

Religious Holiday Bonus Policy Boosts Economical Fairness for Online Drivers as Gig-Workers

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Abstract

Online drivers are classified as gig-workers who earn income by delivering either goods or customers. When working, they naturally want to earn as much money as possible. Religious Holiday Bonuses are classified as non-fixed allowances and not wages, so the provision of them really needs to be further regulated with appropriate government policies to avoid problems. The novelty of this research lies in discussing the meaning of fairness regarding the receipt of Religious Holiday Bonuses compared to Religious Holiday Allowances in general which aims to improve the economical sector. The purpose of this research is to discuss about a government policy on the provision of Religious Holiday Bonuses from an equitable economic perspective compared to wage-earning workers. The qualitative research methods used is an transcendental phenomenology because it discusses the meaning of fairness through in-depth interviews about the Religious Holiday Bonus Policy which can be a motivating factor at work. Religious Holiday Bonuses are calculated based on order data stored in the online system. Therefore, more orders make higher Religious Holiday Bonuses. However, it's not yet fair or comparable to Religious Holiday Allowances for general workers. This Religious Holiday Bonuses bonus is still a recommendation; not all companies have implemented this economic justice policy. A fair policy not only can improve the economy of online drivers but also can create harmonious working relationships.

Keywords: Gig-workers, economics, Religious Holiday Bonuses, phenomenology, justice.

1. Introduction

The economy is an important aspect that supports the success of Indonesia's development. The development goals are very useful for motivating improvements in living standards through cross-sectoral coordination between regional and central governments. The principles of employment development based on national development principles are specific to the principles of Pancasila

democracy, fairness, and equality. Citizens have an opportunity to improve their standard of living of their families so that they can live decently through the availability of employment (Zham-Zham L. M., 2021). Current labor policies sometimes place workers in a position where they are less protected within the industrial relations system which is making it crucial to establish harmony and fairness for workers through legal protection. Therefore, labor developments in Indonesia should be adjusted to legal aspects that are in line with current economic aspects and future demands.

The workforce plays a very significant role in national economic activity, namely in improving the welfare and productivity of society. The workforce is one of the driving forces behind the abundant resources in this country. However, the lack of job opportunities and the number of unemployed people remain labor issues. A decent livelihood and welfare cannot be achieved without the availability of jobs. The state has guaranteed that every citizen will be able to work according to their skills and talents (Zham-Zham L. M., 2021). Many people in Indonesia still struggle to find work. So, innovative approaches to job hunting and even creating employment opportunities are essential in every situation and condition.

One of such situation usually happens during religious holiday which becomes a regular activity for most families in Indonesia. People planning to celebrate religious holidays well in advance must be able to control the amount of money they spend on holiday needs. However, people who do not plan their holiday budget well tend to spend more money on holiday needs than usual which is unreasonable and excessive. Each person's characteristics influence their behavior in celebrating the holidays. Demographic differences influence a person's shopping preferences (Kacen, J., & Lee, J., 2002). Therefore, seasonal workers during the holidays who fall into the gig-worker category, namely online drivers, are entitled to income which is one of the rights that they should receive for the obligations of having carried out.

2. Research Method

The phenomenological qualitative research methodology is a research approach that focuses on understanding the meaning behind social phenomena experienced by Gig workers particularly when receiving holiday bonuses. This research explores individuals' experiences, perceptions, motivations, and views of an event. The main objective of this approach is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the social reality as experienced by the research subjects. The researchers played a direct role in collecting, processing, and interpreting data. The data collected came from words, narratives, documents, and interviews with online drivers, which were then analyzed inductively to find the meaning of holiday bonuses given during religious holidays.

Transcendental phenomenology was first developed by Edmund Husserl (1859–1938), a German philosopher known as the father of phenomenology. Husserl sought to return science to direct human experience through pure consciousness. Transcendental phenomenology emphasizes the importance of understanding the essence of an experience, rather than merely discussing its symptoms. The term “transcendental” here does not refer to metaphysical matters, but rather to the effort to transcend prejudices, assumptions, and subjective judgments so that researchers can understand phenomena as

they actually occur. Transcendental phenomenology in this study is an attempt to uncover the core meaning of fairness in the provision of religious holiday bonuses from the experiences of Gig-workers specifically online drivers. The meaning of fairness in the provision of holiday bonuses is filtered through consciousness, so that only the pure meaning of the experience remains. Transcendental phenomenology aims to discover the universal meaning of an experience, not merely an individual description.

3. Discussion

Work is an economic activity carried out by a person which aims to help him earn income or wages. Work can be divided into four groups (Wijayanto, H., Ode, S., 2019).

- a. Working optimally in terms of both working hours and wages
- b. Working part-time voluntarily
- c. Working in a job that is incompatible with one's educational background and working part-time voluntarily
- d. Working in a job that is incompatible with one's educational background.

The definition of wages according to Law No. 13 of 2003 concerning on labor affair is the right of workers/laborers that is determined and paid according to an employment agreement, or legislation including allowances for workers/laborers and their families for work and/or services that have been or will be performed. Apart from wages, there is also non-wage income received by workers, namely Religious Holiday Allowance (RHA). This allowance can be a form of goods or something given by employers on religious holidays in accordance with the religion practiced by workers as a necessity for workers to celebrate religious holidays (Zham-Zham L. M., 2021). Holiday celebrations are routine religious events held annually by their followers. During this time, gig workers celebrate the holiday in a special way, namely by praying at places of worship, and some of them celebrate by eating together with their families, exchanging gifts, giving envelopes containing money to younger relatives who are not yet working, and returning to their hometowns (Beatrice, T., & Linawati, N., 2018).

3.1. Holiday Allowance and Holiday Bonus

Religious holiday allowances are something that workers/laborers look forward to every year. However, the implementation of religious holiday allowances is sometimes not as expected by them. Some differences in interpreting about Religious holiday allowances are factually caused by unclear regulations, the inability of companies to provide workers' rights, workers'/laborers' lack of understanding, and unfairness on the part of employers. Therefore, this has a negative impact, such as violations in the provision of religious holiday allowances. Clear rules are needed regarding holiday allowances, including the timing, amount, and who is eligible to receive them properly. The other term of religious holiday allowances is mostly known as holiday bonuses. These clear rules can serve as a key foundation for online drivers as gig workers in fighting for their rights after fulfilling their obligations.

Holiday bonuses are very beneficial for online drivers and become special attention needs to be paid to how they are given. This includes the amount, the calculation system, and monitoring the implementation of the bonuses. These three aspects are crucial for the economy and quality of life of online drivers, which are essential for improving work quality. Therefore, the involvement of relevant parties in the provision of workers' rights is necessary to provide an appropriate solution to address the ongoing concerns and issues (Zham-Zham L. M., 2021).

Wages are the most important factor in increasing worker productivity. In addition, wages can also be used by workers/laborers to fulfil their basic needs, support community welfare, and improve access to production methods and economic opportunities (Supramono, G., 2009). Wages are given as compensation for services rendered by workers/laborers to companies for their achievements and services contributed to production activities. Wages are determinedly given based on the minimum cost of living for workers and their families, binding regulations on provincial minimum wages, company productivity and capabilities, length of service, position, education, and competence, as well as differences in job types. Bonuses have a significant effect on loyalty. Employee productivity can be influenced by several factors, including the provision of bonuses. Bonuses are the right of employees for the labor and services they provide to the company. Bonuses are a right that implies an increase in work productivity (Amalia, R., 2024).

3.2. Economic justice for public workers and online drivers

Income is the amount of money received by workers from a particular company or institution. This study uses bonus income, namely the Holiday Allowance. This allowance is received once a year and is generally equal to one month's salary (Beatrice, T., & Linawati, N., 2018). One indicator of bonuses is fairness in the distribution of bonuses (Amalia, R., 2024). Fairness in distributing Eid bonuses refers to the principle that all customers should be given the same opportunity to receive these bonuses without unfair or discriminatory treatment. Eid bonuses for customers can be given in the form of additional interest, service fee discounts, or other gifts as a token of appreciation for their loyalty in using banking products and services during a certain period. Fairness in this case means that the criteria for receiving the bonus must be clear and apply equally to all customers without having any favoritism or special treatment that is detrimental to others.

The noesis stage is the researcher's understanding when hearing the responses from online drivers regarding the Eid Bonus. Informants who work as online drivers and online couriers said, *"At first I was surprised, sir, when I received a notification that money had been transferred to my account from the office. I have been working for an online motorcycle taxi service for almost five years. For me (a 31-year-old man), the holiday bonus of Rp 450,000 that I received is a windfall and something new among online drivers. This is the first time we (online drivers) can enjoy our coffee with a full smile and the calculations are done directly through the app."*

The holiday bonus at online transportation companies has been given to workers in the amount of one month's basic salary, and additional bonuses for online drivers in accordance with policies that vary each year. Meanwhile, the Holiday Bonus is compensation from a new policy that will be implemented in 2025, namely; *"For productive and high-performing online drivers and couriers, the*

Religious Holiday Bonus will be given proportionally according to performance in the form of cash, calculated at 20% (twenty percent) of the average monthly net income for the last 12 (twelve) months”.

The next stage is inter-subjective which explains how justice is interpreted in relation to the holiday bonuses given by the government to online drivers, because prior to 2025, Religious Holiday Allowances (RHA) were only given to workers who had an employment relationship. When researchers questioned several informants about the meaning of Holiday Bonus fairness, they quoted company management involved in the online transportation service sector, who interpreted the fairness of the holiday bonus as follows: *“The holiday allowance is something that must be received by workers and online drivers (online drivers), and the reward is in the form of money.”* According to another informant, the online driver coordinator, Holiday bonus interpretation of fairness is still not implemented. Several testimonies are from informants regarding the meaning of Holiday bonus fairness for online drivers. Based on his statement: *"Yes, if you work in an office, you will definitely be given it. But we're not office workers, so who are we supposed to expect to give us benefits? Who's going to give us anything? Hehehehe. But sometimes, office workers give us bonuses, let's call them bonuses, sir. The amount is whatever they feel like giving."*

To follow-up to the case above, the process is intuitive in nature based on a sense of justice that holiday bonus is provided without considering the knowledge and experience of labor agencies. The result of this intuition indicates that the provision of holiday bonus still tends to receive less attention from transportation companies, even in reality, despite the government policy related to the Circular Letter of the Minister of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia Number M/3/HK.04.00/III/2025 concerning the Provision of Religious Holiday Bonuses for 2025 for Drivers and Couriers in Application-Based Transportation Services. The initial assumption of informants as online drivers who still feel that there is something odd about the holiday bonus. The categories and amounts of bonuses for some drivers do not match the criteria.

Informants from the leadership of online driver organizations said that they also condemned the provision of a holiday bonus of Rp. 50,000, which was not in accordance with the Circular Letter of the Ministry of Manpower. This phenomenon is considered a systematic practice of injustice. *“This is clear evidence of a practice of injustice against the Indonesian people who work as online drivers, and our association also condemns this practice of slavery. On average, the bonus received by online drivers is mostly Rp 50,000, even though they have been working for more than five years. According to him, only a handful of online drivers receive a bonus of Rp, 900,000.”* The agency in charge of labor affairs is working to coordinate and formulate better policies for the benefit of all parties involved in online transportation. Protection for online driver partners is related to their rights as drivers, which are regulated in the Minister of Manpower's Circular Letter. As the government, it is a forum for providing protection for the interests of citizens who report cases to the BHR post. *"We will ask for clarification from the digital platform or applicator as to why these people can earn tens of millions, while holiday bonus only earns fifty thousand, and later the regional office will open complaint posts at each regional coordinator point. The app operators have the right to clarify the complaints made by online drivers and the proportionality of performance from the app."*

Holiday bonuses are payments given directly or indirectly on an irregular basis to Gig-Workers who work as online drivers, and are paid according to a different time unit than the payment of basic wages. Holiday bonuses are certainly very beneficial for online drivers, so special attention is needed regarding their distribution, such as monitoring the implementation of holiday bonuses, applying holiday bonus standards, and accommodating aspirations if problems arise.

This research discussion is an important object to implement and improve the quality of Gig-workers' life in order to boost their performance. The role of various related parties in implementing the employment system for the above workers/laborers is a very appropriate solution to address concerns about issues, particularly benefits and wages that have been felt so far (Hidayat, M., 2006). Gig-Workers can start their own business or work for someone else, and this is related to labor policies that are useful for protecting the rights of gig workers. Labor policies are all regulations that form the basis for regulating labor relations between workers and their employers or companies concerning on work arrangements related to those labor relations (Asikin, Z. et al., 2006). Workers are a resource that has contributed greatly to the progress of the company. Without any workers in a company or organization, it would be very difficult for that organization to achieve its goals. Therefore, workers have a strategic position in developing and advancing the company in terms of work productivity and economy (Qodariyah, E. L., 2017).

Ultimately, holiday bonuses for online drivers are not merely used to buy new clothes, seek money by selling valuable items, pawning electronic goods, motor vehicles, and borrowing from friends or relatives for religious holiday needs. This shows that low-income communities focus more on needs than wants when spending their holiday allowance (Beatrice, T., & Linawati, N., 2018).

4. Conclusion

A religious holiday allowance is mostly and eagerly awaited by online drivers every year. The religious holiday bonus is a right for Gig-Workers that employers are obligated to pay. Employers should provide a fair religious holiday bonus to online drivers before religious holidays which aims to ease the burden on them due to the high expenses incurred in celebrating their religious holidays.

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