

COUNTER-HEGEMONY PRACTICE A LA GOJEK DRIVER-PARTNERS INFLUENCERS

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ABSTRACT

The sharing economy business model implemented by Gojek posits its motorbike drivers as partners with the status of independent contractors. However, some empirical studies show the practices of asymmetrical working relationships and place Gojek's driver-partners as the exploited party. Gojek's business is hegemonic since the exploitation practices wrapped in affective ways, e.g. through the concept of partnership that glorifies freedom and flexibility and the gamification strategy used in the application. In the context of this new emerged business practice, there is a vagueness about the legal status of the driver-partners. This is merely a corporate strategy to avoid the obligation to provide social protections for drivers due to their non-employee status. However, in the midst of hyper-exploitation practices carried out by the corporation, several studies have revealed actions of resistance conducted by driver-partners, ranging from demonstrations, boycotts, to various uses of application modification. In contrast to previous studies, using multimodal discourse analysis method, this paper particularly elaborates a form of counter-hegemony action carried out by three Gojek driver-partners who become influencers (media social users that have plenteous followers). Their affliction as Gojek driver-partners who often experience income deficiency due to the high competitiveness and the complicated platform work system, are used to accumulate social and economic capital.

Keywords: Gojek, hegemony, counter-hegemony, sharing economy, digital capitalism, digital labour, influencers

1) INTRODUCTION

The increasingly high penetration of technology in the industrial sector has given birth to a form of digital labor which is simply defined by Fuchs (2014: 351) as all activities in the production of digital media technology and its content as the excesses of advances in information technology. Ens, Stein & Jensen (2018: 1) even emphasize that technological advances have created a situation where digital labor has transformed into the new normal.

Sharing economy as a business model that has just emerged in the last decade, is increasingly being used by technology companies to build their businesses. The principles of the sharing economy are indeed different from the traditional one, among others, the type of work is short-term work based on contracts and payments are made on an hourly or on a pay-as-you-go basis

(Sinicki, 2019: 2). Sinicki emphasizes that the sharing economy places workers as freelancers or independent contractors by promoting work flexibility.

In the Indonesian context, Gojek is one of the representations of the ride-hailing business with the sharing economy concept. Gojek is the most widely used application in providing facilities to fulfill the daily needs of Indonesian people. Gojek, with the official company name PT. Karya Anak Bangsa Application (PT. AKAB), is a startup company from Indonesia founded by Nadiem Makarim in 2010 that claims as a technology company. This is in line with what Tran & Sokas (2017: 63) argues that the main characteristic of the sharing/gig economy is that it offers a digital platform or application that connects individuals who seek services with those who provide them. The platform organization itself is recognized as a technology company rather than a service provider.

In contrast to its pioneer, Uber, which in its home country, the United States and European countries only provides transportation services, Gojek calls its application a super-app due to its ability to meet every need of its users, which was previously unthinkable would be obtained through one application where the service will come to the users. With the concept of on-demand multi-services, Gojek provides more than 20 service variants to its users, which include food delivery, goods delivery, house cleaning, beauty and body care (both services have been temporarily frozen since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic), donation transactions, bill payments, purchase of telephone credit and internet packages, insurance and investment.

A number of studies have criticized the phenomenon of digital labor with the sharing economy concept, such as super-exploitative practices, lack of protection, and the illusion of work flexibility that surrounds it (Krüger & Johanssen, 2014; Tran & Sokas, 2017; Kamim & Khandiq, 2019; Englert, Woodcock & Cant, 2020). This phenomenon also occurs with Gojek in Indonesia (Adiyasha, 2016; Nastiti, 2017; Saraswati, 2018). Although Gojek's driver-partners' concerns about exploitative relationship practiced by the corporation are often voiced through various demonstrations in various parts of the country, Gojek's business continues to grow more expansively.

The results of a survey conducted by the Demographic Institute, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Indonesia (LD FEB-UI) provide data that the majority of driver-partners feel their quality of life has improved after joining Gojek, they are satisfied with the income and flexibility they get, and feel benefited from the partnership with Gojek. This paradoxical condition can occur because Gojek is a hegemonic digital technology phenomenon and uses affective aspects in its implementation.

The hegemony carried out by the Gojek refers to the concept of hegemony theorized by an Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci (1971: 107) defines hegemony as the spontaneous consent given by the majority community to the direction implanted by the dominant fundamental group. The practice of hegemony in Gramsci's perspective uses common sense, namely "dominant ideas about society and about our place in it—in producing cultural hegemony". The notion of common sense in this context refers to the embedded and incoherent beliefs and assumptions that characterize a particular social order. Common sense involves a deeply held zone of aspects of cultural life that are 'taken for granted' (Barker, 2004: 30). Barker (2004: 30 – 31) also argues that for Gramsci, all people reflect the world and it is through the 'common sense' of popular culture that they organize their lives and experiences. Common sense becomes a crucial site of ideological conflict. Thus, in the concept of hegemony, what is articulated by the dominant party is not oppressive power, but ideology, values, and beliefs which are instilled in a persuasive manner and are considered as common senses.

Gramsci (1971: 161) also reveals that the practice of hegemony will form a compromise equilibrium, which he defines as an economic sacrifice that must be made by the ruling group even though Storey (2018: 10) warns that the compromise equilibrium will usually be more inclined to favor the party who is in power. It is the compromise equilibrium that makes the relationship between the corporation and its driver-partners dialectical, both of them pushing and shoving each other to find conditions that are at least considered mutually "beneficial". This is why the demonstrations performed by Gojek driver-partners are in fact never militant because there are always negotiations carried out by corporations to reduce resistance by driver-partners. This phenomenon shows that where there is dominance, there will always be resistance. Where there is hegemony, there will always be counter-hegemony, and counter-hegemony will use the same way hegemony is practiced.

As previously explained regarding the forms of hegemony articulated by the corporation, driver-partners will use the same method to launch a counter-hegemony movement. Several forms of counter-hegemonic practices carried out by driver-partners include suing their position as partners when they feel the corporation is acting arbitrarily through demonstrations, boycotting Gojek services, and making various application modifications. In addition to the various forms of counter-hegemony movements, the authors find one form of counter-hegemony that is relatively different from other counter-hegemonic movements. Although they do not explicitly admit what they are doing is a form of counter hegemony, the influencer driver-partners take advantage of the vulnerabilities they experience as Gojek driver-partners to create content on their social media.

Based on the background description that has been presented, this research will elaborate on the form of counter hegemony carried out by Gojek driver-partners who have become influencers. In particular, the research questions that are trying to be answered are how the influencer driver-partners who are the subjects of this study take advantage of their position as Gojek driver-partners to create content on their social media. What are the advantages they get and how in the perspective of hegemony theory, the practice can be categorized as a form of counter hegemony.

2) METHODS

The objects of the study were the contents of Instagram accounts of three influencer driver partners. Noviani (in Udasmoro, 2018: 108) explains that the practice of media-based contemporary communication on various social media, one of which is Instagram, blends visual images, both still and moving, with composition, color, and linguistic language in the form of captions with various typography options. All of these aspects are enabled by Instagram users to communicate certain meanings. Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen interpret the concept as multimodality and emphasize that the rapid development of media technology makes communication more multimodal (van Leeuwen 2015, Kress 2011, Kress and van Leeuwen 2001 in Noviani 2018: 108).

Noviani (2018: 120-121) further explains that multimodal discourse analysis is a methodical tool used to examine the configuration of discourse in a text. Multimodal text is a product of design and production work that contains discourses about reality. The discourses in the multimodal text are produced through a combination of different modes which are arranged to form an ensemble. The choice of discourse and mode of course depends on the interests of the text producer in a particular context.

Analysis of multimodal discourse needs to critically examine the agency of the text producer or the party that constructs meaning, who produces the meaning, whose interests are being served by the discourse, why the party who constructs the meaning chooses and uses certain semiotic modes to produce the discourse and what are their interests. With this multimodal discourse

analysis, the authors will analyze what discourses the three Gojek influencers want to build, whose interests are served, and what are their reasons for selecting certain modes to build the discourse.

3) RESULTS

This study uses the theory of Hegemony promoted by Antonio Gramsci to frame the hegemonic relationship between Gojek and its driver-partners. To demonstrate this hegemonic relationship, before elaborating on the counter-hegemony of the influencer driver-partners, the authors will first explore how the Gojek puts influencer driver-partners as its hegemonic apparatus.

Influencer Driver-partners as the Hegemonic Apparatus of the Gojek Platform

Gojek grows in Indonesian digital society where the democratization of social media provide opportunities for anyone to use them for various purposes. Of the millions of Gojek driver-partners, there are some who are actively using social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok. Some of Gojek's driver-partners who actively use social media can be said to have succeeded for being content creators in the virtual world. They already have cultural capital in the form of ideas, creativity, and technical abilities that are processed in producing contents on social media that attracted the attention of Internet citizens (netizens). Popularity was also achieved by gaining followers, likes, and comments. Some of their contents then makes them viral. The popularity makes those who were originally nobody become somebody. Interestingly, these driver-partners use their identity as Gojek driver-partners dominantly in the contents they produce.

The authors' search shows that there are at least three Gojek driver-partners who become influencers after the video contents they uploaded on their social media accounts, especially TikTok which was then cross-posted on other social media, such as Instagram and YouTube, went viral and made them suddenly as influencers. The first driver-partner who went viral were Ulfah or known as Mpo Bhabay with his Instagram account @mpobhabay, TikTok account @MpoBhabay, and YouTube account MPo Bhabay. Second, Babeh Ary or better known as Babeh Ojol is the owner of the Instagram account @babehojol, TikTok account @Ary, Twitter account @BabehOjol. Third, Heru Kurniawan who is known as Superheru with an Instagram account @superheru1, TikTok account @superheru1 and a YouTube account superheru. As of December 2021, Ulfah has 15,200 followers on her Instagram account, 239,500 followers on her TikTok account, and 4,470 subscribers on her YouTube account. Babeh Ary has 81,600 followers on his Instagram account and 973,800 followers on his TikTok account. Heru Kurniawan has 2,101 followers on his Instagram account, 142,700 followers on his TikTok account and 17,700 subscribers on his YouTube account.

Ulfah, Babeh Ary, and Heru Kurniawan each has her/his-own uniqueness in producing video contents that narrate their life experiences as Gojek driver-partners. Ulfah creates her contents by raising certain topics mostly related to her work as a Gojek driver-partner and are produced in monologue with the video selfie technique. Babeh Ary designs a lot of his contents using TikTok features creatively. Meanwhile, Heru Kurniawan produces a lot of video contents by taking advantage of challenges or doing pranks that are trending on various social media, particularly TikTok.

The video contents created by the three of them using their identities as Gojek driver-partners become viral among Indonesian netizens. Ulfah was once viral for uploading content that highlighted GoFood merchant that did not provide bags to carry food, so it was a hassle for her when she had to deliver food ordered by customers. Babeh Ary has gone viral for creating content that tells about his intimate date with his wife. As a relatively senior couple, netizens appreciate the way Babeh Ary maintains his marital relationship with his wife even in a simple way, namely a date to enjoy meatballs together. Heru Kurniawan went viral because of his habit of listening to loud music and is dancing on his motorbike while waiting for the traffic lights.

The creative contents produced by the viral driver-partners were then cross-posted by Gojek on its official social media account. By doing that, Gojek obtains benefit in the form of image building and may at the same time gains financial benefit in the form of monetization of its social media accounts. Gojek also posits its influencer driver-partners as the corporate hegemonic apparatus, either directly or indirectly. For example, Ulfah is often invited as a source person at the Kopi Darat event, a program designed by Gojek as a two-way communication medium that is held regularly to disseminate corporate policies as well as accommodate the aspirations of the driver-partners. In addition, many of the contents created by these influencers function as amplification of corporate policies and attempt to reduce driver partners' criticism in responding to corporate policies.

One of Ulfah's videos that went viral and was cross-posted by Gojek's official Instagram account was a video with content that convinced her followers that during the Covid 19 pandemic, all services provided through Gojek application had gone through the J3K Health Protocol (Keep Healthy, Keep Clean, and Keep Secured). The transcription of her video is as follows.

"Now I'm in this banana plantation. How are you? Fine? Thanks God if you are healthy. I just want to let you know, my beloved Gojek customers. If you want to order a gojek service, you don't have to be afraid or hesitant. Now drivers have followed what is called the J3K protocol. Before we go for riding, we must, must, must go to the J3K safe post, the temperature will be checked and we will be sprayed with disinfectant. Now for the customer who gets a driver, for sure the driver is safe, because he's already following the J3K Protocol. If you don't believe it, just order Goride, Gocar, Gofood, Gosend, ok, then there will be a notification with the information on the profile of the driver. Here's what the notification looks like (pointing to the inserted picture). So, don't worry, don't be afraid. The J3K protocol is a safe way to live comfortably using Gojek application. Now I want to go home first, OK... bye bye...".



Figure 1. The Instagram Account of Ulfah that Promotes Gojek Services

The video was uploaded by Ulfah on her Instagram account on July 11, 2020. On the same day, the video was also uploaded on Gojek's official Instagram account. The modes that Ulfah uses in producing this video are the Gojek jacket uniform a confirmation of her identity that she is part of the corporation. Then, verbal message was conveyed regarding the explanation that Gojek highly respected the safety of its service users during the Covid 19 pandemic due to the

implementation of the J3 health protocol, and invited users not to hesitate to use Gojek's services. The caption that Ulfah constructed in this video is: "DEAR CUSTOMER GOJEK. Let's order again the GOJEK/GOCAR application. We, the drivers, are ready physically and mentally." In the upper right corner of the video there is a Gojek logo. This means that, even though it was produced in a simple way, using only Ulfah's cellphone, which she recorded by taking a selfie technique located in a banana plantation, the video was also owned by the corporation because the content of the message is clearly promotes the security of the Gojek application service during the Covid 19 pandemic.



Figure 2. The Cross-posting of Ulfah's Video on Gojek's Official Instagram Account

On Ulfah's Instagram account, this video in November 2021 has been viewed 5,535 times, while on Gojek's official Instagram account, this video has been viewed 10,917,865 times. This means, with almost no production costs, Gojek has used Ulfah's video content as a promotional tool by gaining profit. Almost none of the content produced by Ulfah has the tone of criticizing the corporation. Some content that should be critical to the platform is delivered in a very persuasive manner in the form of providing advices for the corporation. Ulfah also often invites other Gojek driver-partners to obey the platform's rules and educate new corporate policies to fellow driver-partners and consumers.

This is acknowledged by Ulfah, who whenever there is an opportunity to gather at basecamp (a gathering place for driver-partners which is usually in the form of a gazebo equipped with electricity source facilities where they can recharge their cell phone batteries), always educates the cadets (term for members of Gojek driver-partners' communities). According to Ulfah, many driver-partners often misperceived corporate policies that were considered detrimental. In the context of the hegemony of the Gojek platform, Ulfah plays a role as the platform's hegemonic apparatus because of its social media content that also glorifies Gojek's status quo.

The next influencer driver-partner is Babe Ary or better known as Babe Ojol. Babe Ary went viral for creating video content that tells the story of his romantic date with his wife, even though they are over 50 years old. The video narrates that when he got more sustenance, he took his wife on a lunch date. The strength of the video lies on its simple but meaningful design, humane, humorous, and up-to-date, for example when his wife is confused about what food to eat, they make a choice of food using a random picker application. There were also the scenes of feeding each other, holding hands, or sharing an intimate ride, all of which impressed his followers.

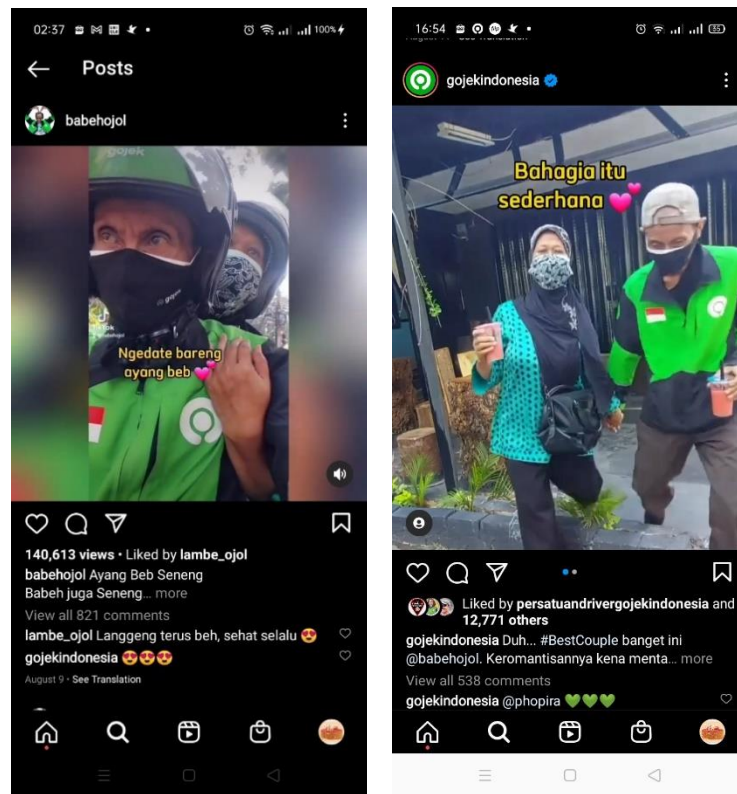


Figure 3. The Viral Video Content of Babe Ary

The video uploaded by Babe Ary on August 9, 2021, has been viewed by 140,613 viewers. On the same day, Gojek cross-posted the video on its official Instagram account and was liked by 12,771 netizens. Unfortunately, due to the work of the algorithm (some display the data of the likers and some display the data the viewers), there is no available data on how many times the video on the official Gojek account were viewed. In the video, Babe Ary wore a Gojek jacket as an identity. This means that the content provides image building benefit to Gojek as the corporation where Babe Ary works.

The two video contents belong to influencer driver-partners that Gojek cross-posted on its official media account are just representations of how Gojek gains profit (as a free-rider) and puts these driver-partners influencers as its hegemonic apparatus. Although hegemony is a strategy to maintain the ideology and power of the influential social groups, hegemony is relational and unstable because hegemony is a temporary condition and is a bond between social groups that is fought for, not earned. Thus, hegemony needs to be constantly re-won and renegotiated because in essence, culture is a field of conflict and struggle for various meanings. Since hegemony must be constantly re-won and renegotiated, it is possible that there will be challenges from subordinated groups and classes in the form of counter hegemony. Counter hegemony will use the same way hegemony is practiced or take advantage of the common sense that is used to carry out hegemony.

Counter Hegemony Practice of the Gojek Driver-partners Influencers

The discussion of influencer driver-partners as Gojek's hegemonic apparatus has provided insights on how Gojek utilizes (if not exploits) them for the profit of the corporation, both in the form of economic profit and image building. However, these driver-partners, although not explicitly acknowledged, have also indirectly taken counter-hegemonic actions from their position as Gojek driver-partners. Many of the contents they produce on their social media expose their daily experiences as Gojek driver-partners. These contents are then responded positively by

netizens, getting likes and increasing followers and subscribers. In the following section, the authors will describe how these three Gojek driver-partners influencers enact their popularity as well as a practice of counter hegemony against the corporation.

1. *Ulfah Faisal*

As previously stated, one of Gojek's driver-partners who is actively using social media is Ulfah with her Instagram account @mpobhabay. In his Instagram account, mpobhabay often posts creative content. These contents include describing her anxiety as a Gojek driver-partner with uncertain income, her frustration with GoFood partners who do not provide bags to carry food ordered by their consumers, or the unfortunate experience of receiving fictitious orders.

In producing the content in the form of videos, Ulfah often wears Gojek jacket as the corporate identity. Ulfah tends to think of all the negative things she experiences as job risks and often uses religious framing to make peace with her various problems. For example, she will tend to assume that sustenance has been arranged by God. If on a certain day she does not get an order at all, then she is sure it has become God's provision. She did not give up and was sure her sustenance would flow tomorrow. Ulfah's style conveys her content with a thick Betawi accent, is always cheerful, responds "lightly" to her life's problems, and always ends her content with her trademark farewell word "bye-bye", making Ulfah has many followers.

On July 23, 2020 Ulfah uploaded a video with the caption "Don't be afraid to be fired by PT GOJEK INDONESIA if you give advice or constructive criticism for the progress of PT GOJEK INDONESIA, THERE IS A WAY". The video shows Ulfah was outside at night wearing a Gojek jacket. The transcription of Ulfah's message in the video is as follows.

"For Gojek drivers, if you keep on complaining, just quit the job. There are still many who are in more difficult conditions than us. If your account is so silent (anyep, receive no-orders, Authors), use your logic. CS (customer) ordered to Gojek, Gojek gave it to us. So if there's no CS make orders, it's not only us who get dizzy, Gojek won't get any money too. Here, I want to give advice to my beloved PT Gojek. Many drivers protest The Berkat program. You better return our previous bonus. If you can't, we're still in the pandemic situation, change it to a miracle program, while tomorrow is Eid al-Hajj. You said that with Gojek there is always a way, I'm sure there is a way. Now, to my beloved Gojek customers, I want to tell you something. There are many restaurants that don't give bags anymore. So you will be charged 5 thousand for the bag. Why don't you add 2 thousand for the parking fee. If we park outside, our motorbike will be picked up by the Transportation Agency, who will take responsibility? Again, I'm not sure if your child is willing to be paid 2 thousand for queuing at the mall. OK, bye bye...".

The video targets three parties at once, namely fellow Gojek driver-partners, the corporation, and Gojek's consumers. To his fellow driver-partners, Ulfah expressed her frustration because she always heard complaints from them, then said that there were still many in a worse condition compared to them. If they continue to complain, Ulfah suggests them to quit as driver-partners. To the corporation, Ulfah conveyed her criticism (even though she was on behalf of other driver-partners as well) regarding the Gojek blessing program, a program to replace the bonus program when the pandemic occurred which was indeed smaller in amount and had a different method of obtaining it. To Gojek customers, she also expressed her frustration that they often don't want to give the parking fee when ordering GoFood.



Figure 4. The Counter Hegemony Content of Ulfah

Just like the common phenomenon of entertainment shows on national private televisions, anyone who is going viral on social media will then be invited to their program to be interviewed. The goal, of course, is to achieve and maintain ratings. In addition, in Indonesia, the phenomenon of online motorcycle taxi drivers has indeed gained popularity because of the many interesting life experiences of motorcycle taxi drivers. The life stories and experiences of these motorcycle taxi drivers were later captured by the television industry to be designed in situation comedy (sitcoms) or soap operas, such as *Ojol Story* on TransTV, *Oke-jek* on Net TV, and *Scrooge* on RCTI.

The impact of that all, Ulfah's popularity is increasing. Ulfah was invited to be interviewed by several private TV station infotainment programs and by several Indonesian celebrities on their podcast or YouTube programs. She was also invited to play on several episodes of soap operas on private TV stations. Ulfah was also covered by detik.com because of the creative content on her social media as a Gojek driver partner.

Due to the popularity of the video she created, Ulfah has become a celebrity. With the increasing number of followers, Ulfah has become an influencer. Offers for endorsements also came. After going viral and gaining fame, Ulfah continues to create content on her social media using a Gojek jacket. This means that she continues to work as a Gojek driver partner, even though financially she gets additional income from being invited as a guest star on various television shows and being an endorser of several products. Ulfah also admitted that she monetizes her YouTube account which already has 4,470 subscribers without mentioning how much money she makes.

2. *Babeh Ary*

As previously explained, the next influencer driver-partner is Babeh Ary or better known as Babeh Ojol. Babeh Ary is very fond of making video content about his daily activities as a Gojek driver-partner.

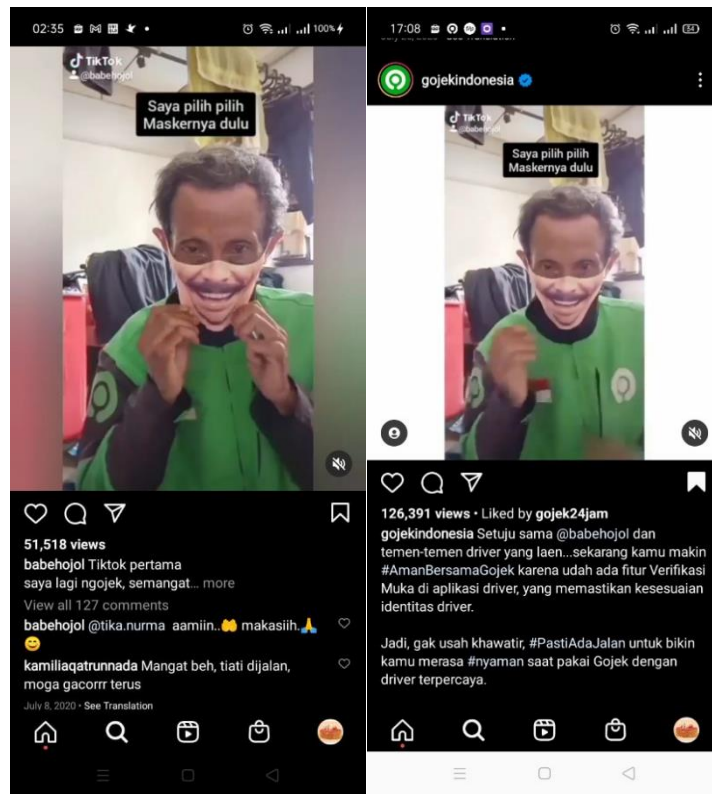


Figure 5. The Content Video of Babeh Ary

Some of Babeh Ary's contents went viral. In addition to the intimate dating video with his wife, Babeh Ary also went viral when he produced a video regarding face verification as one of the mitigating actions taken by the corporation due to the high number of buying and selling or renting Gojek accounts among driver-partners. The video uploaded on his Instagram account on July 8, 2020, was then cross-posted by Gojek on its official Instagram account on July 24, 2020. Babeh Ary's video content which is also viral is when he made a video about his persistence in saving cash tips from customers in a piggy bank so he could buy his daughter, named Nindy, a laptop for work. Because of the video, Babeh Ary was interviewed by Baim Wong through his podcast channel and was given some cash which then spent by Babeh Ary's wife to start her bakery small business. Baim Wong is known as a celebrity who often creates content on YouTube with the theme of charity for the poor. Besides Baim, Babeh Ojol was also interviewed at a TV station in an infotainment program because of the viral video. Like Ulfah, Babeh Ojol also received many endorsements from several Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

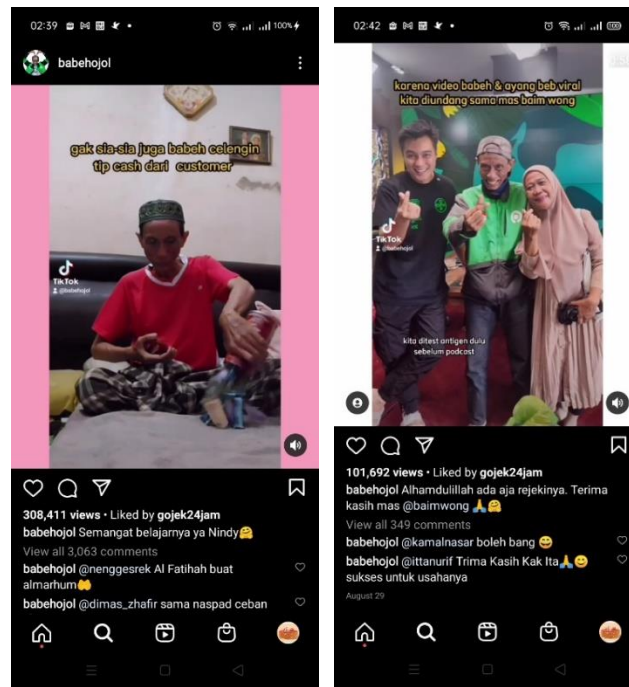


Figure 6. The Viral Content Video of Babeh Ary

These influencer driver-partners are not just ordinary TikTokers or YouTubers or content creators. When creating contents, they use their identity as Gojek driver-partners and highlight their experiences regarding their position as driver-partners. They are not merely producing the contents with no purposes.

3. Heru Kurniawan

The next Gojek driver-partner who become an influencer is Heru Kurniawan, better known as Superheru. Heru started going viral in 2019 because of his actions while waiting for the traffic lights he is listening to high-volume music that he tuned using the speakers on his motorbike and dancing at the same time. His action was criticized by netizens because it was considered dangerous. When confirmed about his action, he explained that he did have a habit of listening to his favorite music at a loud volume to keep his spirits up and to get rid of sleepiness. According to him, listening to music with speakers is safer than listening to high volume music using earphones because it makes the driver unable to hear various sounds around him.

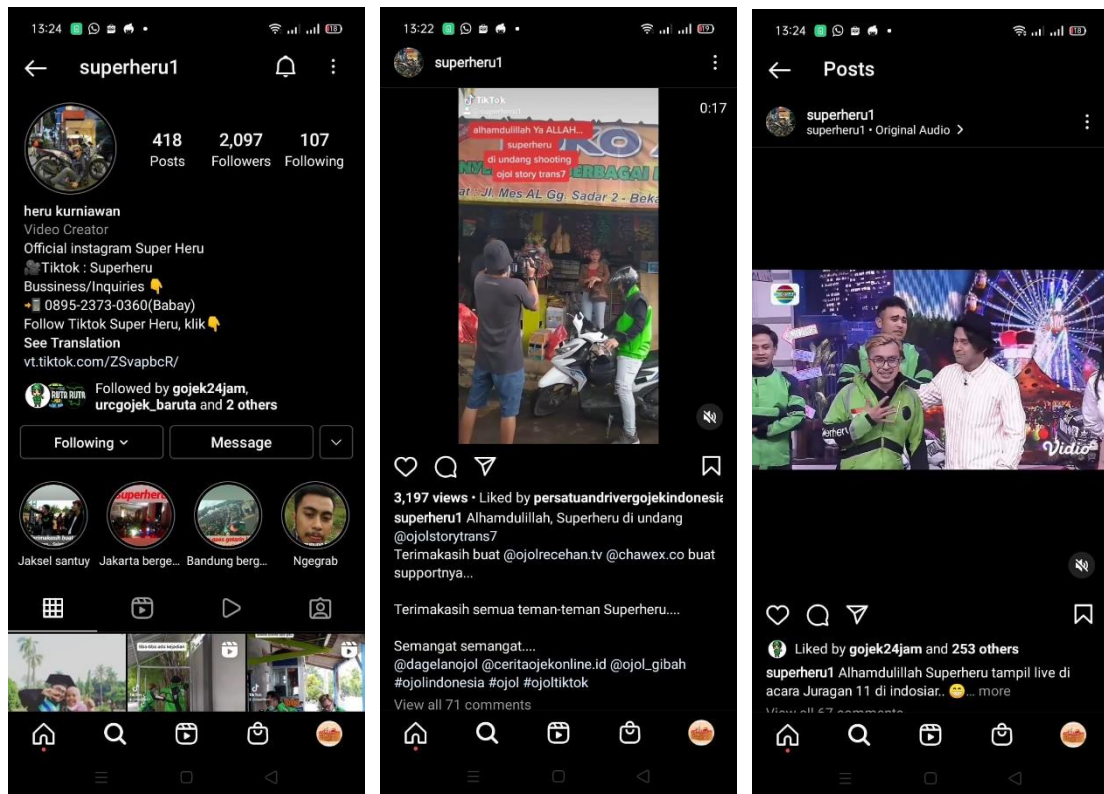


Figure 7. The Viral Content Video of Heru Kurniawan

Because of this action, Heru became famous and he began to get offers to play in several soap operas that raised the life of online motorcycle taxi drivers, and invited to be interviewed by some infotainment programs. Along with his fame, Heru began to receive endorsements of MSMEs products and received many offers to guide various events as a Master of Ceremony or produce some video contents because he does have skills in that field. In October 2021, he graduated with his status as a Gojek driver-partner. Heru's post regarding his graduation moment was also viral and received appreciation from netizens.

Heru's popularity did not come suddenly. Heru already has the cultural capital to become a celebrity. He has the ability to produce video content, has the ability to be an MC, has a unique way of dealing with life's problems in a "fun" way, always sees the complexities of life from a "positive" side.

4) DISCUSSION

Gojek with the sharing economy business model, has become a digital capitalist due to its production practices that gently hyper-exploit its driver partners. Looking at the Gojek business phenomenon from the perspective of digital capitalism, a capitalism in the digital era which uses rhetorical promises and idealistic values, e.g. participation, self-organization, and cooperation (Therborn in Fuchs & Mosco, 2016: 24), then Gojek's hegemonic strategies are indeed a cover for this type of capitalism practices. Capitalism in this digital era is actually practicing capitalism to a higher degree, where driver-partners are exploited to give their best energy to corporations through the cradle of gamification and the power of algorithms. With their own capital, they must bear all the risks and share the profits to corporations for the sacrifices they make.

The Gramscian Hegemony Theory is used by the authors to analyze the practices of power relations performed by Gojek against its driver partners, and how they fight back in the form of counter hegemony by using common sense used by the corporation. The hegemonic dialectic

practiced by the corporation and its driver-partners in the context of digital platforms contributes to how soft capitalism is countered with soft resistance as stated by Therborn (2008: 61), "...the twenty-first century is beginning to look very different from the twentieth not more equal and just, but with new constellations of power and new possibilities of resistance".

Several studies have highlighted the resistance actions carried out by Gojek driver-partners. Nastiti (2017) exposes resistance in the form of demonstrations performed by Gojek drivers as a form of response and rejection of super-exploitative practices carried out by corporations. Nastiti's findings show that the resistance carried out by Gojek drivers does not touch the substantial level regarding the super-exploitation practices carried out by the corporation, but is only a reactive response when the corporation make policies that harm them, for example changing tariffs that threaten their income. Nastiti also reveals that drivers tend to demand a return to the familiar old production system and seek stability rather than progressive aggressive demands, such as worker status and rights.

Several other researchers also reveal the strategies used by driver-partners to outsmart official applications, including using *tuyul* (ghost) accounts, jockey accounts, and doing account therapy (Mustika and Savirani, 2021: 48). Pranoto (2018: 9-10) discovers that the driver-partners' manipulative tactics use some illegal applications and technology, including fake GPS, repeat touch, Xposed Installer, and signal jammer. The purpose of this manipulative tactics is to win the competition to get more orders by working using fake locations, applications that can eliminate internet signals or the location of other drivers. Meanwhile, Wicaksono (2020: 94-95) finds that in addition to using a fake GPS (*tuyul* account), Gojek driver-partners use a fictitious order strategy (abbreviated as *ofik* and better known as *opik* among the driver-partners). In the fictitious order strategy, the driver-partners really do not move at all and stay somewhere. They use fake GPS technology as if the drivers were driving and serving passengers. Likewise, the orders they get are actually fictitious orders that deliberately made by themselves. With a modified cellphone, they can create fictitious orders for themselves. "Creating fictitious orders" or "order shooting" is an attempt to complete the order for the day or to make a "daily point close" faster.

The algorithm as "the ruler" in the application system used on the Gojek platform is also the target of resistance efforts by the driver-partners. There is a phenomenon of street programmers among the driver partners. Panimbang (2020: 18) argues that this street programmers operates clandestinely, therefore the services they provide are web-based or online-based. They share information and tricks related to new releases of apps from platform companies. Their main goal is to bug the algorithm in the driver application thereby reducing the driver workload set by the algorithm. Street programmers argue that bonuses, ratings, and point system encourage drivers to work really hard and for longer periods of time. They challenge and counter algorithmic stresses by helping fellow drivers modify and tweak app algorithms.

Through the glorification of the sharing economy rhetorical ideas such as flexibility, freedom, and autonomy, along with the implementation of gamification work system, Gojek articulates hegemony to its driver-partners. This article shows that besides those configurations of hegemony practices, Gojek takes advantages the popularity of its influencer driver-partners to articulate its hegemony as well while gaining image building at the same time.

5) CONCLUSION

In the phenomenon of influencer driver-partners, they are exploited by Gojek to get a positive image because the corporation cross-posts the videos of the influencer driver-partners content on its official social media. In addition, influencer driver-partners are also used as corporate hegemonic apparatus. They often disseminate and educate other driver-partners who do not understand the application system or when there are complaints from partners regarding policies taken by the corporation. This can be seen from the content they produce, many of which

try to persuade fellow Gojek driver-partners to understand and obey the rules of the game set by the corporation.

From the perspective of the Theory of Hegemony, driver-partners use their identity as Gojek driver-partners with various stories behind it to accumulate social and economic capital through the phenomenon of the driver-partners who become influencers. If the Theory of Hegemony argues that counter-hegemony is a tool of resistance against power to get justice, in this study, the influencers driver-partners of Gojek not only carry out counter-hegemony, but they commodify their life stories to get social and economic capital. This phenomenon happens because this study is conducted in a digital society where social media allows anyone to become somebody. It is undeniable that the social capital obtained by driver-partners is a form of commodification of their lives as Gojek driver-partners which are packaged into content uploaded on social media to bring in economic capital in the form of monetization, endorsement, and being guest stars in many entertainments' television programs and podcasts of several Indonesian celebrities.

Thus, a dialectical hegemonic relationship occurs between the corporation and influencer driver-partners, they subjugate each other and take advantage of each other. The driver-partners influencers already have the cultural capital in creating interesting and creative content, and getting positive responses from Indonesian netizens. These creative contents bring social capital in the form of popularity as well as bring economic capital when they get additional work starring in several soap operas and becoming endorsers of several products.

To acquire a more holistic insights on the phenomenon, the authors recommend future studies to explore from the perspective of the influencer driver-partners by other methods e.g., in-depth interview or virtual ethnography.

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