

## Youth Participation in the Gig Economy: A Scoping Review of Socioeconomic and Maqasid Shariah Perspectives

### *Penglibatan Belia dalam Ekonomi Gig: Scoping Review terhadap Sosioekonomi dan Maqasid Syariah Perspektif*

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore youth participation in the gig economy and examine how socioeconomic sustainability and Maqasid Shariah are reflected in existing research. Using a scoping review guided by the PRISMA-ScR framework, relevant literature published between 2017 and 2025 were systematically reviewed. Searches in Google Scholar yielded 158 records and after screening, 44 peer-reviewed articles were analysed through descriptive and thematic synthesis. The findings reveal a growing research trend after 2021 with Malaysia and Indonesia leading studies on Islamic fintech, halal economy, and sustainability. Early studies focused mainly on employment conditions and governance, while more recent works incorporate ethical and Maqasid-based perspectives. Conceptual and mixed-method approaches dominate with limited empirical validation and minimal cross-regional comparison. The review identifies four main gaps: lack of longitudinal studies, limited empirical research, insufficient comparative analysis and the absence of an integrated Maqasid-based framework. Addressing these gaps can advance understanding of how gig work influences youth welfare and sustainable development. Future studies should apply mixed-method and longitudinal approaches while expanding comparative analyses between Islamic and non-Islamic economies. The study highlights the need for inclusive policies, digital literacy programmes, and Islamic financial instruments such as micro-Takaful to strengthen ethical and sustainable participation in the gig economy. [

Keywords: Gig economy; Youth participation; Socioeconomic sustainability; Maqasid Shariah; Scoping review

### INTRODUCTION

The gig economy has grown quickly in recent years, mainly because of digital technology and the demand for more flexible jobs. This form of employment relies on short-term and freelance contracts and is now a preferred option among young people who seek flexible income and greater autonomy in their work (Muhyi et al., 2023; Johari & Ismail, 2022). For many youths facing a competitive job market and uncertain economic conditions, gig work offers a practical alternative that provides time flexibility and quick income generation (Ismail et al., 2021).



Despite its appeal, gig work poses several long-term challenges. These include unstable income, lack of social protection, and limited opportunities for career advancement (Rahman & Nor., 2023; Yusuf et al., 2021). Globally, the World Bank (2023) reports that more than 435 million people are involved in gig work, particularly youth and women in developing countries. However, the absence of social security, job stability, and fair benefits continues to raise serious concerns about worker well-being.

In Malaysia, gig workers such as e-hailing drivers and food delivery riders often operate outside formal social protection systems. This makes them vulnerable to economic shocks and social risks, especially during crises (Rahman & Nor, 2023). Local studies also highlight an imbalance between job flexibility and socioeconomic stability, calling for stronger policies to sustain this sector (Johari & Ismail, 2022). Yet few studies explore long-term sustainability issues such as youth well-being, social security, and mobility in the gig economy.

This study aims to address these gaps by reviewing existing literature through a holistic approach that aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It seeks to understand how the gig economy can serve as a platform for inclusive and sustainable youth development. In Islamic contexts such as Malaysia, youth participation in the gig economy should also be viewed through the lens of Maqasid Shariah to ensure that work practices preserve religion (*din*), life (*nafs*), intellect (*'aql*), lineage (*nasl*), and wealth (*mal*). Integrating these values provides a clearer picture of how gig work contributes not only to short-term income but also to broader human and ethical well-being.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

The rapid growth of the gig economy has transformed modern employment. It offers flexibility and new income opportunities for young people, but it also creates challenges that affect their long-term stability and welfare. Many gig workers face unstable income, lack of protection, and limited career prospects. This raises important questions about whether the gig economy truly empowers youth or simply expands informal work without security or social support.

According to the World Bank (2023), more than 435 million people are now engaged in the global gig economy, with the majority comprising young and female workers from developing countries. Despite its rapid growth, many of these workers operate outside formal policy frameworks and remain excluded from national social protection systems (World Bank, 2023). In Malaysia, the situation is similar. Gig workers, including e-hailing and delivery riders, frequently lack access to the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) and the Social Security Organisation (SOCSO), leaving them highly exposed to economic risks and market instability (Shakil, 2024).

Local research also suggests that discussions about the gig economy tend to emphasize short-term financial benefits rather than long-term socioeconomic well-being (Shakil, 2024). Few studies comprehensively examine issues such as income stability, job security, or career progression among youth gig workers. This highlights a significant research gap that calls for broader analysis to understand how gig work affects youth welfare and mobility. Moreover, there remains limited integration of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to decent work, social justice, and equality, into the gig economy discourse (World Bank, 2023).

In Malaysia, this issue also involves ethical and religious dimensions that are often overlooked. Using the Maqasid Shariah framework which focuses on the protection of faith, life, intellect, lineage, and wealth which allows for a more balanced and value-based understanding of gig work (Ishak, 2025). Combining Islamic ethics with the SDGs provides a meaningful foundation for evaluating whether the gig economy can truly promote youth empowerment that is productive, fair, and sustainable.

However, current research rarely integrates these ethical and spiritual dimensions when analysing the realities of gig workers in Malaysia. Most existing studies focus on economic benefits, digital access, and employment flexibility but overlook how Islamic values and Maqasid Shariah principles can guide fair treatment, income stability, and worker protection. This gap limits the

understanding of whether the gig economy aligns with the objectives of Shariah and the broader goals of sustainable development. Therefore, this paper seeks to explore these gaps by examining how the gig economy can be framed within the Maqasid Shariah perspective to ensure justice, inclusivity, and long-term well-being for youth workers in Malaysia.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a scoping review approach to map and synthesise existing literature on youth participation in the gig economy and its implications for socioeconomic sustainability. The review followed the PRISMA Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) developed by Tricco et al. (2018), which provides a systematic framework for formulating research questions, defining inclusion criteria, and conducting a transparent and replicable search process. The use of PRISMA-ScR ensured that the review was conducted in a structured, comprehensive, and credible manner. The main research question guiding this review was:

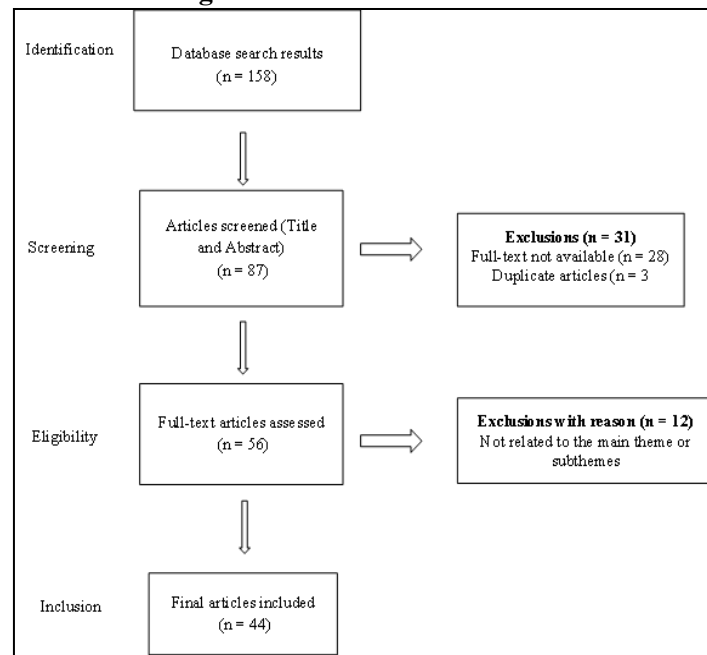
1. What are the key trends in youth participation in the gig economy?
2. How are the dimensions of socioeconomic sustainability and Maqasid Shariah addressed in the existing literature?"

To answer this question, a systematic search was conducted using Google Scholar as the primary database. The search string included open-access academic sources such as journal articles, theses, and research reports published between 2017 and 2025, ensuring the inclusion of recent and relevant works that reflect post-pandemic developments. Boolean operators were applied using the following search strings: “gig economy” AND youth AND sustainability, “gig economy” AND young people AND socioeconomic, and “gig work” AND Malaysia AND sustainable development.

The search was restricted to English and Malay-language articles. Only peer-reviewed journal articles were included, while conference proceedings, research reports, editorials, and media commentaries were excluded. Studies were considered eligible if they examined youth participation in the gig economy and contained elements related to socioeconomic sustainability, youth well-being, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), or Maqasid Shariah.

All articles identified were imported into Mendeley for reference management and duplication removal. The screening process was conducted in two stages. The first stage involved the screening of titles and abstracts to determine relevance, followed by full-text screening to confirm eligibility. In total, 158 records were identified in the initial search. After title and abstract screening, 56 articles were retained for further review, and 44 articles met the inclusion criteria for final analysis. This process adhered to the PRISMA-ScR guidelines to ensure transparency, consistency, and reproducibility.

Relevant information such as author names, publication year, country of study, research design, focus, and key findings was systematically extracted using a data extraction form. The collected data were analysed using descriptive and thematic analysis to identify major research patterns, dominant themes, and knowledge gaps in the literature related to the gig economy, youth, and sustainable development. Figure 1 presents the PRISMA-ScR flow diagram outlining the stages of the article selection process, including identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion of studies that met the review criteria.

**Figure 1: PRISMA Flow Chart**

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 presents the distribution of 44 reviewed articles published between 2017 and 2025. The pattern clearly shows that interest in the gig economy and Maqasid Shariah-related studies has grown steadily over the years. In the earlier period, from 2017 to 2020, only a small number of studies were published. This suggests that the topic was still new and had not yet received much attention within the field of Islamic economics.

**Table 1: Distribution of Article Across Years**

Years	Frequency	Authors
2017	2	Healy et al. (2017); Stewart & Stanford (2017)
2018	1	Bajwa et al. (2018)
2019	3	Wood et al. (2019); Popescu & Popescu (2019); Gursoy et al. (2019)
2020	3	Ahmad, N. (2020); Duggan et al. (2020); Almeida & O'Reilly (2020)
2021	6	Ismail et al. (2021); Yusuf et al. (2021); Kassi et al. (2021); Yeo & Heng (2021); Anwar & Graham (2021); Pardi et al. (2021)
2022	3	Johari & Ismail (2022); Uchiyama et al. (2022); Misbah et al. (2022)
2023	13	Muhyi et al. (2023); Rahman & Nor (2023); Nik Mud et al. (2023); Zamri (2023); Mahmud et al. (2023); Razak et al. (2023); Jumbri et al. (2023); Zulkefli et al (2023); Abd Samad et al. (2023); Malek et al. (2023); Adnan et al. (2023); Ahmad & Sulaiman (2023); Ali et al. (2023)
2024	5	Ghafur et al. (2024); Shakil (2024); Bashori et al. (2024); Syahriani et al. (2024); Huđek & Širec (2024)
2025	8	Mahmood et al. (2025); Mohd Hed et al. (2025); Bakar et al. (2025); Tegar & Sari (2025); Melzatia et al. (2025); Mustofa et al. (2025); Bukido et al. (2025); Basir et al. (2025)
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	

During these early years, most of the studies were conceptual in nature. They focused on explaining what the gig economy is, the flexibility it offers, and the challenges faced by workers in this new

employment model. For example, studies by Healy et al. (2017) and Stewart and Stanford (2017) discussed policy gaps and the governance of gig work, while Bajwa et al. (2018) and Gursoy et al. (2019) examined issues such as worker vulnerability and job instability. These works provided important background understanding, but they did not yet explore the ethical or Islamic perspectives that later became central to the discussion.

A significant shift began around 2021. The number of publications increased as digitalization and flexible work gained global importance, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. This period encouraged researchers to think more critically about job security, fairness, and social protection in the digital world. It also created space for scholars to apply Islamic perspectives, particularly the principles of Maqasid Shariah, to evaluate how the gig economy could support justice, welfare, and balance in society.

The year 2023 marked a high point, with thirteen studies published, making it the most productive year within the review. This increase shows that more researchers were beginning to see the gig economy not only as an economic trend but also as a social and moral issue that affects livelihoods and equity. Many studies in 2023 began linking the gig economy with broader topics such as the halal economy, digital inclusion, and sustainability. The growth in publications during this period reflects a stronger academic interest in connecting Islamic values to real economic challenges.

In 2024 and 2025, the research focus became even more refined. Scholars explored themes such as Islamic fintech, digital entrepreneurship, and the role of artificial intelligence in shaping ethical economic practices. Researchers including Mahmood et al. (2025), Bakar et al. (2025), and Mustofa et al. (2025) emphasized how Maqasid Shariah can guide digital transformation and ensure that technological progress remains inclusive, and value driven.

Overall, the trend in Table 1 shows a clear evolution in the field. Early studies provided the foundation by describing the nature of gig work as well as while later research expanded to consider how Islamic principles can shape fair and sustainable digital economies. The obvious increase in publications after 2021 highlights a growing awareness that Maqasid Shariah offers not just a theoretical framework but also a practical guide for ensuring justice and well-being in an increasingly digital and flexible world.

**Table 2: Distribution of Articles by Year Range and Research Focus (2017–2025)**

Year Range	Frequency	Research Focus
2017–2019	6	Early focus on policy issues, work conditions, and governance within the gig economy.
2020–2022	12	The emergence of Maqasid Shariah and sustainability approaches in digital and social contexts.
2023–2024	18	A surge of studies on the halal economy, Islamic digital inclusion, and governance.
2025- current	8	Dominance of research on fintech, AI integration, halal entrepreneurship, and sustainability.

Table 2 shows how research focus has evolved over time, reflecting both global developments and the growing maturity of Islamic economic studies. In the first period, between 2017 and 2019, the six studies published mainly examined policy issues, work conditions, and governance within the gig economy. These early studies provided an important foundation by identifying the economic and structural dimensions of gig work, including challenges such as unstable income, limited protection, and weak regulatory oversight. However, most of these works did not yet consider Islamic frameworks or Maqasid-based perspectives. The focus during this time remained descriptive and exploratory shows that the trend still aiming to understand the phenomenon rather than offering normative or ethical solutions.

Between 2020 and 2022, the research focus began to shift. Twelve studies from this period started incorporating Islamic perspectives and sustainability concepts into the discussion of digital and social transformation. This change coincides with the global experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, which exposed gaps in social protection and digital readiness. Scholars began using Maqasid Shariah principles to interpret how justice, welfare, and balance could be achieved in digital economies and flexible work settings. Studies during this phase also reflected a growing awareness of the need for a more inclusive and ethical framework that could guide not only individual well-being but also collective social resilience.

The trend continued to strengthen between 2023 and 2025, with twenty-six articles focusing on the intersection of halal economy, digital inclusion, and ethical governance. Research during 2023 and 2024 showed a surge in interest in Islamic digital finance, social equity, and governance mechanisms, while studies published in 2025 moved further into emerging topics such as fintech, artificial intelligence, and halal entrepreneurship. This indicates a more advanced and interdisciplinary stage of research development. Collectively, the findings suggest that studies have moved from merely describing the gig economy to examining how Islamic principles can shape its ethical and sustainable future. This progression also reflects the growing recognition that Maqasid Shariah provides not only a moral foundation but also a practical framework for addressing the challenges of technological change and economic inclusion.

**Table 3: Distribution of Article Across the Region and Dominant Themes**

Region	Frequency Percentage		Dominant Themes
	(n)	(%)	
Asia (including Southeast and East Asia)	35	79.5	halal economy, maqasid integration, islamic fintech, sustainability
Europe	8	18.2	gig work, worker policy, labor governance
North America	1	2.3	social protection and worker welfare
Middle East (GCC)	1	2.3	islamic digital finance
Total	44	100	—

Table 3 illustrates the regional distribution of the 44 reviewed articles and highlights the clear geographical imbalance in the academic discourse on the gig economy. Most of the studies, representing 79.5%, originate from Asia, particularly Southeast and East Asia. This regional concentration indicates that much of the contemporary discussion on Islamic perspectives, Maqasid integration, and the halal digital economy has been driven by Asian scholarship. Countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia have emerged as key contributors. This is especially after 2020 that reflects their active engagement in digital transformation and their growing interest in embedding Islamic principles into social and economic research. In Malaysia's case, researchers have increasingly used Maqasid Shariah as an ethical lens to understand youth participation, entrepreneurial resilience, and sustainable livelihoods, making the country a reference point for value-based gig economy studies.

By contrast, research from Europe accounts for 18.2% of the total publications, while North America. European studies, mainly from the United Kingdom and continental Europe, tend to focus on themes such as gig worker rights, labor policy, and algorithmic governance. These works are often grounded in labor economics and social justice, reflecting mature policy frameworks and robust research infrastructures. Similarly, North American publications, particularly from the United States and Canada, highlight issues of social protection and worker welfare, consistent with their advanced welfare systems and regulatory structures. The single study from the Middle East, focusing on Islamic digital finance, indicates that the region's academic output remains limited compared to its practical involvement in fintech innovation.

Despite the strong representation from Asia, the overall pattern reveals a geographical gap in the global research landscape. There is little to no representation from Africa, South Asia, Central Asia, or Latin America, regions that are experiencing rapid digitalization but remain underexplored in scholarly literature. This imbalance restricts a more holistic understanding of how gig work and digital entrepreneurship operate under different economic and cultural conditions. It also means that much of the current global narrative is shaped by countries with stronger social protection systems, potentially overlooking the lived realities of workers in regions with weaker labor governance. Bridging this gap would require more inclusive and comparative studies that connect the moral and social dimensions of Maqasid Shariah with the socioeconomic challenges faced in less-studied regions. Such efforts would enrich the academic dialogue and make the understanding of the global gig economy more equitable, representative, and aligned with universal human well-being.

**Table 4: Distribution of Articles by Method**

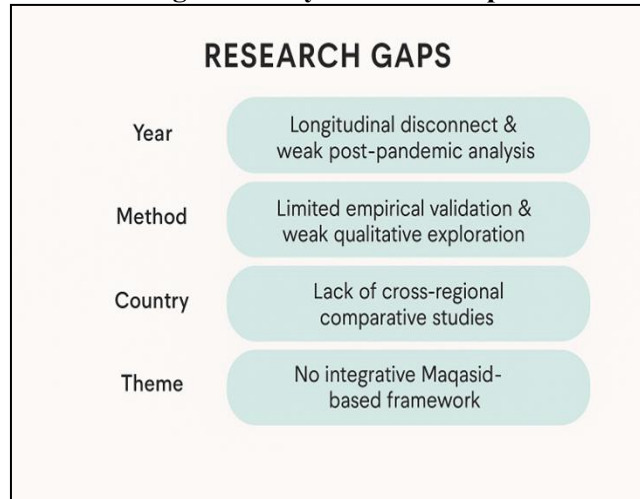
Method	Articles Involved (Author & Year)	Frequency (n)	Dominant Patterns / Themes
Qualitative	Healy et al. (2017); Stewart & Stanford (2017); Duggan et al. (2020); Johari & Ismail (2022); Anwar & Graham (2021); Bukido et al. (2025)	6 (13.6%)	Policy & Governance; Social Protection; Halal Lifestyle Contexts
Quantitative	Wood et al. (2019); Ismail et al. (2021); Kassi et al. (2021); Yeo & Heng (2021); Mahmud et al. (2023); Jumbri et al. (2023); Zulkefli et al (2023); Nik Mud et al. (2023); Mahmood et al. (2025); Mohd Hed et al. (2025)	10 (22.7%)	Motivation & Work Conditions; Youth Participation; Employment Readiness
Mixed Methods / Conceptual	Bajwa et al. (2018); Popescu & Popescu (2019); GURSOY et al. (2019); Ahmad, N. (2020); Almeida & O'Reilly (2020); Yusuf et al. (2021); Pardi et al. (2021); Uchiyama et al. (2022); Misbah et al. (2022); Muhyi et al. (2023); Rahman & Nor (2023); Zamri (2023); Razak et al. (2023); Abd Samad et al. (2023); Malek et al. (2023); Adnan et al. (2023); Ahmad & Sulaiman (2023); Ali et al. (2023); Ghafur et al. (2024); Shakil (2024); Bashori et al. (2024); Syahrani et al. (2024); Huđek & Širec (2024); Bakar et al. (2025); Tegar & Sari (2025); Melzattia et al. (2025); Basir et al. (2025); Mustofa et al. (2025)	28 (63.6%)	Policy & Governance; Sustainability; Digitalisation; Islamic Fintech; Halal Market; Financial Inclusion

Table 4 shows that studies on the gig economy are still largely shaped by conceptual and mixed-method approaches. Out of forty-four reviewed articles, twenty-eight used mixed or conceptual methods, while ten applied quantitative and six adopted qualitative designs. This pattern suggests that the field is still in a developmental phase, where researchers focus more on discussing frameworks, governance, and social issues rather than producing data-driven evidence. The dominance of conceptual work indicates strong interest in exploring policy directions and theoretical perspectives, but it also highlights the need for more empirical studies that can validate these ideas in real-world settings.

Quantitative studies have started to explore worker motivation, youth participation, and employment readiness. Research by Ismail et al. (2021) and Mahmud et al. (2023) demonstrates growing interest in measuring flexibility, autonomy, and satisfaction among gig workers. However, most of these studies remain descriptive and have not yet progressed to advanced statistical analysis that can explain causal relationships or long-term trends. Future studies should therefore strengthen methodological depth by including inferential testing and longitudinal designs to better capture the evolving nature of the gig economy.

Qualitative research, though limited, contributes valuable insights into the experiences and challenges of gig workers. Studies by Anwar and Graham (2021) and Bukido et al. (2025) help explain the social realities of income insecurity, job stress, and worker adaptation in digital platforms. These findings add depth to the understanding of the human side of gig work. As the field continues to evolve, combining the richness of qualitative data with the precision of quantitative analysis will help build a more holistic and ethical view of the gig economy, especially when guided by Maqasid Shariah and sustainable development values.

**Figure 2: Key Research Gaps**



Based on the overall synthesis, Figure 2 summarises the key research gaps identified in this review. These include limited longitudinal analysis, weak empirical validation, lack of cross-regional comparison, and the absence of an integrated Maqasid-based framework. These gaps form the foundation for the critical discussion that follows, as presented in Table 5, which outlines the main analytical dimensions, identified weaknesses, and suggested directions for future research

**Table 5: Summary of Analytical Dimensions, Identified Gaps, and Future Research Directions**

Analytical Dimension	Key Observations	Identified Gaps	Suggested Future Research Directions
Time (Year Range)	Studies from 2017–2019 focused on gig work, policy, and employment ethics (mainly in Europe). After 2020, research shifted towards halal economy, Maqasid-based governance, digitalisation, and fintech (mainly in Asia).	Lack of longitudinal continuity between early gig economy studies and recent Islamic digital economy research. Limited comparative studies examining structural transformation of Islamic gig work before and after the pandemic.	Conduct longitudinal analyses (2017–2025) on the evolution of Maqasid Shariah values within the digital gig economy. Explore pre- and post-COVID-19 impacts of digitalisation on Maqasid dimensions, employment, and well-being.
Research Methodology	Mixed/conceptual approaches dominate (64%), followed by quantitative (23%) and qualitative (14%) methods. Conceptual studies are abundant, but empirical validation remains limited.	Insufficient quantitative studies measuring the relationship between Maqasid principles, digital innovation, and socioeconomic well-being. Limited qualitative research on small Muslim gig worker communities.	Apply exploratory sequential mixed-method designs to empirically validate Maqasid-based models. Encourage ethnographic and micro-level case studies (e.g., Muslim drivers on Go-Jek, Grab, or FoodPanda).

Analytical Dimension	Key Observations	Identified Gaps	Suggested Future Research Directions
Country / Location	77% of studies were published in Asia (mainly Malaysia and Indonesia), 18% in Europe, with few from North America and the Middle East.	Lack of cross-regional comparative studies between Asia–Europe or Asia–Middle East. Islamic countries outside ASEAN (e.g., Pakistan, Egypt, Morocco) remain underrepresented.	Expand comparative policy research between ASEAN and non-ASEAN Islamic economies. Promote Global South collaborations (Asia–West Africa–Middle East) on digital and Islamic economic inclusivity.
Research Focus / Themes	Dominant themes include policy and governance, sustainability, Islamic fintech, halal economy, and youth employment.	Few studies integrate all these themes into a holistic Maqasid Shariah framework. Youth readiness and digital skills are rarely linked to the halal economy.	Develop an integrated Maqasid Digital Youth (MDY) Framework to analyse interconnections between digital inclusion, youth participation, and halal economic growth. Focus on intergenerational inclusivity and Maqasid-oriented entrepreneurship.
Continental / Regional Trends	Asia remains the most active research hub, while European contributions declined after 2020; Middle Eastern output is gradually increasing post-pandemic.	No existing studies connect Asia’s socioeconomic trends with global Maqasid-based governance principles. Lack of integration between policy-driven governance (Europe) and faith-based governance (Asia).	Encourage cross-continental studies (Asia–Europe) to establish Islamic governance benchmarks. Propose a collaborative “Global Maqasid Index for Digital Economy” to map progress across regions.

The review shows that studies between 2017 and 2019 mainly focused on labour policy, employment ethics, and governance issues within the early development of the gig economy, especially in Europe. After 2020, there was a noticeable shift towards the halal economy, digitalisation, and Maqasid Shariah perspectives, particularly in Asia. However, there is still no longitudinal link connecting these two phases. Research rarely examines how the earlier concepts of gig work evolved into the current Islamic digital economy framework. Future studies should therefore consider a time-based approach that compares pre- and post-pandemic developments and explores how digital transformation has influenced employment, ethics, and social well-being through the lens of Maqasid Shariah.

In terms of methodology, most studies still rely on conceptual or mixed-method approaches. Empirical evidence remains limited as only a few studies use quantitative data or field-based qualitative analysis. This situation restricts the ability to confirm causal relationships or measure the practical impact of Maqasid-based frameworks. Future research should apply stronger empirical designs, such as sequential or convergent mixed methods that combine statistical analysis with narrative interpretation. It is also important to expand fieldwork and ethnographic studies that document the experiences of Muslim gig workers, particularly in delivery, ride-hailing, and freelance sectors.

Geographically, the research landscape is heavily dominated by Asia, especially Malaysia and Indonesia, while other regions contribute far less. European and North American studies often focus on labour regulation and welfare whereas Asian research centres more on Islamic governance and digital inclusion. However, collaboration between these regions remains limited. There is also a lack of research involving non-ASEAN Muslim countries such as Pakistan, Egypt, and Morocco. Future research should

focus and prioritise comparative and cross-regional studies that connect faith-based and policy-based governance approaches to create a more balanced global understanding of the gig economy.

Finally, most studies highlight key themes such as policy and governance, sustainability, Islamic fintech, and youth employment, but these topics are often analysed separately. Few studies integrate them under a single Maqasid framework. A more comprehensive approach is needed to connect digital inclusion, youth readiness, and ethical entrepreneurship. Developing models such as the Maqasid Digital Youth (MDY) framework could help researchers analyse these relationships more systematically. A collaborative effort to create a “Global Maqasid Index for Digital Economy” may also strengthen comparative analysis and promote shared standards for ethical and sustainable digital practices.

## CONCLUSION

This study provides a comprehensive overview of youth participation in the gig economy through a systematic scoping review approach. The method enabled a transparent and structured mapping of existing literature, which helped identify research patterns, knowledge gaps, and key themes that shape academic discussions on the gig economy within the context of socioeconomic sustainability and Maqasid Shariah. The findings show that youth engagement in the gig economy is mainly driven by flexibility and income opportunities, yet challenges such as job insecurity, limited social protection, and inadequate digital skills remain significant.

Five key themes were identified: policy and governance, social protection and equity, youth participation and employment, motivation and working conditions, and sustainable development. The review also reveals that most current studies are conceptual and normative rather than based on empirical evidence. Future research should therefore prioritise large-scale empirical studies and mixed method approaches to better evaluate the relationships between policy, motivation, and the well-being of gig workers.

From an Islamic perspective, applying the five principles of Maqasid Shariah such as *hifz al-din* (protection of faith), *hifz al-nafs* (protection of life), *hifz al-‘aql* (protection of intellect), *hifz al-nasl* (protection of lineage), and *hifz al-mal* (protection of wealth) is essential for balancing economic growth, social justice and human welfare. Incorporating these principles into research and policy design ensures that economic participation supports both material and moral well-being.

In practical terms, strengthening inclusive social protection, improving digital literacy training, and expanding access to Islamic financial tools such as micro-Takaful can help build a fair, ethical, and sustainable gig economy. A value-based and Maqasid-oriented approach can transform the gig economy into a balanced platform for youth empowerment and sustainable development that aligns with both Maqasid Shariah objectives and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

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