

Youth Labor in the Platformization Era: Flexibility or Precarity

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Abstract

This study explores the work conditions and resilience strategies of young freelancers in the digital-creative economy within the broader context of platformization, which simultaneously generates employment and fosters new forms of labor informalization. The analysis draws on the concepts of decent work, and agency theory to examine the dynamics of flexibility, control, and worker agency in platform labor. A qualitative research design was employed using in-depth interviews with young freelancers. Data were analyzed through thematic analysis to capture patterns in work experiences and adaptive strategies. Results indicate that platform systems promote flexible work arrangements but also intensify control over workers. Employment conditions often fail to meet decent work standards. Resilience emerges through collective practices, yet these remain fragmented and largely oriented toward individual survival rather than structural solidarity. This study deepens the understanding of precarious youth labor and highlights the paradoxes of flexibility and domination in platform economies.

Keywords: Precarious work, platformization, youth.

1. Introduction

Labour issues remain a central concern in national development. One of the persistent challenges in Indonesia's labour landscape is the pursuit of *decent work*. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the notion of decent work represents an effort to promote opportunities for all members of society to secure employment that ensures freedom, equality, security, and human dignity (Ghai, 2002). Ideally, decent work should also encompass workers in the informal economy, including unregulated wage workers, self-employed individuals, and domestic workers (Hussman, 2005). One of the largest informal employment sectors in Indonesia today is the creative and digital economy. The rapid development of this sector has been driven by technological innovations, and this digitalisation process has restructured the broader economic order. Within this transformation, what has been termed the *platformisation* of industry has emerged—where digital platforms and applications function as new means of production (Alex, 2019).

This platformisation process is reflected in the growing presence of Indonesian start-ups, e-commerce platforms, and labour platforms. The use of these digital platforms to exchange labour services is commonly referred to as the *gig economy* (Taylor, 2017). The gig economy can be categorised into two types: *local gigs*, where work is arranged via platforms but carried out in person, and *remote gigs*, where all transactions and services are conducted digitally. These workers are often known as freelancers or digital nomads (Huws, 2014). Within the broader market structure, these developments indicate a shift toward a post-Fordist mode of production, characterised by flexible labour markets. Such flexibility, however, often results in *precarious work*—marked by unstable wages, irregular working hours, limited social protection, and temporary contracts (Standing, 2011).

Standing argues that young people, particularly in developing countries, constitute a large proportion of the *precariat* class. The expansion of new forms of employment encourages a shift toward flexible work arrangements, especially for those unable to enter the formal labour market. Consequently, many turn to part-time jobs, freelancing, self-employment, or informal apprenticeships. Freelancers, for instance, are globally connected to the labour market through the internet, competing not only with domestic peers but also with international freelancers (Alex, 2019). This global competition shapes their ability to obtain projects and maintain economic stability.

In Indonesia, the digital-creative workforce or gig workers have yet to receive adequate recognition in labour policies. The Law No. 24/2019 on the Creative Economy, for example, does not address the social protection needs of workers. Despite the creative industry's substantial contribution to GDP and employment (Yuliawati, 2019), the absence of protective policies has left many digital-creative workers vulnerable. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, many freelancers were forced to survive independently without government support—highlighting the fragility of worker protection in this sector. Although prior studies have identified the vulnerability of digital-creative labour, few have explored how certain groups sustain resilience amid economic and social insecurity. This research, therefore, aims to examine the *resilience of young freelancers* in Indonesia's digital-creative economy, focusing on the strategies they employ to navigate challenges in this precarious labour environment. The study's findings are expected to serve as both academic insight and practical reference in efforts to promote welfare and inclusive labour policies. Based on the background and existing data, this research seeks to answer the following question: “What is the portrait of work and resilience among young freelancers in Indonesia's digital-creative economy sector?”

The objective of this study is to describe the working conditions and resilience strategies of young freelancers within the digital-creative sector. Understanding freelancers' resilience is crucial for both academic and policy discussions, as it sheds light on how individuals confront adverse work conditions and what structural or social factors support their survival. The study also contributes to discussions on inclusive labour policies, particularly for freelancers who remain outside the scope of formal protection frameworks.

Over time, research on digital-creative labour has evolved. Early studies emphasised the potential of digitalisation to expand employment and drive economic growth. However, subsequent research began highlighting the growing *vulnerability* within creative digital work. Primorac (2016), in *Towards More Insecurity? Virtual Work and the Sustainability of Creative Labour*, found that

flexible, non-standard employment relationships often exclude workers from formal labour rights, leaving them in precarious and unsustainable positions. Similarly, Pitts (2018), in *Creative Labour Before and After 'Going Freelance': Contextual Factors and Coalition-Building Practices*, revealed that freelance digital-creative workers are classified as self-employed contractors rather than employees, thus losing access to employment benefits such as paid leave, sick pay, and pensions. Unlike these studies, the present research focuses specifically on the *portrait of work and resilience* among freelancers in the digital-creative sector, examining how they manage job insecurity and the absence of social protection in an increasingly platformised economy.

To frame this analysis, the study employs two conceptual frameworks: decent work and fair work. The ILO defines decent work as employment that upholds human rights, provides productive opportunities, and promotes sustainable livelihoods through four pillars—employment creation, social protection, workers' rights, and social dialogue. Complementing this, the **Fairwork** framework introduces five evaluative principles for digital labour: fair pay, fair conditions, fair contracts, fair management, and fair representation (Fairwork, 2022).

In addition, this study draws on Anthony Giddens' structuration theory to explain freelancers' resilience in navigating structural constraints. Giddens (1984) posits that structure and agency exist in a duality: structures shape human actions through rules and resources, while individuals (agents) reproduce or transform those structures through their practices. In the context of this study, *structure* refers to the institutional and technological arrangements of digital-creative work, as well as the social and policy frameworks that govern it. *Agency* refers to the freelancers themselves—how they adapt, negotiate, and reflect upon their working conditions to construct resilience. Through *reflexive monitoring*, freelancers interpret their own experiences and develop adaptive strategies in response to structural limitations within the digital-creative economy.

2. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative research design. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews to obtain comprehensive information regarding the informants' processes and experiences in the digital-creative economy sector, as well as their resilience as freelancers within this field. The interviews were carried out both face-to-face and online via social media platforms to capture broader and more nuanced insights.

The qualitative data were analyzed using the **thematic analysis** method. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a method used to identify, analyze, and report patterns or themes within qualitative data. This analytical approach is particularly appropriate for researchers who seek to examine specific aspects of the data that are relevant to the research objectives while also providing a rich and detailed description of the overall dataset. Thematic analysis further allows researchers to engage with theoretical frameworks to generate deeper interpretative insights (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The selection of research participants was conducted using the **snowball sampling technique**. The participants in this study consisted of young individuals who met the following criteria: (a) high

school graduates or current university students, and (b) university graduates engaged in freelance work within the digital-creative economy sector. Specifically, this research focused on freelancers engaged in remote gig work through one of the digital employment platforms, Fastwork.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The Dynamics of Work within Platformization

This section presents the findings of the study on the dynamics of work within digital labor platforms, with a particular focus on work practices on the **Fastwork** platform. The findings are organized based on an analysis of the work system, partnership relations, and mechanisms of income distribution and performance evaluation implemented by the platform. Through these findings, the study seeks to explain how digital technology not only shapes new models of labor relations but also introduces distinctive forms of flexibility and uncertainty within the platform economy. In addition, the findings illustrate how freelancers interpret, negotiate, and adapt to algorithmic and rating-based systems that have become defining features of the contemporary digital work ecosystem.

a. Work System and Digital Flexibility

The results indicate that Fastwork provides a flexible workspace for individuals seeking to earn income through a project-based employment system. The platform facilitates interactions between clients and freelancers without requiring formal labor contracts. Jobs are accessible to anyone possessing basic digital skills and internet access, thereby creating opportunities for groups that were previously excluded from the formal labor market. However, the flexibility offered by the platform also implies a degree of precarity. Freelancers must bear all production costs themselves, including equipment, software, and internet connection expenses. Moreover, the absence of job training and social protection places freelancers in a vulnerable position, particularly in response to shifts in market demand or platform policy changes.

b. Partnership Relations and Workers' Bargaining Position

In practice, labor relations on Fastwork are governed through a one-sided digital partnership agreement. Freelancers are required to accept the platform's *terms and conditions* without any room for negotiation. The agreement process is completed by clicking the "agree" button during registration, which automatically binds the worker to all platform rules. This demonstrates that the relationship between the platform and freelancers is not entirely equal, as the company retains full control over the system, policy changes, and workflow. Freelancers lack participatory channels to provide feedback or influence decision-making, leaving them with a weak bargaining position vis-à-vis the platform.

c. Income Scheme and Revenue-Sharing Mechanism

The findings also show that Fastwork's income system operates under a revenue-sharing scheme, in which freelancers receive approximately 90% of each project payment, while the remaining 10–17% is retained by the company. Income is highly variable, depending on the number and type of projects successfully completed. Payments are processed automatically by the platform on a biweekly basis. This performance-based payment model encourages freelancers to compete for as

many projects as possible; however, it also generates economic instability due to the lack of guaranteed monthly work volume. Hence, the revenue-sharing mechanism reflects the logic of the platform economy—emphasizing efficiency and flexibility—while transferring nearly all economic risk to the workers.

d. Performance Evaluation and Algorithmic Control

Freelancer performance on Fastwork is regulated and monitored through a digital rating and review system. Each completed project is evaluated by clients using a five-star scale and written feedback, which subsequently affects the freelancer's visibility in the platform's algorithmic ranking system. Higher ratings and positive reviews increase a freelancer's chances of securing future projects. Thus, the rating system functions as a form of **digital surveillance or algorithmic management**, standardizing work quality while pressuring workers to maintain consistently high performance. For the platform, this system ensures efficiency and service quality; for the workers, however, it creates psychological pressure and dependency on an often opaque evaluation mechanism.

The findings of this study reveal how digital labor platforms such as **Fastwork** represent a transformation in the post-Fordist economy, characterized by flexibility, individualization, and the digitalization of production processes. The emergence of project-based work and the use of online platforms confirm Vallas's (1999) argument that labor market flexibility is a key feature of post-Fordist production. In this context, digital technology functions not only as a productive tool but also as a control mechanism that governs the rhythm, access, and distribution of work. The digital labor system implemented by Fastwork blurs the boundaries between formal and informal employment, as workers remain subordinate to algorithmic management despite their nominal status as independent contractors.

From the perspective of **digital labor theory** (Scholz, 2013; Fuchs, 2014), the working model on Fastwork can be understood as a new form of labor exploitation in the digital era. The platform bears no responsibility for providing work facilities, tools, or social security, yet it continues to extract profit from every transaction between freelancers and clients. This reflects the logic of **platform capitalism** (Srnicek, 2017), in which digital companies derive value from user activity—users who simultaneously act as both producers and consumers of services. Through algorithms and rating systems, platforms transform workers into components of digital production infrastructures that are automated, efficient, and data-driven, but largely unprotected by labor law.

The flexibility promoted by Fastwork indeed offers new employment opportunities for individuals previously excluded from the formal labor market, such as young workers, women, and those in the informal sector. However, this flexibility is inherently ambivalent—while it grants autonomy in terms of time and location, it also generates income instability and dependency on algorithmic management. This condition resonates with Standing's (2011) concept of the **precariat**, a new class of workers living under unstable conditions, lacking social security, and dependent on short-term projects. In Fastwork's case, freelancers experience a paradoxical form of freedom, in which autonomy is coupled with new forms of digital control, such as rating pressure, automated evaluation, and hyper-competition.

Thus, the working model within Fastwork illustrates a new configuration of industrial relations in the digital age—an asymmetrical relationship governed by the logic of platform capitalism operating through algorithms, data, and automated evaluation systems. Technology, which is often celebrated as an instrument of empowerment, in practice serves as a means of surveillance and labor management that reinforces power asymmetries between platforms and workers. Consequently, there is an urgent need for digital labor regulation that can protect platform workers' rights while sustaining the innovative potential of the digital economy.

3.2 Worker Profile and Process to Freelance Employment

Based on the research results, the average age of freelance workers is around 20 years old and above. These freelance workers are young people who are currently studying at university or who have graduated from university education. This illustrates that freelance workers have a high level of education. However, these educational qualifications do not affect freelance workers in obtaining tasks/jobs. Even on the platform itself, there are no rules regarding workers' educational qualifications. This means that this job is open to anyone who has the skills and is able to complete the task/job. What is seen in this case is the portfolio of freelance workers and the experiences that have been done.

Based on the age of freelance workers who have exceeded 18 years or are no longer classified as children, they are no longer included as the obligations and responsibilities of their parents, as stated in Law No.35/2014 Article 26 Paragraph (1). However, Law No.1/1974 Article 45 Paragraph (2) states that the limitation of parental obligations and responsibilities towards children is until the child is married or can stand alone. Standing alone means that the child is able to fulfil their own needs without depending on their parents. In this study, most of the young people were unmarried and not yet able to stand on their own, in which case they still received financial support from their parents. However, these young people are not completely dependent on their parents, but have a livelihood to supplement their pocket money and fulfil their needs. There are even some informants who have been able to stand on their own without relying on their parents.

"Income is uncertain, sometimes if I get it, it can be quite good, but if there is no project, it is quiet. But I am still in college, still want to finish first. My parents still cover my living expenses" (interview with AA, February 2022).

Most freelance workers said that before starting in freelance work they did not have professional work experience. Because some of them are still in education, the experience they have is in the form of college assignments, internships, internships, self-taught learning. According to them, working in the freelance world can be their professional work experience to prepare them to get a formal job or a more decent job. In addition, they added that working as a freelance can improve their skills. Based on the informants' statements, they said that choosing to work as a freelance on an employer platform, in this case fastwork, is one way to channel their hobbies in the field of design or drawing. Starting from this hobby, young people then make career choices which are then realised in the world of work, thus generating income and experience at the same time.

From the explanation above, it can be understood that becoming a freelancer is a zigzag journey phase. Looking at previous research related to youth strategies in the world of work (Sutopo 2013),

which explains that the zigzag journey is a long-term strategy for young people to accumulate capital that will be converted in the future. This is also done by the informant, that he is also in the process of accumulating capital in the form of work experience in the field of design through the fastwork platform as a freelancer.

a. Freelance Worker Experience

In doing freelance work, freelancers initially claimed to find several conveniences such as freedom (flexibility) at work. According to CM's statement, the freedom obtained is in terms of workplace and time can be arranged by themselves. In addition, according to SN and PP, freelance work makes them more productive both in terms of work and income. This was conveyed through the following statement:

"It's good to work at home, freelance work is good. The reason is that at home there is time with family, not far away. You can organise your own time flexibly" (interview with CM, February 2022).

They inevitably have to face an uncomfortable choice: unemployment or project-based work according to client requests. In this case, they are trapped in temporary work. In addition, platform workers also demand the ability and quality of their workers' work to earn higher incomes. Despite the demands on workers' abilities and quality, according to Woodcock and Graham (2020), platform work actually encounters little opportunity for workers to undertake career mobility. Instead of getting promoted in the workplace, platform workers often end up doing the same, repetitive tasks over and over again.

Some of the most common precarious working conditions experienced by freelance workers are overwork or working beyond the standard working hours (8 hours per day). Due to the flexible working system, freelance workers must be available at any time within 24 hours. In addition, freelancers also face income instability. They say that large income will be obtained if they handle many projects or orders, otherwise income can be small or even non-existent. When there are no projects or orders. This uncertainty of income makes some of them doubt the income of freelance work and still try to find a job with a steady income.

"If you call it freelance, the income is uncertain, sometimes big, sometimes small" (interview with PP, February 2022).

Freelance workers often face work demands, namely completing work or projects at any hour or outside standard working hours. Clients on the platform, for example, often ask these freelancers to revise the work according to their wishes and in a short time. This is influenced by the ease of communication that is increasingly intense through digitalisation. Freelancers revealed that they even have to finish their work late at night or until the next morning. Working conditions like this can certainly harm both physical and mental health.

b. Survival Strategy

Based on interviews with informants, these freelancers usually take on several jobs at once. In this case, many workers have several jobs at several different employers at the same time. This is done

by workers to maximise their income, because their jobs are not stable or fixed. Freelancers are also self-organised, they push themselves to always look for new challenges. In addition, they believe that the work they are currently doing provides an opportunity for them to improve the quality of their work and gain experience. Taking on different jobs is considered to provide an opportunity to develop skills. Finally, freelance workers realise that there is intense competition on the platform. However, this intense competition is not seen by freelancers in a negative way, but rather in the direction of competition that has a positive impact.

In addition, freelancers try to encourage themselves to upgrade their skills and abilities. According to them, there are still many new technologies that need to be explored. They do this by joining online communities that provide events, seminars and training. The optimism of freelancers about improving their quality is the reason they still want to stay in freelance work.

c. Reflections of Freelance Workers

Based on the results of interviews with informants, freelancers realise that there are various vulnerabilities faced by them in working in a flexible work system. This then makes freelancers doubt if they will continue to do freelance work. As informant PP said, he wants a permanent job to fulfil his needs. He considers that a permanent job is a secure job to guarantee his life in the future.

On the other hand, informant CM welcomed the prospect of freelance work in the future. He said that freelance work in the field of design will be much needed not only domestically but also abroad. He added that it is necessary to increase skills to adapt to new technologies that emerge. In line with CM, SN is also optimistic to always hone skills, adapt to the development and needs of the world of work. She said that in addition to building skills on their own, it is also important to build links and networking among freelancers to support their productivity in the world of work.

In my opinion, the first thing that needs to be improved is the skills of freelancers themselves, they must keep up with the development and needs of the world of work, experience, cutting hours, and from the device as well. And the most important thing is the link or circle, networking. Because if we have networking, for example, if there is a job or project overload, it can be given to other freelance friends as a support as well (interview with SN, February 2022).

3.3 Portrait of Work in the Concept of Decent Work

The concept of decent work according to the International Labour Organization (ILO) is an effort to encourage opportunities for all elements of society to obtain jobs that guarantee freedom, equality, security and human dignity (Ghai, 2002). The elements of decent work are then broken down into four main components, namely employment, social protection, workers' rights, and social dialogue.

a. Employment

The achievement of decent work must be supported by the creation of sustainable employment opportunities. Available jobs must include all people who are looking for work. In this case, the platform is able to provide new model employment opportunities for the community. The employment opportunities provided are also more open when compared to employment opportunities that are generally applied by formal companies and agencies. The absence of restrictions on the level of education, maximum age, certain gender makes this type of work accessible to the general public. Flexible working relationships make people, especially informal

groups, have the opportunity to work anytime and anywhere, which has never been applied in previous decades.

b. Social Protection

Social protection is an aspect of creating safe conditions for everyone against possible vulnerabilities. The purpose of this aspect is to protect workers from losses due to job loss, health conditions, or retirement age. In practice, in this study, workers with the status of freelancers had difficulties in accessing social security, such as pension funds. This is because they are involved in several jobs or projects with different employers.

c. Workers' Rights

The fulfilment of workers' rights is the most important element of decent work. The purpose of this element is to ensure that any work should ensure the fulfilment of equality, freedom, security, and dignity. Workers' rights in the workplace should include, among others: freedom of association, organisation and expression, elimination of all forms of forced labour, elimination of trafficking in persons and elimination of discrimination in employment.

In practice, there are still some insecurity conditions that are most commonly experienced by freelance workers, namely overwork or working beyond the usual working hours (8 working hours per day). Due to the flexible working system, freelance workers must be available at any time within 24 hours. Freelancers also face income instability. They say that they will get a large income if they handle many projects or orders, on the other hand, income can be small or even non-existent when there are no projects or orders. This income uncertainty makes some of them doubt the income of freelance work and still try to find a job with a fixed income. The condition of income instability is also further exacerbated by the deferral of wages, which is the disbursement of wages 2 weeks after the work is completed. In some cases, freelance workers have even experienced payment cancellations due to clients disappearing or projects being cancelled suddenly.

d. Social Dialogue

Social dialogue refers to the negotiation, meeting or information exchange process between government actors, employers and workers regarding conflict resolution, social justice, and the implementation of policies that are in the best interests of all parties. Social dialogue is an important aspect in maintaining cooperation between government, employers and workers and to achieve sustainable development. In this research, in terms of negotiation, there is already a contract that includes terms and conditions on the platform. However, in practice, prior to contract approval or agreement by pressing the agree button, prospective workers seem to be given the opportunity to read the agreement on the platform, but in the formulation of the agreement material, prospective workers are not involved. This means that the agreement should be agreed by both parties, but it has been made in such a way by the platform company alone, workers cannot reject or provide input on the material points of the partnership agreement. Workers can only agree or reject it as a whole. This one-way relationship is proof that there is no bargaining position for freelancers.

3.3.1 Portrait of Work in the Concept of Fair work

The concept of fair work, as discussed earlier, requires consideration of the current discussion on the consequences of technology on new labour relations. This is a consequence of new business models resulting from technological developments. The Fair Foundation proposes the concept of fair work to certify platform companies on the principles of fair work for workers. There are 5 principles of fair work, including: fair pay, fair conditions, fair contracts, fair management, fair representation.

a. Fair Pay

Fair Pay is a principle that concerns workers' wages related to the work completed. In this case, workers must earn a decent wage in accordance with the local minimum wage after work-related costs are taken into account. In addition, the timeliness and regularity of payments are essential to ensure fair pay.

In this study, freelancers earned above the local minimum wage when converted into a month. However, freelancers face income instability. They said that they will get a large income when they handle many projects or orders, whereas their income may be small or even non-existent when there are no projects or orders. This income uncertainty makes some of them doubt the income of freelance work and still try to find a job with a steady income.

b. Fair Condition

Fair Condition is a principle that includes the platform's ability to implement policies that can protect its workers from risks that may occur during the work process. In addition, platforms must be proactive in protecting and promoting the health and safety of their workers. In practice, freelance workers often face work demands, namely completing work or projects at any hour or outside of normal working hours. Clients on platforms, for example, often ask these freelancers to revise work according to their wishes and in a short time.

c. Fair Contracts

The Fair Contract principle includes clear terms and conditions in regulating the platform's work. In addition, the platform as a liaison between workers and clients has the responsibility to oversee the relationship between workers and clients to protect the interests of workers. In this case, there is already a contract that includes terms and conditions on the platform. However, in practice, prior to the approval of the contract or agreement by pressing the agree button, prospective workers seem to be given the opportunity to read the agreement on the platform, but in the formulation of the agreement material prospective workers are not involved. This one-way relationship is evidence of the absence of a bargaining position for freelancers.

d. Fair Management

Fair Management is a principle that involves a transparent process related to platform decisions that affect workers. In this case, sometimes workers experience deactivation or prohibition from accessing the platform. To achieve this principle, platforms must be able to show an explanation of all punitive actions for workers. In this study, when viewed from the management side that regulates

and controls the work process is only carried out unilaterally by the platform. There is no transparency regarding the algorithm system on the platform and access to data and information.

e. Fair Representation

The principle of Fair Representation concerns workers' access to express their opinions to the platform. In addition, platforms must also ensure that workers have the freedom of association and association, as contained in the constitution of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In this research, there are no specific platform restrictions related to freedom of association and association. However, the individual working conditions among freelancers also make it difficult to build solidarity and organisation among freelancers. The absence of a direct physical workplace also makes it difficult for freelancers to organise with fellow workers.

Table 1. Comparison of Decent Work and Fair Work in Digital Labor Platforms (Fastwork Case)

Aspect	Decent Work (ILO)	Fair Work (Fairwork Foundation)	Fastwork Findings
Core Idea	Work with freedom, equality, security, and dignity.	Fairness and justice in digital labor through five principles.	Both promote dignity and protection, but differ in focus: ILO = employment; Fairwork = platform ethics.
Employment / Pay	Access to decent jobs for all.	Fair and timely pay meeting minimum standards.	Open access and flexible jobs, but income instability.
Protection Condition /	Social security and safety from risks.	Safe and healthy working conditions.	No social protection; risk of overwork and stress.
Rights / Contracts	Equality and dignity at work.	Transparent and fair contracts.	One-sided digital contracts; no bargaining power.
Dialogue Management /	Negotiation among workers, employers, and government.	Transparent management and fair decision-making.	Platform control is unilateral; algorithm not transparent.
Participation Representation /	Workers' voice and social justice.	Freedom of association and collective voice.	Isolation limits freelancer solidarity and organization.

Based on the explanation above, it shows that the decent work conditions lived by freelance workers are still not fulfilled. Of all the indicators of decent work by the ILO, the employer platform only fulfils aspects of the indicators to workers, namely employment opportunities. Meanwhile, other

decent work indicators such as social security and social dialogue have not been fulfilled. This has an impact on precarious working conditions, due to the absence of job continuity, job protection and social security for workers. This is inseparable from freelance workers who are positioned as self employed workers not as employees of the platform company, thus making workers' rights in accordance with those stipulated in the decent work agenda not fulfilled by the employer platform. Although the ILO decent work framework concept is generally applied to look at working conditions in formal employment, it is still relevant to look at new working conditions in the platform economy. In other cases, the ILO decent work framework is also increasingly encouraged to be practised in new jobs other than those where the employment relationship is between workers and employers, but in partnership relationships in the platform economy.

On the other hand, based on working conditions seen through the Fairwork framework, it shows that there are several working principles that workers have not fulfilled. The five principles of Fairwork include wages or payments, working conditions, work contracts, work management and representation. In terms of wages, workers face income instability. In terms of working conditions, workers often face demands to complete work outside standard working hours and in a short period of time. In terms of labour contracts, labour contracts are in place but workers are not involved in the process of making labour contracts. In terms of management that regulates the work process, it is only done unilaterally by the platform, there is no transparency regarding the algorithm system on the platform. In terms of representation, the existence of individual working conditions among workers has made it difficult for them to organise and collectivise. Based on the above explanation, both frameworks, namely decent work and fair-work, have not been fulfilled, but both frameworks can be a standard of decent working conditions for workers.

3.4 Resilience and Work Individualisation of Freelance Workers

As discussed in the previous chapter, freelance workers face several conditions of vulnerable work practices. This is due to the fact that freelance workers are considered as self employed workers. This identification of freelance workers as self employed workers seems to offer freedom in determining self-regulated working hours. In reality, the work process is controlled by the employer. In addition, the results of the work carried out by freelance workers only benefit the interests of the company or the owner of the capital.

The working model of freelance workers as self employed workers who work based on projects either with a clear work agreement or not, consequently these digital-creative industry freelancers face more vulnerable conditions. In this case, some do not get the rights as workers like working in institutions or companies, they tend not to be able to sue the platform as an employer. Similarly, their status as self-employed workers clearly impacts on freelance workers' lack of access to social security or protection.

Their position as self-employed workers, on the other hand, is also closely related to entrepreneurship. This narrative of entrepreneurship has made freelance workers consider themselves as 'entrepreneurs' rather than workers. As a result, most freelance workers consider unstable income,

pseudo-employment agreements, long working hours, and no job protection at all, either health insurance or pension insurance.

The individualisation among freelancers also makes it difficult to build solidarity and organisations of freelance workers. In fact, the role of solidarity and worker organisations is very important, namely in voicing the rights of freelance workers, which are usually ignored by companies and even government policies. The absence of a direct physical workplace also makes it difficult for freelancers to organise with fellow workers. Under these conditions, freelancers are in an increasingly vulnerable condition, because structurally it is also difficult to have solidarity and community.

In line with Standing's explanation, these freelancers belong to the precariat class where they face uncertainty and unpredictability in the future (Standing, 2011). To deal with these vulnerable conditions, there is resilience formed by freelancers. Resilience is an effort by freelancers in dealing with job insecurity. In essence, resilience by workers is intended to reduce the vulnerability faced by workers and improve their welfare.

The concept used to see the efforts of freelancers in dealing with job insecurity conditions is through the concept of agency. Agency has been understood as the ability of actors or individuals to mobilise economic, technological and information resources in the face of shocks and pressures (Norris, 2008). It can be seen through social processes such as interpersonal reciprocity and trust, as well as individual support for collective action (Schwarz, 2011). The concept of agency shows that freelancers as agency is a fundamental element to potentially create all kinds of changes in an effort to deal with job insecurity.

Primorac's research shows that the development of worker solidarity and new types of labour organisations and networks among workers can contribute to sustainable employment. This is particularly important in the context of putting short-term labour rights issues on the table on issues related to non-standard work such as insecurity and vulnerability conditions. Such strategies are developed so that these workers are better able to cope with the uncertainty and insecurity of work in the creative industries. This is in line with the concept of agency where there is the ability of actors to deal with vulnerability through the formation of worker solidarity (Primorac, 2016).

In this study, the effort to deal with vulnerable working conditions in the concept of agency is through online communities or groups consisting of fellow workers. The formation of an online community like this is a form of collective action among workers. In the process, the collective action built by these workers leads to the interest of upgrading skills which helps in the learning process, increasing self-capacity and sharing places related to work problems and other work experiences for fellow workers. However, the formation of this community has not yet led to the interest of putting labour rights issues at the structural level.

4 Conclusion and Recommendations

The Fastwork platform represents a flexible mode of work within the digital economy. However, this flexibility simultaneously creates new forms of labour relations that exert control over workers. In

this portrait of work, several conditions fail to meet the principles outlined in both the concepts of *decent work* and *fair work*. In terms of resilience, workers demonstrate various strategies to sustain themselves through collective efforts; however, these remain largely at the individual rather than structural level. The informalisation of work also tends to be normalised or tolerated by workers due to their perceived status as self-employed individuals or independent contractors, which creates an illusion of equality in their relationship with platforms and clients.

Future research should examine more comprehensively the structural barriers to achieving decent and fair working conditions within platform-based labour systems. Moreover, it would be valuable to explore the underlying interests and power dynamics that shape market control by capital owners. From a practical standpoint, this study proposes several recommendations aimed at improving decent and fair working conditions. **For the government**, it is essential to strengthen regulatory frameworks that ensure adequate labour protection in the digital industry. **For platform companies**, the implementation of transparent and equitable work systems aligned with the principles of decent and fair work is necessary. **For workers**, fostering solidarity and collective organisation can enhance their bargaining power in both structural and individual domains. **For society**, promoting awareness of decent work standards and actively supporting initiatives to improve labour conditions are crucial steps toward achieving fairness and sustainability in the digital labour economy.

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