The Sense of Community of Online Taxi Drivers

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Abstract

This study explores how the sense of community (SOC) is represented in online taxi driver communities. This study in Yogyakarta utilized qualitative descriptive research. Data collection was conducted using in-depth interview by snowball sampling method. Thematic analysis is used with theory-driven approach of SOC framework by McMillan and Chavis (1986). Nine male online taxi drivers were the participants. The findings show that all four SOC components are present: membership, influence, integration & need fulfillment, and shared emotional connection. Membership has permeable expanding boundaries with multiple membership and multilayered communities with conventional taxi drivers involvement. Bidirectional influence represents the influence component. Integration and needs fulfillment exists by their informational and helping shared values. Shared emotional connection is represented with the 'brotherhood' concept as their main community value. This study contributes to the literature on how sense of community is represented among informal workers amidst the heightened popularity of gig economy.

*Keywords***:** *sense of community, online taxi, transportation network company, community psychology*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi bentuk representasi dari *sense of community* (SOC) pada komunitas sopir taksi *online*. Studi di Yogyakarta ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Pengambilan data dilakukan dengan metode wawancara mendalam dengan pengambilan sampel *snowball.* Analisis tematik digunakan dengan pendekatan berdasarkan teori SOC oleh McMillan dan Chavis (1986). Sembilan sopir taksi online laki-laki menjadi partisipan penelitian. Temuan menunjukkan adanya representasi keempat komponen SOC: keanggotaan, pengaruh, integrasi serta pemenuhan kebutuhan, dan koneksi emosional bersama. Keanggotaan memiliki batasan yang longgar dan terus berkembang dengan adanya keanggotaan - kelompok berganda serta keterlibatan sopir taksi konvensional. Komponen pengaruh juga ditemukan dengan adanya pengaruh dua arah. Integrasi dan pemenuhan kebutuhan ditemukan dengan adanya nilai kolektif informasional dan nilai membantu. Koneksi emosional bersama direpresentasikan dengan adanya '*paseduluran'* sebagai nilai komunitas utama. Studi ini berkontribusi pada literatur tentang bagaimana representasi nyata *sense of community* diantara pekerja informal di masa *gig economy* yang semakin populer.

Kata Kunci: *sense of community*, taksi *online*, *transportation network company*, psikologi komunitas

Introduction

Community or *"gemeinschaft"* was defined by the 19th-century German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies two centuries ago as small groups with tightly knitted social ties among members, usually modeled in small towns or villages (Tönnies in Hammond, 2017). Almost two centuries later, this definition of community has changed with the existence of technological advancement that changes the way people interact, including communities. People still need some form of belonging to a certain group, whether that belonging comes from the same interest, occupations, or living in the same neighborhood. From their initial relatedness to each other and need for belonging, comes many activities that are held within the group, then they begin to develop a solid identity of the group. This is what a sense of community means. A sense of community is "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to being

together" (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Humans need other humans to survive from necessities up to the need for psychological consolation from other humans as community belonging is strongly associated with good mental health (Michalski et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, there has been a new disruptive wave of ride-hailing transportation. It is indicated by the increasing popularity of Gojek and Grab as pioneers of ride-hailing transportation of Transportation Network Company (TNC) and also as the two biggest companies in Indonesia. This rapid growth of TNC is shown by the increase of GoCar drivers (one of Gojek services) from only 800 people up to 3 million people in just 3 years (Pratama, 2016). The Gojek app. alone has been downloaded 142 million times and each day Gojek handles 3-5 orders per second (Hastuti, 2019). In Yogyakarta, the number of online taxis has reached more or less 6000 partners (Widiyanto, 2018).

Ride-hailing transportation in Indonesia has two types of vehicles and those are cars and motorcycles. A driver who works using cars is called an online taxi driver and becomes a partner usually under GoCar in Gojek and/ or GrabCar in Grab companies as both of them are the most popular ride-hailing companies in Indonesia. With the sudden growth of the number of online taxi drivers in Yogyakarta, arise conflict between conventional taxi drivers and online taxi drivers as they are going after the same thing which is passengers looking for a ride in Yogyakarta. For decades, the conventional taxi has been a ruler in Indonesia and Yogyakarta in terms of private car transportation (which differs from car rental). The conflicts that were rising came from actual occurrences such as clashes on the street resulting in the physical destruction of each conflicting parties' vehicles and also the rapid spread of hoaxes among social media group chats worsen the conflict tension (Debora, 2019). It has come to know that conflicts arise from the financial insecurity that conventional taxi drivers face as a result of income competition with online taxi drivers (Zohrah & Prasetyo, 2018).

Along with this conflict, arise the existence of online taxi driver communities. The news portrayal of these communities often involves the act of mass helping for its members such as an escort for its members that face law charges (Nugroho, 2019) and also the act of demonstration (Edi, 2017).

The activity of helping others, the similarity of jobs, and common enemies from outside of the group all contribute to the existence and development of the sense of community. Even more so the type of job being online taxi driver only relatively known in big cities and their bargaining power is lower than conventional taxi drivers that have existed for decades makes it possible, even forces online taxi drivers to unite and eventually have a strong sense of community.

Sense of community is a term first proposed by Sarason in 1974 defined as "the perception of similarity to others, and acknowledged interdependence with others, a willingness to maintain this interdependence by giving to or doing for others what one expects from them, the feeling that one is part of a larger dependable and stable structure" (Sarason in Hassanli et al., 2021). One theoretical framework of the dimensions of psychological sense of community that has been dominant in the literature is the framework made by McMillan and Chavis (1986).

McMillan and Chavis (1986) operationalized SOC under the term sense of community, its definition is "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to being together". These phrases that make up the definition are from the four components of sense of community (SOC). Those components are membership, influence, reinforcement: integration &

fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection.

Membership is the feeling of belonging or of sharing a sense of personal relatedness. Membership has five attributes: boundaries, emotional safety, a sense of belonging and identification, personal investment, and a common symbol system. Boundaries serve as meaning that there are people who belong and people who do not. Emotional safety may be considered part of the broader notion of security that boundaries established by membership criteria provide the structure and security that protect group intimacy. The sense of belonging and identification involves the feeling, belief, and expectation that one fits into the group and has a place there, a feeling of acceptance by the group, and a willingness to sacrifice for the group. Personal investment is an important contributor to a person's feeling of group membership and to his or her sense of community as McMillan (in McMillan & Chavis, 1986) contended (a) that working for membership will provide a feeling that one has earned a place in the group and (b) that, because of this personal investment, membership will be more meaningful and valuable. A common symbol system serves several important functions in creating and maintaining a sense of community, one of which is to maintain group boundaries.

Influence is a sense of mattering, of making a difference to a group, and of the group mattering to its members. This element means that there is a bidirectional effect of influence on both an individual and the community to each other. The third element is reinforcement: integration and fulfillment of needs. This is the feeling that members' needs will be met by the resources received through their membership in the group. In the other words, individuals' needs will be fulfilled through the whole group's cooperative behavior. The last element is shared emotional connection, it is the commitment and belief that members have shared and will share history, common places, time together, and similar experiences. Strong communities are those that offer members positive ways to interact, important events to share and ways to resolve them positively, opportunities to honor members, to invest in the community, and to experience a spiritual bond among members.

Chavis et al. (1986) then made an instrument called "Sense of Community Index" (SCI) to measure neighborhood participation. Later on, SCI became useful across different community settings ranging from older populations (Gonyea et al., 2018), minority communities such as the community of gay men (Yip & Chan, 2021), and religious groups (Ng & Fisher, 2018; Sohi et al., 2017). Sense of community among community members is also found to be associated with community participation (Talò et al., 2014).

Sense of community is essential during a crisis, as it builds connectedness with crowds who are facing the same problem and builds collective perception (Al-Omoush et al., 2021). Sense of community is also essential to induce the environment of problem-solver within their community and increase positive Word-of-Mouth (Naranjo-Zolotov et al., 2021). Current research about the sense of community grows into another set of theories called Sense of Virtual Communities (SOVC) that are evolved from computer-mediated communication (Chih et al., 2017).

The majority of research that investigates the sense of community tends to use a quantitative approach (Loomis & Wright, 2018) and using SCI or SCI-2 scale and studied mostly in western societies. Only a few researchers studied it qualitatively in eastern societies especially studying the actual representation of the sense of community that occurs within communities. On the other hand, the nature of being an online taxi driver as a rather individual job also differs from conventional employees at the office. They are informal employers within the gig economy, that is, temporary jobs with the opportunity of being

flexible time working (Kibaroğlu, 2018). They have fewer benefits to gain workplace friendship resulting from a physical permanent workspace.

The characteristic of a non-existent physical workspace that is the nature of having a job as an online taxi driver, and lack of structure in communities reduce the chance of social interaction among online taxi drivers, let alone having a sense of community among workers. But despite all of them, the reality is that communities do exist within online taxi drivers with many purposeful interactions as mentioned above.

Looking back 2 years in 2019, Gojek has been growing exponentially as a company. In 2019, Gojek became the first 'decacorn' startup that has a valuation of over 10 million USD (Rafie, 2019). Looking back in history, the company has grown from being the company that often gets public protest to the company that helps keep the country's economy running in the Covid-19 pandemic. As with the growth of Gojek as a TNC company it also flourished with the emergence of online taxi driver communities. It is becoming more apparent that virtual communities are becoming more important in people's lives in general. Sense of virtual community (SOVC) is one antecedent of the maintenance and success of various virtual communities (González-Anta et al., 2021). The framework of this study is best illustrated in figure 1.

Based on the literature review from prior research, there is also a population gap. It has come to be known that the sub-population of informal workers within the crisis, in this case, online taxi drivers, has not been studied much in Southeast Asia. been unexplored in eastern societies. These appear to be significant and need to be investigated. This community is growing due to the demands for flexible working hours especially in Millenials (Setiyani et al., 2020).

Research Methods

This research is conducted in Yogyakarta by qualitative method with a total of 9 participants. Participant recruitment is done by mainly snowball sampling. We searched for participants through ordering online transportation services, mainly Gojek as Gojek is the most popular ride-hailing transportation apps. In Indonesia (EcommerceIQ, 2018). Another way that we have done this is by visiting some of the communities' basecamps in Yogyakarta, we extract the information about basecamp from our earlier informants. We visited the basecamps and we interviewed members that were currently in the basecamps and are willing to be interviewed.
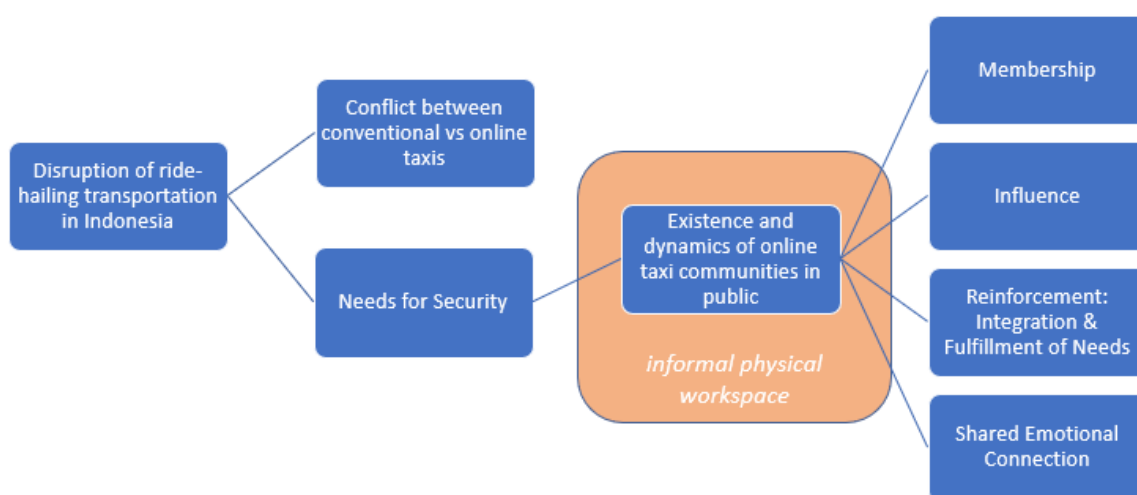

Figure 1. Framework of the research

Table 1
List of Participants

Name (pseudonym)	Years of working as online taxi driver	Community Membership
Norman	1.5 years	One colony
Anwar	1.5 years	One colony
Alfi	more than 1 year	One emergency call community (Circle) Ex-member of other one emergency call community (Crescent) One colony
Andre	1.5 years	Ex-member of one emergency call community Members of at least two colonies (inactive)
Johan	2 years	One colony
Firman	1.5 years	Three colonies (one of them Red Orchid)
Bambang	more than 1 year	One emergency call community (Circle, as the leader) Three colonies
Hikmat	more than 1 year	One colony (as the leader)
Burhan	1 year	One emergency call community (Circle) One vendor

The data gathering process is done by doing in-depth interviews with the participants. Interview guideline was developed by the research team, then the data is analyzed using thematic analysis by a theory-driven approach using the sense of community theory by McMillan and Chavis (1986). Thematic analysis is conducted by four inter-raters to ensure the saturation of the data. The main question of this study is how the sense of community represents itself in online taxi driver communities. We formed our interview guidelines to answer these questions: 1) "How were the structures of online taxi driver communities built and maintained?", 2) "How was community members' experience and opinions about their community and also other communities?".

All participants are male online taxi drivers who lived in Yogyakarta as only a few females who work as online taxi drivers (Glöss et al., 2016). Our informants' age are ranging from 22-35 years old, starting from college students up to males who have married and also who is currently middle-aged. All of the informants have worked as online taxi drivers of both Gojek and Grab ranging from a few months up to a few years since the beginning of Gojek establishment and later on Grab establishment in Yogyakarta. Our method of snowball sampling might be the reason as online taxi drivers tend to give referrals for more senior drivers to be respectful.

Informally, we also have taken observation as our additional data gathering method to familiarize ourselves with the environment of online taxi drivers by ordering the service and observing the vehicles that they use.

Results and Discussion

Sense of Community Representation in Online Taxi Driver Community

All four senses of community representations are present within online taxi driver communities with many variations. Those representations of a sense of community within the communities are the existence of permeable expanding boundaries, a common symbol system, bidirectional influence, members' need fulfillment, and shared experience.

Permeable Expanding Boundaries

Online taxi communities have permeable expanding boundaries that are not necessarily rigid in terms of a group membership. The online taxi driver community has a permeable regulation to its members regarding membership. There are multiple involvements of members across

different communities and involvement of 'supposedly' outgroups.

According to our informants, many online taxi driver communities have more than one membership (even multiple higher roles) across different groups of communities. Some of them even have three colonies with him being a leader in one of them. The example of multiple memberships is shown by our conversation with Bambang, currently placed as Circle leader: *"I joined 3 colonies. (...) I am just a member* [in two colonies], *even though those entire colonies joined Circle* [Bambang is the leader of Circle]. *I positioned myself when I am in a colony and there's an event, I come as a member. When there is Circle event, they come too* [as a member of Circle]*"*

Permeable expanding boundaries are shown too by the involvement of groups of people who 'supposedly' do not belong in online taxi driver communities because of their identity. The first group of people who 'supposedly' do not belong is the retired online taxi drivers. They are still actively involved in their communities. Active members of online taxi driver communities are defined by our informants by their frequency of involvement in the communities. How often they attend group meetings and how active they are on their communities' online group chats.

The following is the statement by Anwar: *"The majority of us is 90% online taxis. Some didn't work anymore* [as a taxi driver] *but still joined, there are many* [of them]. *The purpose is not necessarily* [only for online taxi drivers] *but for wider road users. (...) They are still in this group* [group chat(s)]. *The most important* [thing] *is the emergency* [cases] *on the road* [helping people].*"*

The second group of people who 'supposedly' do not belong are conventional taxi drivers. The way of working by conventional taxi drivers has changed. Some conventional taxi drivers are also working as online taxi drivers when they do not have many passengers from the conventional way of waiting on the side of the street. Despite the history of frequent conflict of interest as mentioned before in the previous section, Bambang, who is the Circle leader, tells a rather unexpected statement we have not expected that his community is open to the whole road users, especially online taxis and also conventional taxis:

There are lots of them [conventional taxis]. *In here* [Circle] (…) *there was someone called Karunia* (pseudonym), *he usually called for Curl Taxi* (pseudonym), *he joined Circle too. If* [we] *happened to meet, there are lots of Curl Taxi drivers that have Circle stickers on their cars because they also* [use] *online apps* [online taxi apps for drivers] *When they didn't get orders from the conventional taxi, they turned on the app. If I'm not mistaken, there are 12 taxis* [who joined Circle]. *In the future, we are going to keep gathering the entire lines, conventional taxis, black license plate taxis, the purpose is* [because] *we are together in the street, so if anything happens, anyone can help* [each other].

Besides the formal statement from the community's leader to open his community to wider road users, another involvement of 'supposedly' outgroups is also possible by the act of helping other online taxi drivers who are not yet a member of the informant's community. This act of helping is done through the 'a friend from a friend' channel. One of our informants has a friend who back then had not joined the community yet. Burhan requests his community friends to help his friend by online group chat to help his friend despite him not (yet) being a member:

"When there was an accident, my friend isn't a member yet, well I shared [the request] *in the group* [online group chat] [they] *immediately help, it's acceptable* (...) *he still got helped."* This permeable expanding boundaries of multiple membership and roles; and involvement of 'supposedly' outgroups indicates that the boundaries within online taxi drivers do not

come black and white. The community is not rigid, to some extent. The extent is that some communities still require an insider, or a friend, already in those communities to connect those people outside the communities.

A Common Symbol System

We have found that online taxi driver communities have a common symbol system. Two representations of the system are the existence of a physical logo representing different communities, and a distinct way to greet members. The physical logo is used by their members in the form of car identifiers such as stickers and also in the form of wearables such as identity cards, caps, and clothes. This wearable is often used for various activities such as in routine meetings, other times the wearable is put on the dashboard of their car. These attires and stickers can be owned by members from the first time they register themselves as a member by paying the registration fee for around 25 thousand rupiahs (around 1.76 US Dollars). These wearable and stickers can be used to identify internal members.

One of our informants even purposefully put his community cap on his dashboard so other members that pass by will recognize the logo. A distinct way to greet members is our second finding within a common symbol system. Burhan, our informant, is often greeted by another member of his community on the street in a particular way, and that is by the headlight of their cars. He is very happy if someone recognized him while driving on the road.

Figure 2. Online taxi driver's car spotted with communities' logos at Sudirman street Yogyakarta

"I am very happy when there is someone who greets [me] *while* [I] *was driving on the street, That's why if anyone knows* [each other], *they dimmed* [and brighten their car headlights repeatedly]*"*

A common symbol system that is also interesting is that the communities' names have some importance to reasoning why some people joined the community. Johan told us that he chose his current community as his group because his community has a name whose meaning resembles his hope in terms of his job as an online taxi driver, which is to gain money to support his daily life:

"I choose it [the colony] **laughs* is because like..* [it is] *touching, others* [other communities' names] *is like..ordinary.* [The colony] *means..* [the first word] *is fishing nets,* [the second word] *is food So* [the name means] *'fishing' for food. The name is like a Javanese philosophy so* [I] *feel touched* [by the name] *that's what I meant, how can* [the name of his community] *could* [make me feel] *so touched, as if we are truly* [doing a job as an online taxi driver] *to look for something to eat."*

He also shared his opinion about other communities' names who is too ordinary, by inferring from the name of the groups that he mentioned, it is implied that those ordinary groups just derive their name only from the name of the area that the group is based on and Johan prefers name that has philosophical meaning: *"(...) Because there are lots* [of communities, the following are some of them, by pseudonym] *Red Orchid* [because Red Orchid is based on a street called Orchid Street] (…) *I'm not happy with it. What is it? What is their meaning?* [There is another called] *Golden Gate because they often hang out under the bridge, thus the name is Golden Gate."*

Bidirectional Influence

Influence within online taxi driver communities comes in both ways. The whole group can put influence its members while its members are also able to influence the whole group. One example of group-to-

member influence is the act of public demonstration. Online taxi driver communities often held public demonstrations to fight the rights of online taxi drivers from the government and ride-hailing companies. Firman, one of our informants, implicitly said that he went to Jakarta to do a public demonstration because all of his friends did the same thing: *"The latest public demonstration, people who are being online taxi drivers as their main job, they are 'fighting to the death. I joined that one. In Jakarta right? We slept there* [at the demonstration area] *like a camper. Those military tents? Exactly where I slept. Back then it was in the rainy season, ugh, so wet. The bag filled with spare clothes* [were also wet]. *What should I do? Actually um, for me it's not* [indicating that he wasn't willing to do public demonstration]*, but everyone did the same thing, well…*[had to] *go full force I guess"*

Member-to-group influence could be recognized by the presence of an act of helping by the whole group for its members. Bambang, tells the story about how one of Crescent members got his car stolen by his passengers, and from this 'unlucky' single person accident, came the act of mass helping across different communities in Yogyakarta:

"So there was a car who belong to one of Crescent member, in the afternoon he rode along tourism complex area and got a passenger, at 4 PM the car stopped around Prambanan Temple, the driver was told to buy some stuff in front of a convenience store [then passenger tricked him into leaving his car alone with his passengers and the car is taken by his passenger] *then he asked for help from Crescent, he sent his car photos then the news spread across groups.* (…) [Many of the members saw it from different places as time went by]*People who have already turned of the apps* (GO-JEK & Grab apps) *had to turn it off again. Finally until 70 cars* [have followed the car] *then the culprit was caught in Sentolo Post* (…) *The street became crowded because of this*

stolen car (…) *From there we finally meet other online taxi driver communities all in one place."*

Members' Need Fulfillment

Members of online taxi driver communities get their needs fulfilled in types of work-related help and non-work-related help. Work-related help that online taxi drivers get is the accessibility of information for community members. The online taxi driver is mainly an individual kind of job and by joining the group, information from other members and/or from stakeholders related to online taxi drivers could be known faster by its members rather than not being affiliated with any online taxi driver communities. This accessibility of information is available cross-communities. Leader of community representatives share the information with another representative:

"Colonies share events across many colonies. Because each colony leader already knows other leaders. So usually if there were clashes then we got the info, then we came together to the scene (…) *There will be some updates regarding the development of the clash on the scene. If the final update is mediation between conflicted parties there would be a news update."*

Besides getting information from cross-communities, members could also get personal guidance from other members that improve their welfare as online taxi drivers. For starters, members could get guidance on how to get more income as a driver from other members who are more experienced. They can get tips from how to gain more income up to technical tips on how to do maintenance for their car. One of our informants, Norman, also said that other members helped him to get access to be an online taxi driver:

"This group has helped me get access to be an online taxi driver. I face difficulties with it. I have registered [to be an online taxi driver] *but I still couldn't get in. From there, there was a friend who knows a friend… so from there they helped me"*

Our other informant, Burhan, also said that joining the community can help him deal with harsh people. He told us that because online taxis often have a conflict of interest with conventional taxis, he has to be extra careful when driving in certain areas with the abundant presence of conventional taxis:

"Sometimes there are people who are harsh or soft, if we don't have friends who are usual to deal with those kinds of [harsh] *people, it is going to be difficult...especially in the airport. Airports are the most difficult* [place where most harsh people are needed to deal with].*"*

Another work-related help that members of the communities could get is the act of helping each other in need by a 'rescue team'. Generally, members of the community can help each other while they need help on the street mainly in two ways: rescue team and general help by members from the community. Despite that, communities can help other members not from the rescue team but just the act of help in terms of being the same member from the community.

Alfi said that online taxi driver communities also present field coordinators who coordinate the act of helping members that got into difficulties on the road such as technical difficulties in their cars:

"Field coordinator is for such events like for example [follows up] *someone who ask for help in the middle of the night, car battery runs out, punctured tire. For example on the north of Jogja, there's someone* [field coordinator], *there are also* [someone who may currently in that place] *in east Jogja, west Jogja."*

Another help the communities do is non-work-related. Members of the communities often help other internal members and also members' family relatives that got into personal difficulties such as physical illness, car accidents, and natural disasters. Anwar is one of the members who helped his friend whose home got into natural disaster:

"(...) Then some members got into a tornado disaster around Amplaz, from there we helped. Some help financially, others contribute by giving sleeping supplies"

Shared Experience

Shared experience is another representation of SOC in online taxi driver communities. Our findings within shared experience are shared activities and good quality of interaction. The members can participate in many activities and have a good quality time because of the concept of 'brotherhood'. Brotherhood is a concept that is held by members of many online taxi driver communities that make them care and bond with each other. They can help each other despite having few chances to meet in person and build a relationship in real life but this 'faith' keeps them believing that everyone will help each other and this concept makes them able to bond quickly whenever a chance of meeting happens. This is an explanation from Bambang, our informant:

"The concept of sedulur (brotherhood) *is that they don't know one person from each other, not yet. So for example on the campus, at least in there, the least is that every day* [students] *meet each other. It isn't like that exactly in sedulur. Almost one year* [we] *didn't get to meet each other, we meet in kopdar, but not everyone can attend that. I have a certain saying that 'Even when we don't meet each other we already love each other, even more, loving when we already know more about each other. When someone needs help in group chats, we didn't know him/her, what is his name, where is he from, if he needs help from a particular area, many people come to help him despite* [his unknown appearance] *(...) the concept of sedulur for me is… making strangers become our brothers and sisters"*

From this concept of 'brotherhood', members could have shared activities and good quality of interaction. Those shared activities involve periodical meetings or in the local term. "*Kopi Darat*", advocate

activities, human cause activities, and also recreational events.

The periodical meetings or "*Kopi Darat*" in its original name have additional purposes. Bambang tells the reason for communities that are based only for emergency purposes, "*Kopi Darat*" could be a way to know each other directly, not just knowing from online group chat:

"To disclosure our relationships we have an event called kopdar. Its function is also for people to meet face-to-face 'oh so Mr. Slamet is him' 'oh actually if [we] *finally meet each other we can talk where his house is', something like that to open up the interaction."*

The act of advocate is often done by members. Most online taxi driver communities are formed initially for survival purposes. They help each other with their day-to-day job as an online taxi driver and also they held mass movements for fighting their rights among stakeholders in the TNC scheme.

Members of the communities also arranged events for social causes such as fundraising among its members for victims of natural disasters, blood donor events, etc. These shared activities can be initiated by a single member who knows someone who needed help.

Another finding that is seen as a shared experience is that members of the communities also held recreational events for their members such as sightseeing, drinking alcohol, and singing entertainment.

This shared experience also made up good feelings about them joining the community and bonding with the members from their interaction with each other. Firman, our same informant who is reluctant to do public demonstrations, is feeling comfortable having friends from the community by its joyful events:

"It wasn't a long time Red Orchid held an event. So we had 4 members who were just graduated, we did a gratitude event. All of the RO members were contacted, let's cook this and that [the act of contacting everyone and did feast together] *is brotherhood. I felt 'I have been in car club for a long time, and when I was still in high school, I never felt something like this. There is a swimming pool, and at 1 am, the weather is very cold, all of the members jumped* (...) *All of them, the old ones, the youngsters. It makes me.. aduh... 'rasane ning ati'* (felt so touched). *Meanwhile in car club ... there were only car contests and such."*

Our same informant also said:

"I am very happy. Seriously. There weren't any activities like this in car clubs. Online [online taxi driver communities] *is more intimate than car clubs."*

Bambang told us the concept of brotherhood and its relevance with "Kopi darat": *"The concept of sedulur* [the reality within Circle communities] *is that they don't know one person from each other, not yet. So for example on the campus, at least in there the least is that every day* [students] *meet each other. It isn't like that exactly in sedulur. Almost one year* [we] *didn't get to meet each other, we meet in kopdar, but not everyone can attend that. I have a certain saying that 'Even when we don't meet each other we already love each other, even more, loving when we already know more about each other. When someone needs help in group chats, we didn't know him/her, what is his name, where is he from, if he needs help from a particular area, many people come to help him despite* [his unknown identity] (...) *the concept of sedulur for me is... making strangers become our brothers and sisters"*

This 'connectedness' is also shown by the preference to stay chatting with other members in the basecamp. The majority of members of online taxi driver communities are male and some of them are married. From the time they spent together as a community, they have formed a bond so they are comfortable having a deeper connection. Norman told us that many of those married members chose to spend time

in basecamp than in their home with their families:

"This [community]… *many of us already have wives, but they feel more at home with their friends here"*

The Development of Online Taxi Driver Community in Yogyakarta

Online taxi driver communities in Yogyakarta have three different forms based on their purposes. Those three forms of communities are emergency call communities, colonies, and vendors. These forms of communities differ based on their origin reasoning of establishments. Emergency call communities serve mainly as a platform to get from and to give help to other members. In Yogyakarta, emergency call communities for online taxi drivers are known as Circle, and later on, arise another group called Crescent. These groups' activities are based mainly on online group chats. From these group chats, members of the communities could get and also give help to each other in terms of job-related help as an online taxi driver on the street.

Alongside the existence of emergency call communities, there is another form of a community called Colony. Colony's purpose is by being a platform specifically to connect online taxi drivers on the road as close friends to hang out with. According to most of our informants, the colony is the most numerous and diverse type of group in the whole online taxi driver communities in Yogyakarta. Colonies' size varies from only a dozen members up to hundreds based only from one certain area to many areas in Yogyakarta. Most of the colonies members also joined emergency call communities to be a wider platform to get help across Yogyakarta. Despite numerous colonies, there has not been any formal record of the total number of colonies in Yogyakarta. The existence of a colony usually spreads mouth-to-mouth, starting from usual chatting while waiting for orders. From the usual chatting, they could join the colonies. Another origin of colony establishment in recent times

according to our informants is the most recent government regulation that required online taxi drivers to be affiliated with a certain group. This other type of colony is called vendor. The vendor is also a taxi online driver community but at the same time vendor is a legal institution that has a law license.

From the explanation above, the online taxi driver community in Yogyakarta has a diverse structure and some diversity could be explained by its origin of the establishment. For the simplicity of the defining groups in this study, the community was used as the umbrella term for those groups because all of the member communities have the same characteristics, namely working together as taxi drivers, not just online taxi drivers.

Discussion

Sense of community representation in the online taxi driver community comes in five forms and those are permeable boundaries, a common symbol system, bidirectional influence, members' need fulfillment, and shared experience. This finding is similar to Blanchard and Markus (in Rotman & Wu, 2014) with a sense of community representation in virtual communities, including informational and socioemotional support to all members publicly. Online taxi drivers can be categorized partly as virtual communities of practices (VCoP) as it is a social network developed from individuals who interact through social media and share practice-related knowledge from their occupational experience with its distribution members in vast geographical areas (Chang et al., 2016)

Yet after aligning the result and the current conception theory of sense of community arises a contradictory thing that is not expected to coexist. Permeable boundaries exist while at the same time members of online taxi driver communities are contented with the interactions within the group and also across completely

different groups without feeling threatened from their membership.

Membership

Boundaries are needed as protection against threat and they served as a fence for communities to develop intimacy safely (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Sense of community also helps to strengthen the social structure of identity among workers (Nistor et al., 2015). Historically, online taxi drivers have clashed because of the damage that is felt that exists because of the existence of opposing parties but over time, conventional taxis begin to join the online taxi profession as a double job that can change depending on the situation. Multiple memberships across different groups and involvement of online taxi drivers coexist with conventional taxi drivers even planning to expand the community to wider groups under the umbrella as road users in Yogyakarta. This is similar to another research that exists among individuals with individualistic activities, in this case, a motorcyclist community (Gagné & Austin, 2018). They also have a specific brand-based community, but they identify themselves with the large group of motorcyclist community in general because of their shared values and activities.

Another explanation for the harmonization of online taxi driver communities is the superordinate goal's existence within opposing parties that reduce ingroup-outgroup competition towards intergroup cooperation (Sherif in Smith & Haslam, 2017). Conventional taxis begin to compromise with the situation and even joined online taxi driver communities because of reasons like the realization that financial income could be gained by being an online taxi driver and a conventional taxi driver at the same time. The goals from within online taxi drivers were also made by being not only as an online taxi driver but being road users that could gain help from other road users. The compromise is arranged not only from individual

conventional taxi drivers but also from the official agreement between TNC and conventional taxi companies as Gojek claimed that they have arranged around 40% of taxi companies in Yogyakarta to also use the GoCar app. (Linangkung, 2017; Sudjatmiko, 2017). From the superordinate goals, members are feeling empathetic towards outgroups. Empathy leads to a positive attitude towards the outgroup (Taylor & McKeown, 2021).

Another possible explanation is that online taxi driver communities accept them because they know that being an online taxi driver is a more profitable and conventional taxi driver's profit is getting lower, they feel obligated to help, not just voluntarily feeling empathetic. In cultural communities where a confucianism ideology is dominant (mainly in Asia), people generally feel socially obligated to help while feeling satisfied by the behavior more than western culture (Buchtel et al., 2018). Some online taxi driver communities in Yogyakarta allowed conventional taxi drivers to enter their communities as they are culturally 'embedded' to help others in need, in this case, helping conventional taxi drivers to gain access to a network of other taxi drivers to raise their income.

Another finding regarding the membership is the presence of a common symbol system. The common symbol system serves as a tool to maintain group boundaries and "groups use social conventions (e.g. rites of passage, language, dress) as boundaries to create social distance between members and non-members" (McMillan in McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Online taxi driver communities use unique names and symbols to make social distance from other groups, other communities within online taxi drivers, and also from conventional taxis.

Influence

Influence for sense of community is an internal process that reflected individuals' perception of influence over their

community and the community's influence over them (Van Winkle & Woosnam, 2014). Influence is divided into two aspects, influence from the group and influence from individuals of the group.

The perception of the prevalence to be influenced by the group or member-to-group influence prevalence differs based on the culture in which the community is located. Individuals in collectivist cultures are more willing to make sacrifices for their ingroups in pursuit of group goals for the sake of harmony (Triandis, 2019). Another reason for influence in the form of conformity and uniformity might also come from the need for consensual validation (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Individuals' perception of community influence over them might be caused by the emphasized behavior of obedience to authoritative figures. All of the informants are from Indonesia, a culture that emphasizes high power distance. Subordinates expect to respect authority and everyone has a specific place (Wardoyo & Pang, 2017). Group-to-member influence could be explained as individuals tend to choose activities congruent with salient aspects of their identities and they support the institutions embodying those identities (Ashforth & Mael in Prentice et al., 2019). Members of online taxi driver communities support public demonstration because it is arranged by their groups of the communities.

The activities that indicate member-to-group influence can be explained as members who got into accidents asking for help believing that many members of the community will help them. This faith exists because of the consensus to protect and support ingroup members in return for loyalty and obedience in high power distance culture (Dutta & Islam, 2016). This is aligned because the initiation of the online taxi driver community is to become a medium to help each other and connect individual online taxi drivers across Yogyakarta and in return they are encouraged to do the act of preserving their rights, in this case in the form of public demonstration.

Integration and Fulfillment of Needs

For any group to maintain a positive sense of togetherness, the individual-group association must be rewarding for its members (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Online taxi driver communities are often based on online group chats and serve as a medium so that its members can get help from other members in the form of action of helping and also by the information they could get in group chats. Sense of community serves to maintain knowledge sharing among members (Nistor et al., 2015) and develop behavior of consuming and contributing information from social interaction (Mamonov et al., 2016). Online taxi drivers also help each other by assisting to improve life welfare, this behavior also increases the sense of community of its members (Canevez et al., 2021). This could be the explanation for why members of conventional taxi drivers and online taxi drivers who are not yet a member of certain communities can be helped because the value for helping others outweighs the term 'who is in and who is out'.

Shared Emotional Connection

Shared emotional connection is "the commitment and belief that members have shared and will share history, common places, time together, and similar experiences", it is also a sharing of significant events and the amount of contact that members have with each other (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Shared experience in online taxi drivers comes from the concept of 'brotherhood' that unites the whole community to act massively and individually towards the community's purpose as a helping community.

A shared experience that is felt cross-members make members more connected as they are fighting for superordinate goals, the goal of the community and they act in common values. This is aligned as shared

values give the force for communities to become cohesive (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). The brotherhood gives the community a force to become cohesive with a common goal, thus they can have shared activities and become more involved. This behavior can happen because they identify themselves with being a community member and getting their needs fulfilled (Kim et al., 2020). They have a good quality of interaction as well and this also aligns with the contact hypothesis that McMillan & Chavis proposed to be additional factors contributing to the connection as a person having more interaction with other people, the closer they become to each other (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). The more frequent important events, positive experiences, and good relationships make the bond stronger.

This study has several implications. It shed some light on multilayered communities' existence and how it affects the sense of community diverse social dynamics within informal workers. This study has also captured the sense of community representation qualitatively in the Indonesian population, particularly in a job-related community that is still under-researched. Another implication of this study is the ability to cover the sense of community phenomena thoroughly and contribute to the current literature. This strength has yet to be delivered by previous recent studies that mostly use the quantitative scale as the method of collecting data. One practical implication from this study is for policymakers to take into consideration of these communities' existence and their opinion regarding labor welfare as the ride-hailing service becoming more popular, the communities' rights as part of the drivers' organizations should be even more heavily emphasized.

This research, however, is subject to several limitations. One of them is the limited diversity of participants. We have not examined the dynamics of minority populations, including female online taxi drivers which may have a completely different perspective on online taxi driver communities altogether. Another limitation is that this study was conducted in Yogyakarta and it is still categorized as a medium-to-large city in Indonesia. The social dynamics of online taxi drivers might differ from communities in bigger populations such as Jakarta or even smaller ones.

Future research should dive deeper into the various demographics of community members and research a long period to see the development of these communities over time as the external factors may have influenced the growth of the community.

Conclusion

Sense of community in online taxi driver community emerges and is inseparable from the context of the community that is in the collectivist Javanese society. While online taxi driver in its conception is an individual 'lone wolf' profession, the development and social dynamics force the emergence of online taxi driver community. In-group and intergroup dynamics in the communities revolve around the superordinate goal "brotherhood" and because of this goal, online taxi driver community is still able to serve their members' needs within the "brotherhood" and helping value while having permeable expanding boundaries at the same time.

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