplifies autonomous regulation: serenity about externals and diligence within.

c. *Premeditatio Malorum*: Anticipatory Coping and Uncertainty Tolerance

The practice of *premeditatio malorum*—imagining future hardships—trains emotional preparedness. Rather than morbid pessimism, it is a cognitive rehearsal of adversity designed to reduce shock and enhance rational readiness. Robertson (2020) likens this to exposure techniques in CBT: by visualizing setbacks, individuals habituate to potential loss and plan rational responses. Empirical parallels are strong. Seery et al. (2010) found that people who had experienced moderate adversity reported greater resilience and life satisfaction than those with none or excessive hardship, supporting the stress-inoculation hypothesis. Similarly, Aspinwall and Taylor (1997) demonstrated that anticipatory coping improves control appraisal and proactive planning.

Hirsch et al. (2023) extend this to organizational contexts, describing Stoic reflection as developing “negative capability,” the ability to operate amid radical uncertainty. For gig workers,

this discipline transforms anxiety into foresight. Yet Stoic forethought does not stand alone: it operates within the Dichotomy of Control, which distinguishes what lies within reasoned influence from what does not. When individuals mentally rehearse possible misfortunes, this distinction guides their response—planning deliberate action where control exists and cultivating acceptance where it does not. By contemplating possibilities such as income volatility or platform deactivation, workers can prepare contingency plans or psychologically release concern over uncontrollable fluctuations. This synthesis of foresight and control mirrors empirical models of resilience emphasizing both anticipatory problem solving and adaptive acceptance (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997; Benita et al., 2020). *Premeditatio malorum*, when grounded in the Stoic control framework, thus represents a complete cognitive inoculation: seeing difficulties ahead and meeting them with proportionate, rational effort.

d. *Prosoche*: Mindful Attention to Impressions and Cognitive Reappraisal

The Stoic discipline of *prosoche*—literally “attention” or “mindful awareness”—is the continuous effort to observe one’s impressions (*phantasiai*) before assenting to them. It functions as a real-time psychological checkpoint that intercepts impulsive reactions and restores rational self-command. Hadot (2001) describes this vigilance as “constant attention to the representations which appear in the mind,” preventing the automatic fusion of perception and judgment. In contemporary psychology, *prosoche* corresponds to mindfulness and cognitive reappraisal, two central mechanisms of emotion regulation (Gross, 2015).

Building on classical Stoic sources and contemporary cognitive theory, this article interprets *prosoche* as a three-step attentional–reappraisal process that unfolds dynamically in moments of strain. The first movement, *mindful noticing of impressions*, cultivates awareness of the initial reaction as a mere appearance, allowing a brief attentional pause before the mind rushes into judgment. The second, *rational scrutiny of judgment*, examines the thought behind the feeling, a process often strengthened through practices such as journaling or self-dialogue that resemble the thought-record methods of cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT). The third, *rational reappraisal*, restructures the situation in line with reason and values; this stage functions most effectively when guided by the Stoic Dichotomy of Control, since much emotional strain in gig work originates from preoccupation with outcomes that lie beyond one’s power. It does not define reappraisal but rather optimizes it by clarifying where action is possible and where acceptance is required.

Mindfulness research confirms that sustained attention training strengthens neural systems for executive control and emotional balance (Tang et al., 2015). This capacity for attentional pausing enables individuals to perceive an event—such as a negative rating—not as a verdict on the self but as a transient mental impression. Robertson (2020) interprets *prosoche* as deliberate cognitive monitoring, reinforced through daily journaling and self-dialogue, both comparable to CBT thought records. Empirical findings further show that emotion-regulation strategies combining acceptance and reappraisal predict greater psychological functioning and resilience (Aldao et al., 2010). Reinterpreting criticism as information rather than personal failure reduces ego-involvement, stabilizes attention, and sustains task performance under social-evaluation stress (Glavin & Schieman, 2022; Gross, 2015).

In the context of digital labour, where feedback is instantaneous, public, and algorithmically amplified, *prosoche* becomes a vital inner discipline. When a platform driver receives a low rating accompanied by a terse comment, the first step is to notice the emotional surge—the tightening chest and the reflexive thought “I failed”—and recognise it as an impression rather than a fact. The second step follows naturally: the worker scrutinizes this judgment by recalling evidence, identifying cognitive distortions such as catastrophising or over-personalisation, and restoring a more balanced perspective. The third step, rational reappraisal, transforms the event by separating the uncontrollable elements—client mood, algorithmic bias, transient demand—from the controllable ones such as communication clarity or service consistency. The rating is thus reframed as data to analyse rather than an insult to endure. As ego-involvement decreases, attention returns to task-relevant goals and performance stabilises. This sequential process illustrates how *prosoche* converts reactive tension into composure and clarity, embodying the Stoic conviction that emotional freedom arises not from suppression but from understanding.

These three stages describe the corrective mode of *prosoche*, activated when emotional disturbance arises and deliberate reappraisal is required. In moments of calm perception, however, *prosoche* operates preventively as a form of continuous rational vigilance, maintaining composure without the need for explicit correction. A fuller model explaining how this and the other four Stoic principles interact as a unified coping framework for gig workers is presented in Section 4.

e. *Oikeiōsis*: Social Affinity and Altruistic Resilience

Contrary to popular caricature, Stoicism is not individualistic withdrawal. The doctrine of *oikeiōsis* teaches the natural expansion of self-concern toward family, community, and ultimately humanity (Long & Sedley, 1987). Marcus Aurelius wrote that human beings are “made for cooperation,” capturing the Stoic conviction that moral development culminates in social contribution. Robertson (2020) interprets this as an ethical imperative: the Stoic acts as a citizen of the world, integrating personal virtue with service to others. Within this view, *oikeiōsis* represents not the end of self-discipline but its transformation into benevolent participation in the shared rational order. In psychological terms, *oikeiōsis* corresponds to the relatedness component of SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and to the prosocial dimension of *eudaimonia* (Huta & Ryan, 2010).

Within the Stoic framework developed in the preceding subsections, *oikeiōsis* represents the altruistic maturation of the inward disciplines. *Aretē* grounds moral intention; the Dichotomy of Control stabilizes emotion; *Premeditatio Malorum* cultivates foresight; and *Prosoche* sustains mindful attention to others. These foundations converge in *oikeiōsis*, where self-mastery becomes benevolent participation in the shared rational order. As Robertson (2020) explains, *apatheia* denotes not detachment but freedom from passions that obstruct empathy and justice. The truly Stoic self is therefore not sealed off from others but extended through them—a moral consciousness that perceives the welfare of others as integral to its own.

Empirical psychology reinforces this synthesis. Huta and Ryan (2010) found that eudaimonic motives centred on contribution predict greater vitality than self-focused goals. Xie et al. (2022) observed that mindfulness combined with social support reduces burnout, paralleling the

alignment between *prosoche* and *oikeiōsis*. Studies in occupational and organizational psychology likewise confirm that perceived social support mitigates emotional exhaustion and fosters collective efficacy (Chen et al., 2020; Hobfoll et al., 2018). In gig work contexts, peer forums and online communities help workers resist isolation and sustain motivation through shared strategies and mutual aid (Cropanzano et al., 2023; Wood et al., 2019). These findings affirm the Stoic insight that rational self-management and altruistic cooperation are mutually reinforcing.

In the context of digital labour, where platform design often fragments solidarity, *oikeiōsis* re-centres coping on mutual uplift rather than competitive isolation. It invites gig workers to view clients and peers as partners in a common moral project, to mentor newcomers, and to share strategies for collective dignity. Supported by the composure of the Dichotomy of Control and guided by *aretē*, such altruistic engagement transforms endurance into fellowship. Cooperative online groups, peer mentoring, and shared advocacy channels thus operationalize Stoic cosmopolitanism in the digital economy—demonstrating that the highest form of resilience is not solitary fortitude but virtuous interdependence.

3.2. Integrative Framework: Stoicism as a Unified Coping System

3.2.1. Rationale for Integration

The preceding subsections have shown that each Stoic principle—*aretē*, the dichotomy of control, *premeditatio malorum*, *prosoche*, and *oikeiōsis*—addresses a distinct dimension of psychological coping. Yet Stoic philosophy conceives these not as discrete techniques but as interlocking disciplines that together sustain moral and emotional stability. As Hadot (2001) explains, Stoicism is “a way of living guided by reason,” in which practical exercises form one continuous movement of the soul toward coherence. Translating this into modern psychological terms, the five principles correspond to sequential but mutually reinforcing processes of self-regulation: moral grounding, cognitive boundary-setting, anticipatory preparedness, attentional reappraisal, and social extension. The integrative model proposed here interprets Stoicism as a dynamic coping system in which inner discipline matures into social virtue, producing resilience that is both personal and collective.

3.2.2. Sequential and Reciprocal Functions of the Five Principles

Each Stoic discipline contributes a distinct yet interdependent function within the broader coping system. As discussed in the preceding sections, *aretē*, the dichotomy of control, *premeditatio malorum*, *prosoche*, and *oikeiōsis* correspond to successive layers of moral and psychological regulation. Their integration transforms Stoicism from a collection of techniques into a coherent developmental process.

Coping begins with moral orientation. Through *aretē*, the individual defines purpose and value congruence, providing a stable motivational base. The dichotomy of control then delineates cognitive boundaries, translating moral intent into practical agency by distinguishing what can and cannot be influenced. *Premeditatio malorum* extends this agency forward in time, cultivating foresight and tolerance of uncertainty. In daily practice, *prosoche* sustains attention and rational appraisal, ensuring that perception remains aligned with the judgments established by reason. Finally, *oikeiōsis* completes

the movement by expanding moral concern outward—transforming self-regulation into prosocial engagement.

Together these principles form a reciprocal sequence: purpose directs focus; focus refines anticipation; anticipation steadies perception; perception nurtures empathy; and empathy renews purpose. The resulting structure functions as a self-reinforcing cycle of ethical and psychological adaptation rather than as isolated strategies. In this integrative view, Stoic coping proceeds from inner coherence to social altruism—the individual attains stability not by withdrawal but by participating rationally in the collective order.

3.2.3. The Dynamic Model

Synthesizing these dimensions yields a cyclical coping mechanism:

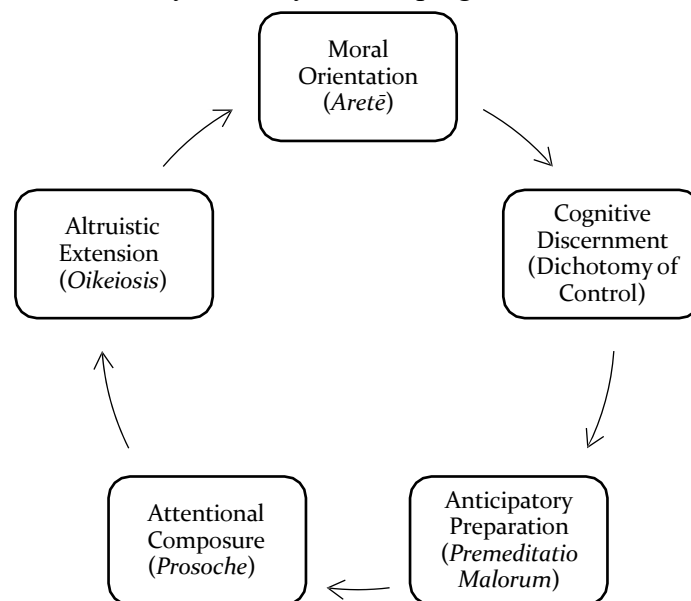


Figure 1. The Model Illustrates Stoic Coping As A Cyclical Progression: Moral Orientation Leads To Cognitive Discernment, Foresight, Mindful Attention, And Altruistic Extension. Each Stage Reinforces The Next, Forming A Self-Sustaining Loop Of Personal and Social Resilience.

Each stage both depends on and reinforces the others. Virtue gives meaning to control; control stabilizes anticipation; anticipation refines attention; attention awakens empathy; empathy, in turn, reaffirms virtue. The process therefore operates as a feedback loop of self-regulation and prosocial action. In psychological terms, it unites the domains of motivation, cognition, affect, and social behavior into one rational system of adaptation. The integrative model can be visually represented as concentric circles—virtue at the core, radiating outward through self-discipline to social solidarity—or as a spiral indicating continuous moral development.

This recursive structure differentiates Stoic coping from conventional taxonomies of “problem-focused” and “emotion-focused” strategies (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984): it reconciles both within a single moral psychology that begins in self-governance and culminates in altruism.

3.2.4. Theoretical and Practical Implications

Conceptually, this framework reframes coping not as defensive stress management but as ethical self-cultivation that naturally generates social resilience. It contributes to contemporary coping theory by integrating value-based motivation, rational appraisal, and prosocial orientation within one model. Practically, it suggests that interventions aiming to support gig workers' well-being should combine three elements:

1. **Moral coherence** – helping workers define value-consistent goals.
2. **Cognitive clarity** – training reflective control over judgments and expectations.
3. **Social altruism** – fostering networks of mutual aid and cooperative learning.

These correspond respectively to the inner, cognitive, and social strata of Stoic discipline. Future empirical studies could operationalize these constructs—virtue orientation, perceived controllability, anticipatory coping, mindful reappraisal, and altruistic engagement—as measurable variables predicting resilience and life satisfaction in precarious work.

3.2.5. Synthesis of the Framework

Stoicism thus provides a unified coping architecture: it begins with moral purpose and culminates in altruistic solidarity. The individual who practices virtue not only endures adversity but also contributes to the endurance of others. In the gig economy—where precarity is systemic and isolation structural—such integration of internal strength and outward benevolence transforms coping from survival into citizenship. The Stoic worker, guided by reason and compassion, embodies a form of resilience that is simultaneously personal, ethical, and communal.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has conceptually examined Stoicism as a psychological coping framework for gig-economy workers. By integrating five core principles—*aretē*, the dichotomy of control, *premeditatio malorum*, *prosoche*, and *oikeiōsis*—the analysis constructs an integrative model of resilience that unites moral orientation, cognitive regulation, and social altruism. The framework demonstrates that personal virtue and collective solidarity are interdependent dimensions of well-being within precarious digital labor systems.

The findings suggest several implications for policy and practice. First, government training institutions under the Ministry of Manpower can incorporate Stoic-inspired reflective exercises—value clarification (*aretē*), controllability mapping, and mindful attention (*prosoche*)—into capacity-building and entrepreneurship programs for platform workers. Second, policymakers should promote peer-mentoring and cooperative networks that operationalize *oikeiōsis* by transforming individual coping into social support systems. Third, the Stoic focus on rational self-command can inform psychosocial modules within national Decent Work and Smart ASN initiatives, linking mental resilience with ethical professionalism.

For academic development, future studies are encouraged to operationalize Stoic constructs into measurable variables—virtue orientation, perceived controllability, anticipatory coping, and altruistic

engagement—and test them empirically among diverse worker groups. Pilot projects combining Stoic reflection training with digital-skills programs could provide practical evaluation data for evidence-based manpower policy.

In conclusion, Stoicism offers not only a philosophical but also a policy-relevant foundation for strengthening psychological resilience and moral integrity in the digital workforce. Embedding its principles within Indonesia's labor-development agenda can foster a generation of workers who are competent, adaptive, and ethically grounded, ensuring that the pursuit of productivity remains inseparable from human dignity.

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