

From Entry to Empowerment: Exploring Motivation, Organizational Support, and Impact of Female Train Drivers in MRT Jakarta

Anis Hartini^{1*}, Nursini Nursini^{2*}, Ery Iswary³

¹ Postgraduate School, Gender and Development Study Program, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia;

² Faculty of Economics and Business, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia;

³ Faculty of Humanities, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia.

*corresponding author: Anis anishartini3@gmail.com, Nursini; nursini@unhas.ac.id

© Author(s)

OIDA International Journal of Sustainable Development, Ontario International Development Agency, Canada.

ISSN 1923-6654 (print) ISSN 1923-6662 (online) www.oidaijsd.com

Also available at <https://www.ssm.com/index.cfm/en/oida-intl-journal-sustainable-dev/>

Abstract: In Indonesia's male-dominated public transport sector, female train drivers remain a rare and underexplored phenomenon. Formal work as a train driver, based on the Minister of Transportation Regulation Number 4 of 2017, is open to both women and men participating and being involved as train drivers. In 2023, the number of MRT Jakarta drivers was 80, consisting of 11 Female Drivers and 69 Male Drivers. This study analyses women's motives for becoming train drivers and contribution of female train drivers. This study uses qualitative research with a phenomenological approach. The data used are primary data obtained from in-depth interviews with key informants with the help of interview guidelines, recording devices, documentation tools, and field notes. Primary data were analysed using a qualitative analysis model. Key informants are female train drivers, and supporting informant from Human Capital staff at MRT Jakarta. Participants were chosen using purposive sampling to ensure their relevance to the study's objectives, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of diverse perspectives within the organizational context. The results showed that educational background and peer influence were the main motives in choosing this job; other supporting motives included feeling challenged, gender equality, opportunity to gain new knowledge, enjoyable work in dealing with customers, challenging stereotypes, self-actualisation, and the company supporting and being a pioneer for female train drivers. Organizational support such as risk allowances, health benefits, leave, dormitories, and self-development programmes play an important role in supporting productivity at work and encouraging growth. MRT train drivers contribute to a country's economic, social, and development aspects.

The findings of this study highlight the interconnected nature of social and economic contributions. Employees' income is not only a tool for personal benefit but also serves as a catalyst for broader societal impact. These findings underscore the importance of creating inclusive workplace policies that empower employees to contribute meaningfully to both their professional growth and the community at large. The research highlights the alignment of Jakarta MRT's inclusive policies with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 5 and SDG 8, showcasing how gender equality and decent work coexist in traditionally male-dominated sectors. This form of agency is not abrupt but evolves over time, beginning with decisions around vocational education, engaging in conversations with mentors or peers, and continuing through the process of adapting to a male-dominated work environment. These accounts align with concept of agency as the ability to make meaningful choices and take actions that shape one's life trajectory. The women in this study present themselves as change agents through acts of everyday resistance that gradually challenge and transform dominant norms in the workplace. These findings contribute to the growing discourse on breaking gender stereotypes and fostering inclusivity in the transportation industry. Therefore, broader access for females in the transportation industry is essential.

Keywords: Career Motivation; Female Train Drivers; Gender Equality; Sustainable Development Goals; Women's Workforce Participation

Introduction

Work plays a vital role in human life, and producing material work also helps people realise themselves. In the world of work, there are various professions; these professions are often grouped between jobs for men and women. There is a precise classification or grouping between "men's work", which is always considered to represent masculine traits because men are required to show their masculine side, and "women's work", which is always considered to represent femininity. Gender stereotypes or labelling exist in the context of work; gender stereotypes, especially in work, are a supporting factor for gender inequality. Gender stereotypes impact human life; gender stereotypes shape self-perception attitudes in establishing relationships and influence participation in work [1].

A motive is a reason or drive that makes someone do something, act, or behave in a certain way. Motive is a concept that includes all the drivers, reasons or drives in humans that cause them to do something. Human behaviour essentially has motives. According to Heckhausen (1980), social motives indicate that the goals to be achieved have interactions with other people. Social motives arise to fulfil individual needs about the social environment. Motives arise because of needs [2].

The theory developed by Clayton Paul Alderfer in Rinda explains that three human needs drive a person to act. These needs are the need for existence (Existence), the need to relate and interact between humans and other humans (Relatedness) and a person's need to develop (Growth). Alderfer's theory is abbreviated as ERG; this ERG motivation theory is a simple form of Maslow's Theory of Needs [3]. Research by Fitzpatrick found that the motive for women to become truck drivers in the United Kingdom (UK) is the freedom provided by their work. The study also found many challenges female truck drivers face in their daily work lives. The biggest challenge for female truck drivers is the lack of facilities [4]. The main motive for women to participate as commercial transport drivers in Lagos, Nigeria, is the need for survival and family support. Women in Lagos are determined to continue as commercial drivers after marriage because they need to care for their children, most of their partners do not fully contribute to the maintenance or fulfillment of household needs [5].

Mining work is often considered formidable and dominated by men, but over time, it has become open to women. This phenomenon is the same as women's work in transportation. Based on the results of Ledwaba and Nkomo's research in South Africa, the new democratic dispensation has tried to make the mining industry attractive to women, many of whom enter this industry because of their economic and social circumstances [6].

Female participation at work has been fluctuating. In August 2022, the working population will be 135,30 million. 55.35% live in the cities, while the rest, 44.65%, live in the villages. 61.02% of the number is male, while 38.98% are female [7].

Formal work as a train driver, based on the Minister of Transportation Regulation Number 4 of 2017, is open to both women and men participating and being involved as train drivers. In 2023, the number of MRT Jakarta drivers was 80, consisting of 11 Female Drivers and 69 Male Drivers.

Materials and Methods

Epistemologically, this study uses a post-positivistic approach (Qualitative Approach) with the Phenomenological Study method (Creswell, 2014). The Phenomenological Study used in this study is generally to provide information and an overview of how women participate and are involved as MRT drivers in DKI Jakarta. The data used are primary data obtained from in-depth interviews with key informants with the help of interview guidelines, recording devices, documentation tools, and field notes. Primary data were analysed using a qualitative analysis model. Key informants are female train drivers, and supporting informant from Human Capital staff at MRT Jakarta. Participants were chosen using purposive sampling to ensure their relevance to the study's objectives, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of diverse perspectives within the organizational context. This streamlined process ensured systematic analysis, contextualized within relevant theories such as the ERG motivation model.

Qualitative analysis models refer to systematic frameworks used to interpret non-numeric data, such as interview transcripts, with the goal of identifying patterns, themes, and meanings from informant experiences. The data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of three concurrent steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction was conducted by selecting, focusing, and simplifying interview transcripts to highlight meaningful patterns. These were then organized and presented in data display tables to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn and verified through reflection and discussions with academic supervisors to ensure the validity of the findings.

Given that the researcher's own identity has the potential to be partial to issues of gender equality, reflection was an important aspect of this study. Regular discussions with academic supervisors were conducted to minimise interpretation bias, especially during theme development. These steps helped to ensure that the findings were based on the participants' experiences and not on the researcher's assumptions.

Results and Discussion

Results

Overview of MRT Jakarta train drivers

According to Regulation of the Minister of Transportation Number 4, 2017, the train driver vacancy is open for both females and males. PT MRT Jakarta pioneers the path for female train drivers. This quickly became the centre of public attention because it had been a male job for as long as people can remember. Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) has been operating since 2019. Today, there are 80 train drivers in MRT Jakarta, among whom are eleven females. The company has no specific quota between male and female train drivers. The number of current male and female train drivers is according to the recruitment result. Female participation in PT MRT Jakarta outside the Head Office and Worksite can be found more in the engineering and maintenance field than as train drivers. The recruitment process in PT MRT Jakarta is based on Competency-Based Human Resources Management (CBHRM). The recruitment of train drivers does not occur annually. There are several reasons why fewer female train drivers exist than male counterparts. First, there is less enthusiasm from female job applicants despite the job advertisement attempts. Second, male substitutes in operational areas must be provided as backups for female workers with menstrual leave or other reasons. This is done to fulfil the operational worker's quota as a part of risk mitigation from PT MRT Jakarta. PT MRT Jakarta has certain conditions and requirements regarding the recruitment of train drivers. The number of train drivers in PT MRT Jakarta is affected by the Train Travel Graphics (*GAPEKA*). The more comprehensive the coverage, the more train drivers will be recruited. PT MRT Jakarta will recruit more train drivers when Phase 2 of the MRT Jakarta station development is completed.

Educational Background as a Key Factor

Educational background is among the determining factors when choosing a job. Other than the information gathered from the informants, in this study also acquired data about train drivers' training and recruitment process from GN, a Human Capital staff of PT MRT Jakarta. According to him, the first recruitment was done in 2017 and 2018, and the recruited had joined the company before the MRT started operating. At first, PT MRT Jakarta partnered with the Indonesian Railway Academy (*Akademi Perkeretaapian Indonesia*)—now Indonesian Railway Polytechnic (*PPI*) in Madiun, East Java. The recruitment started before the students graduated, as a informant told us.

“PT MRT Jakarta visited my campus for recruitment in the third or fourth semester. Initially, I signed up for the electricity (maintenance), but my test result showed I could pass that and train drivers. Furthermore, I learned that PT MRT Jakarta will hire female train drivers, so I chose that one”- Informant DS, Female Train Driver.

Several other companies were recruiting, too. At first, PT MRT Jakarta only recruited from transportation-focused educational institutions, such as *Politeknik Perkeretaapian Indonesia* (*PPI*, or Indonesian Railway Polytechnic) and *Sekolah Tinggi Transportasi Darat* (*STTD*, or Indonesian Land Transportation Polytechnic). However, PT MRT Jakarta has expanded the limit and allows more diverse educational backgrounds.

This study deeper into how the informants choose to work as train drivers based on their educational background.

“In 2014, I researched the transportation campus, and there weren't many of them. My dad was in the army near Tulungagung station, but there was no space for female train drivers” -Informant AM, Female Train Driver.

“Initially, I wanted to enrol in STTD, but when I joined the admission tests, I was accepted into PPI, so I enrolled there instead. PT MRT visited my campus in my 4th or 5th semester. I tested for the operator position but was offered to be a train driver, and I said yes. In my family, there have not been any train drivers, and many are private sector employees,” said Informant TA, Female Train Driver.

“At first, I got the job vacancy information from my lecturer, so I applied for OCC. After the test, I was offered the position of train driver. After talking to my friends, I finally accepted the job” -Informant SA, Female Train Driver.

Based on the informants' accounts, the choice of work as train drivers is driven by educational background motive. The process happens during research on choosing a campus for college while being a student and after graduating from college. This shows that their choice of work can be shaped before, during, and after graduation. This study find

the informants in this study have an educational background in common: vocational education focused on transportation.

After graduating from vocational education and working as train drivers in PT MRT Jakarta, some continue their studies to obtain bachelor's and master's degrees. Informants said that their educational background is one of the reasons they chose to work as train drivers.

"I graduated from the major Lake and River Crossing Transportation with an associate degree. Although I did not study railway transportation, I can still work as a train driver because there's a need for female train drivers"-Informant AN, Female Train Driver.

"My motive to be a train driver is because I got a 4-year diploma in transportation"-WL, Female Train Driver.

The findings suggest that the process of aligning education with career aspirations begins early. Informants often selected educational institutions with strong transportation programs, which positioned them for opportunities at PT MRT Jakarta. Many shared a foundational background in vocational education focused on transportation, and some pursued further studies after joining the company. For instance, one informant noted that her associate degree in Lake and River Crossing Transportation, though unrelated to railway systems, still enabled her to qualify as a train driver due to PT MRT Jakarta's efforts to recruit and train female candidates. Another informant attributed her motivation to become a train driver to her four-year diploma in transportation.

As a Human Capital Staff of PT MRT Jakarta, GN mentioned that in the recruitment process, the company preferred to hire candidates from vocational education with an associate degree or 4-year diploma. However, once they already become train drivers, they will be encouraged to take higher education to have more expansive knowledge and deeper understanding of railway engineering, maintenance, and others and to encourage them that being train drivers is not the end of their journey, that higher degree will support their professionalism and career. Train drivers are expected to have determination and willingness to pursue higher education.

This study highlight education plays a vital role in human life, both individually and socially. Education serves to fulfil basic needs. According to *Clayton Paul Alderfer*, there are three human needs, which are the need for existence, the need to relate with and interact with other people (Relatedness), and the need to develop (Growth). Education is considered as a necessity for someone to create and to motivate someone to learn. Through education, individuals can gain the knowledge and skills needed to get a decent and desired job [8].

Education emerges as a critical factor in fulfilling human needs and advancing career progression. According to Alderfer's ERG theory, education satisfies growth needs by equipping individuals with the skills and knowledge required to achieve fulfilling careers. The vocational education background of train drivers at PT MRT Jakarta aligns with the job's qualifications and motivates them to continue their studies, ensuring personal and professional growth. Prior research supports this notion, demonstrating that educational attainment enhances career development and organizational performance. Well-educated employees contribute to achieving company goals through improved productivity and innovation, further underscoring the value of continuous learning [9, 10, 11].

Peer Influence and Social Support

Friends are not only a source of information and a place to exchange ideas, but they are also influential in someone's career choice [12, 13]. In addition, friendship is also a factor that affects decision-making [14, 15]. The interview in this study confirms that friends influence the choice of work as a train driver. The informants need friends to exchange information about working as train drivers.

"Yes, I need to share with my friends who have graduated earlier" -Informant SA, Female Train Driver.

"I am quite close with my senior, and they told me about this job vacancy as a train driver of MRT, so I signed up" -Informant AN, Female Train Driver.

Some informants highlighted the role of friends and social networks in providing information and encouragement. The findings of this study reveal that friendships play a crucial role in influencing individuals' decisions to pursue careers as train drivers. Informants highlighted the importance of their social connections in providing information and guidance about the profession. One informant emphasized the value of consulting with peers who had graduated earlier, noting that these interactions helped them gain insights into the opportunities available and the process of becoming a train driver.

Another informant described how their close relationship with a senior led to the discovery of the job vacancy at PT MRT Jakarta. The senior, who was familiar with the role, shared valuable information about the position, prompting the informant to apply. These accounts underscore the significance of social relationships in shaping career choices, as friends and peers serve as trusted sources of advice and support during the decision-making process.

Regarding the friendship influence motive in this study, this study find the need for relatedness. The relationship between informants and their friends is not only for companionship but also for valuable exchange of information, especially about work. The finding of this study, that the criteria for choosing friends as a source of information is based on their experience of graduating earlier and their closeness with the informants. Those friends are deemed to have valuable information about work as train drivers, which affects their decision-making. In this study, highlight that friendship affects their choice of work as train drivers.

Challenging Gender Stereotypes

This study also found several supporting motives to being female train drivers are a challenging feeling, gender equality, the opportunity to gain new knowledge, a fun job dealing with customers, challenging the stereotype, self-actualisation, and a supportive company that pioneers the path for female drivers.

“Train drivers used to be a male-dominated job. I want to prove otherwise, that I can be a female train driver and support gender equality” -Informant ED, Female Train Driver.

“People think only men can be train drivers, but I can be one too” -Informant ZR, Female Train Driver.

“A lot of professional staff members are women, so I am encouraged to be one as well, and I hope men support women training drivers too” -Informant TA, Female Train Driver.

“Back in college, I only had four girls in my class. I want to prove we can be involved and responsible in male-dominated jobs” -Informant RG, Female Train Driver.

This study identifies that female train drivers often express multiple motives behind their decision to pursue this profession. Among these, the desire to promote gender equality stands out as the most frequently mentioned and is closely intertwined with other motivations. Informants shared how their experiences and aspirations to challenge societal perceptions about gender roles shaped their career choices.

One informant reflected on her determination to prove that women can succeed in a male-dominated profession, emphasizing her commitment to supporting gender equality. Another highlighted how the assumption that train driving is exclusively for men motivated her to demonstrate that women are equally capable of excelling in the role.

For some informants, observing women in leadership roles inspired them to take up the challenge of becoming train drivers. They also acknowledged the supportive attitudes of male colleagues, which reinforced their confidence to succeed. Additionally, experiences in predominantly male academic settings further strengthened their resolve, encouraging them to demonstrate that women could take responsibility and thrive in male-dominated environments.

These findings illustrate how the motive of promoting gender equality not only drives women to enter this field but also connects with other personal aspirations, such as challenging stereotypes, proving competence, and gaining recognition in a profession traditionally dominated by men. Female participation and involvement in the transportation industry as train drivers show that humans require existence, which aligns with the theory from *Clayton Paul Alderfer*. Existence can be interpreted as presence. This study find that female participation and existence as train drivers in MRT Jakarta contribute to gender equality in the transportation industry, especially in the railway field, challenge gender stereotypes, and facilitate female train drivers for self-actualisation.

Female contribution to economy, social, and development

A company will reward and give benefits to their employees to fulfil their needs and welfare. According to Law Number 13, 2003, regarding employment, employee welfare is achieved by fulfilling physical and spiritual needs and/or requirements both within the scope of work and outside work. Normative forms of employee welfare include wages, social security, occupational safety and health, which, if not implemented, has legal consequences [16].

Table 1 Facilities for female train drivers of PT MRT Jakarta

Facility	Type
Health	Health insurance
	Employment insurance
	Glasses
	Nursery room
Leave	Dormitory
	Menstrual leave
	Maternity leave
Physical exercise	Gym
	Pound fit
Transportation	Employee pick-up for night shifts
	Refreshment training
Self growth	Training
	Internal Development Programme
	Risk allowance
Allowance	Kilometer allowance
	Food allowance (night snack & lunch)
	Transportation allowance

Source: Author's interviews with female train drivers of PT MRT Jakarta (2024).

“The facilities I get are pick-up for females working night shifts from 10 PM to 3 AM, nursery room for breast pumping, dormitory for rest, and night snacks. We also get access to exercise classes such as Pound Fit, health insurance such as BPJS, insurance for glasses, maternity leave, and health insurance that covers our spouse and children.

When I was pregnant, I was off duty due to safety and health concerns. When there is a passenger evacuation, the emergency stairs require people to squat and jump from height, which should be avoided during pregnancy. Therefore, the company's standard operating procedure requires pregnant train drivers to work at the office and help with administrative work or other departments.”-Informant AL, Female Train Driver.

“.....When I was pregnant, I did not drive the train for health and safety reasons. After maternity leave, we are given a 2-week refreshment before returning to duty. I can breast pump at work, and I also get health insurance and glasses insurance.” Informant TA, Female Train Driver.

“MRT is concerned with our welfare and wellbeing. For night shifts, we are given a pick-up facility, snacks, 8-hour rest, and health insurance, both BPJS and private insurance. In addition, we also have gym, dormitory, and training”- Informant RG, Female Train Driver.

“Facilities given are pick-ups, dormitory, a good salary, yearly refreshment training, soft skills training, and insurance.” Informant ZR, Female Train Driver.

“....there is an Internal Development Programme based on individual assessment and training for everyone. Other than that, there is also risk allowance, grade promotion every year, and kilometre, food, and transportation allowance outside basic salary.” Informant ED, Female Train Driver.

All female train drivers stated that they are given adequate welfare and facilities. This study find that PT MRT Jakarta's priorities for their employees are security, health, and safety.

This can be seen from how pregnant train drivers are assigned to work in other departments temporarily to ensure their health and safety with their babies. Other facilities include a dormitory for rest, pick-up for female train drivers working night shifts, and facilities and infrastructure for sports and exercise. The facilities provided by the company have a positive impact on workers' welfare, thus affecting workers' productivity at work [17]. The facilities and welfare provided by the company to workers can support workers in growing, developing, and minimising demotivation and accidents at work. Based on the facilities above, the company ensures workers are safe, healthy, and secure and provides space to grow, supported by a self-development program. The program facilitates employees in fulfilling the need to grow, which aligns with the motive of education.

The informants' income contributes to their family and social and fulfils other needs. Income is beneficial for themselves, their families, and others. In this study, the informants contribute to the economy and society.

"I am a sandwich generation. As my family's breadwinner, I think MRT is considerate of our welfare. I earn enough to support my family, parents, and siblings. I fully fund my younger sibling's tuition fee in a private university in Kediri, majoring in public health." -Informant AL, Female Train Driver.

"Although I am not married yet and not the breadwinner in my family, I still give money to my parents, even though not much, because they are still working" -Informant SA, Female Train Driver.

"In my previous job, the salary was only enough for myself. Now I earn enough to give to my parents and for my savings" -Informant AN, Female Train Driver.

Informants contribute to the economy by fulfilling family needs, saving, and funding family members. Women often work to support the family financially to contribute to fulfilling their family needs [18]. First, one of the ways to contribute to family needs is by funding a family member's education. The family member can improve their skill and knowledge with the effort, further supporting their future career and independence. The following way is to save up. This will secure someone's financial condition for themselves and their family. Women's social status greatly influences their motivation and ability to use their money to exert influence within the home [19].

Social contribution consists of interacting, impacting, and bringing advantages to other people.

"My needs are met, and I can still give them to my family. Besides that, I can use my salary for social causes when I volunteer, so I do not only contribute to the economy but also social causes, bringing benefits for other people." - Informant AM, Female Train Driver.

"....I can give my income to my parents. My husband's income and mine have become a dual income. My husband's income is for our family's living and sustenance, while mine is for myself, for zakat, and alms." -Informant TA, Female Train Driver.

Regarding social contribution, informants said it is done on the principle of utility for many people. In my opinion, humans live not only to work but also to stay connected with other people in social interaction, as expressed by *Clayton Paul Alderfer's* theory about relatedness. One of the examples is by volunteering, giving *zakat*, and charity. Beyond individual benefits, employees contribute significantly to social development through activities that align with the principle of utility, as suggested by *Betham* in *Izudin*. According to this principle, actions should aim to maximize benefits for the greatest number of people [20].

Discussion

Motivations of Female Train Drivers

The motivations of female train drivers in this study were shaped by various interrelated factors, including vocational education, peer influence, and a commitment to gender equality. These findings are consistent with *Alderfer's* ERG motivation theory, particularly the dimensions of growth and relatedness, which highlight the importance of personal development and social connection as central to one's motivation to work [3].

This study contributes to the theoretical discourse by enriching discussions around women's work motivation in male-dominated professions through an integrated perspective that combines ERG motivation theory with feminist frameworks, notably liberal feminism and standpoint feminism. This integration offers a broader analytical lens to understand how women challenge gendered divisions of labor, particularly within public transportation settings.

Empirically, the research presents new insights based on the lived experiences of female train drivers in Jakarta's MRT, population that remains underrepresented in Indonesian academic literature. The role of vocational education and peer encouragement emerged as dominant influences in shaping women's career choices, demonstrating how

educational institutions and social relationships play a significant role in enabling women's participation in non-traditional fields.

The findings also offer practical implications for transportation institutions aiming to create more gender-equitable workplaces. They indicate that recruitment and career development strategies should include early exposure to career information, the establishment of peer support systems, and the creation of inclusive work environments that actively welcome women into operational and technical roles.

Beyond structural and social influences, this study highlights the presence of women's agency in navigating their career paths. In contexts where train driving is still widely perceived as a masculine profession, the decision by women to enter this field represents a quiet but clear form of resistance to traditional gender roles. Informants expressed a desire to prove that women are equally capable, signaling a deliberate assertion of capability and legitimacy.

This form of agency is not abrupt but evolves over time, beginning with decisions around vocational education, engaging in conversations with mentors or peers, and continuing through the process of adapting to a male-dominated work environment. These accounts align with Kabeer's (1999) concept of agency as the ability to make meaningful choices and take actions that shape one's life trajectory. The women in this study present themselves as change agents through acts of everyday resistance that gradually challenge and transform dominant norms in the workplace.

Similar trends can be observed across Southeast Asia, where women have increasingly begun to enter male-dominated fields in transport, such as bus driving in Malaysia and rail operations in the Philippines. However, the pace of progress remains uneven. In many cases, institutional support, vocational education access, and gender-inclusive policies determine the success of such transitions. The case of MRT Jakarta illustrates how a combination of targeted recruitment, workplace support, and cultural shifts can create viable entry points for women in technical roles.

Implications for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

According to the Global Gender Gap Report, the transportation sector remains one of the industries with the widest gender gaps globally [21]. The inclusion of women as train drivers aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 5 [22], promoting gender equality by dismantling stereotypes and creating equitable opportunities, which aims to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.

Informants' motivations to challenge norms reflect a broader societal shift towards inclusivity. Moreover, this research demonstrates how gender equality initiatives, such as those implemented at MRT Jakarta, can simultaneously drive Sustainable Development Goal 8 economic growth and workplace diversity, which seeks to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value [22]. By exploring the motivations of female train drivers in a traditionally male-dominated profession, this research highlights the importance of providing equitable access to employment opportunities and dismantling gender-based occupational stereotypes.

Through these contributions, the research not only addresses academic gaps but also offers practical insights for policymakers and public transportation operators in Indonesia, reinforcing the role of gender mainstreaming strategies in advancing national and global development agendas. As one of the pioneering studies on female train drivers in MRT Jakarta, this research sheds light on gender dynamics in a non-traditional profession within a developing country, contributing to the literature on breaking gender stereotypes and fostering workplace diversity.

Implication for Economic and Social

Employees' participation in social activities, such as volunteering, charity, and zakat, reflects their commitment to societal welfare. Volunteering, for instance, provides opportunities for increased community interaction, enhanced self-esteem, a deeper understanding of social needs, and the expansion of social networks [23, 24]. By engaging in these activities, employees develop a broader perspective on societal challenges and contribute to addressing them.

Charity and zakat also play a pivotal role in reducing income inequality and fostering social equity. These practices enable resources to be redistributed, narrowing the gap between the wealthy and the underprivileged, and contributing to social development [25]. Informants in this study reported setting aside portions of their income for these purposes as part of their religious obligations and a means of giving back to the community.

The findings of this study highlight the interconnected nature of social and economic contributions. Employees' income is not only a tool for personal benefit but also serves as a catalyst for broader societal impact. By supporting both individual welfare and collective development, employee contributions can significantly influence economic

growth and societal well-being [26, 27, 28]. These findings underscore the importance of creating inclusive workplace policies that empower employees to contribute meaningfully to both their professional growth and the community at large.

Organizational Practices and Support

The welfare policies at MRT Jakarta, such as maternity leave, dormitory accommodations, and health programs, serve as best practices for other industries aiming to foster diversity. These policies not only ensure women's safety and well-being but also promote productivity and long-term retention. Furthermore, by aligning with SDG 5 and SDG 8, this research illustrates the interplay between gender equality and economic growth, highlighting how inclusive practices contribute to broader societal and economic goals.

Conclusion

The results provide practical implications for organizations aiming to foster gender diversity, and theoretical contributions to feminist perspectives on women's empowerment in male-dominated profession. This study underscores the need to address barriers in traditionally male-dominated roles and encourages broader participation of women in such fields, providing a pioneering perspective in an emerging and under-researched context within Indonesia.

This study highlights the significant contributions and capabilities of female train drivers at PT MRT Jakarta. Key motivations for women pursuing careers as train drivers include educational background, peer influence, and personal aspirations. Additional factors such as the desire to challenge gender stereotypes, achieve self-actualization, and work in a supportive and innovative environment further reinforce their career choices. These findings underscore the role of MRT Jakarta's inclusive policies in empowering women and pioneering opportunities for female train drivers. This research demonstrates that promoting gender equality in the workplace, as emphasized in SDG 5, also aligns with broader economic goals outlined in SDG 8. The inclusion of female train drivers at MRT Jakarta serves as a model for how gender-inclusive policies can empower women while fostering economic growth through workplace diversity and innovation. By addressing gender imbalances and facilitating self-actualization, industries can create environments that support both social inclusion and economic development.

Acknowledgements

The author thanks Indonesia's Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology for providing financial aid through grants. The data and views presented in the article are entirely the author's responsibility.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflicts of interest were reported in this study.

Funding

This research was funded by Indonesia's Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, Decree Number 0459/E5/PG.02.00/2024 dated May 30, 2024, and Agreement/Contract Number 050/E5/PG.02.00.PL/2024 dated June 11, 2024.

Ethical approval

This study complied with ethical standards for research involving human participants in the social sciences. All informants were informed of the purpose of the study, their voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Informed consent was obtained prior to the interview. Confidentiality and anonymity of informants were strictly maintained throughout the research process. In accordance with institutional policy, no formal ethical clearance was required for the research conducted within the social science programme at Postgraduate School, Hasanuddin University, Indonesia.

Informed Consent Statement

All data and information provided have been approved by all authors. This study uses primary data from key informants at MRT Jakarta. The researcher has obtained research permission from LPPM UNHAS and permission to conduct interviews with train drivers from PT MRT Jakarta.

Data Availability Statement

This study uses primary data from interviews with key informants. By the contract agreement with PT MRT, data cannot be disseminated without the author's permission.

References

- [1] Institute of Physics. (2018). *Gender stereotypes and their effect on young people*.
www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/12/3099/348575.
- [2] Rahmawati, I. (2022). *Introductory Social Psychology (Pengantar Psikologi Sosial)* (F. Azzahrah, Ed.; 1st ed.). PT. Bumi Aksara.
https://books.google.co.id/books?id=BTpwEAAAQBAJ&pg=PA147&dq=teori+motif&hl=en&newbks=1&newbks_redir=0&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj6pdHNoJ-CAxWOyDgGHfTWAlgQ6AF6BAGKEAI#v=onepage&q=teori%20motif&f=false
- [3] Yanti, R., Raharjo, Rosyidin, I., Suhirman, L., Djollong, A., Adisaputra, A., Junaidi, J., Nurhasanah, Pratama, A., Djakariah, Nurdin, A., Walilulu, H., Handayani, N., & Kase, E. (2023, July). *ILMU PENDIDIKAN : Panduan Komprehensif untuk Pendidikan*. PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonea.
https://www.google.co.id/books/edition/ILMU_PENDIDIKAN_Panduan_Komprehensif_un/nL7MEAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=teori+motif+alderfer&pg=PA75&printsec=frontcover
- [4] Fitzpatrick, A. M., & Balci, G. (2021). *Promoting Road Freight Industry to Women: Motivations and Challenges of Female Truck Drivers in the UK*. 222–241. <https://pure.hud.ac.uk/en/publications/promoting-road-freight-industry-to-women-motivations-and-challeng>
- [5] Owolabi, T., Alabi, T. A., & Busari-Akinbode, S. A. (2023). Changing times and women on the wheels: a qualitative investigation of the experiences of female commercial drivers in Lagos State, Nigeria. *Journal of Enterprising Communities*, 17(2), 382–397. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEC-07-2021-0105>
- [6] Ledwaba, S., & Nkomo, T. S. (2021). An Exploration of Motivations for Women Mine Workers to Work Underground. *SAGE Open*, 11(3). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211032157>
- [7] *One Employment Data | Republic of Indonesia Employment Data Portal (Satu Data Ketenagakerjaan | Portal Data Ketengakerjaan Republik Indonesia)*. (n.d.). Retrieved May 12, 2023, from <https://satudata.kemnaker.go.id/data/kumpulan-data/1072>
- [8] Suyatno. (2024). *Fundamentals of Education (Dasar-Dasar Pendidikan)* (A. Ulinnuha & S. Khoriyati, Eds.; Cetakan Pertama). PT Bumi Aksara.
https://www.google.co.id/books/edition/Dasar_dasar_Pendidikan/MdYHEQAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=kebutuhan+dasar+pendidikan&pg=PA4&printsec=frontcover
- [9] Ahmad, L., & Rizal, S. (2022). The Role of Education and Training on Employee Career Development at the Aceh Manpower and Population Mobility Service. *Indonesian Journal Economic Review (IJER)*, 2(2), 63–72. <https://doi.org/10.35870/ijer.v2i2.107>
- [10] Hitka, M., Štarchoň, P., Lorincová, S., & Caha, Z. (2021). Education as a key in career building. *Journal of Business Economics and Management*, 22(4), 1065–1083. <https://doi.org/10.3846/jbem.2021.15399>
- [11] Wau, J., & Purwanto, P. (2021). THE EFFECT OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT, WORK MOTIVATION, AND JOB SATISFACTION ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE. *Jurnal Aplikasi Bisnis Dan Manajemen*. <https://doi.org/10.17358/jabm.7.2.262>
- [12] Alfi Ramadani, N., Wijaya, C., & Khairuddin. (2023). The Role of Peers on Career Formation (Case Study on Students of Class XI IK 1 MAN 3 Medan). *Journal of Education and Community Service.*, 3(3), 116–122. <https://doi.org/10.56832/pema.v3i3.432>
- [13] Savira, F., Yuwono, D., Sugiharto, P., & Mulawarman, M. (2022). The Effect of Family and Peer Environments on Students' Career Planning. *Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling*, 11(3), 215–220. <https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/jubk>
- [14] Ho, G., & Law, R. (2021). How Parents and Friends Influence Student Preference in Selecting a Bachelor's Degree in Hotel and Tourism Management in Hong Kong. *ASEAN Journal on Hospitality and Tourism*, 19(3), 185–199.

- [15] Naz, A., Saeed, G., Khan, W., Khan, N., Sheikh, I., Khan, N., Lower, C. D., & Pakhtunkhwa, K. (2014). Peer and Friends and Career Decision Making: A Critical Analysis. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 22(8), 1193–1197. <https://doi.org/10.5829/idosi.mejsr.2014.22.08.21993>
- [16] The Ministry of Manpower. (2018). *Guidelines for worker/labor welfare facilities (Panduan fasilitas kesejahteraan pekerja/buruh)*. https://jdih.kemnaker.go.id/files/Panduan_fasilitas_kesejahteraan_buruh/files/mobile/index.html#1
- [17] Septiady, A., Padilah, P., & Yasa Anggana, S. (2022). *THE INFLUENCE OF WORK DISCIPLINE AND WORK FACILITIES ON EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY PT. HALEYORA POWER AREA GARUT (PENGARUH DISIPLIN KERJA DAN FASILITAS KERJA TERHADAP PRODUKTIVITAS KERJA KARYAWAN PT. HALEYORA POWER AREA GARUT)*. 28(1).
- [18] Hartatie, D., Muspita Dyah Utami, M., & Candra Dewi, A. (2022). *Participation of Women for Supporting Family Income in the Sukowono Sub-district*. <https://doi.org/10.5614/ajht.2021.19.3.02>
- [19] Priyanka, *, Sanyal, S., Singh, R., Palanivel, R. V, Raj, P., Dey, S., & Scholar, P. D. (2023). The Upheaval Of Family Economy Without Contribution Of Women: A Critical Study. In *Journal of Namibian Studies*.
- [20] Izudin, M. (2023). *Dynamics of legal protection* (N. Duniawati, Ed.; Pertama). Penerbit Adab.
- [21] World Economic Forum. (2022). *Global Gender Gap Report 2022*. <https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2022/>
- [22] United Nations. (2015). *Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for sustainable development*. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>
- [23] Algera, P. (2022). *The Impact of Volunteering on a Young Person's Life A study into the SVA Service Award-a New Zealand national framework for recognising and growing secondary school volunteering*.
- [24] Matthews, K., & Nazroo, J. (2021). The Impact of Volunteering and Its Characteristics on Well-being After State Pension Age: Longitudinal Evidence From the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing. *Journals of Gerontology - Series B Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 76(3), 632–641. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbaa146>
- [25] Nayak, V., & Hegde, K. P. (2023). Examining the Impact of Wealth Redistribution through Zakat. *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies*, 22(2), 285–312. <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol22.iss2.art1>
- [26] Eludire, A. (2023). *THE IMPACT OF LABOR FORCE ON ECONOMIC GROWTH: A GLOBAL VIEW THE IMPACT OF LABOR FORCE ON ECONOMIC GROWTH: A GLOBAL VIEW*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/376557034>
- [27] Puspitasari, R. (2022). The Effect of Labor Force, Exports and Government Expenditures on GDP. *Efficient: Indonesian Journal of Development Economics*, 5(3), 286–294. <https://doi.org/10.15294/efficient.v5i3.54959>
- [28] Riat Winanto, A. (2019). *EKUILIBRIUM INVESTMENT, LABOR AND THEIR EFFECTS ON ECONOMIC GROWTH OF PONOROGO REGENCY*. 14, 58–73.

ORCID

Anis Hartini <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-8425-611X>

Nursini <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5374-7883>

Ery Iswary <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8193-3029>

About Authours:

Anis Hartini, Master student in Gender and Development, Hasanuddin University. Anis is interested in health, especially health education, focusing on youth, social inclusion, and gender equality. From 2021, Anis work as a Social Worker for the Young Health Program with a focus on preventing non-communicable diseases in young people using a holistic approach related to non-communicable diseases, namely Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights,

Emotional well-being, and Gender and Gender Equality at Lentera Anak Foundation. E-mail : hartinia22p@student.unhas.ac.id / anishartini3@gmail.com

Nursini is a Professor of Economics at the University of Hasanuddin, Indonesia. She has served as a leader in the centre of research and development for population and gender. She is currently a leader of the postgraduate gender and development study program at the University of Hasanuddin. She has conducted research in the fields of gender and development and poverty and inequality. She is also a resource in gender mainstreaming and a reviewer for reputable international journals indexed by Scopus, such as FWU Social Science, Poverty and Public Policy. E-mail : nursini@unhas.ac.id

Ery Iswary is a Lecturer at the Faculty of Humanities, Hasanuddin University, Indonesia. She has been a Head of the Master of Linguistics Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, since 2018-present. He is a lecturer in the Gender and Development Studies program at the Postgraduate School at Hasanuddin University. She is actively conducting research and community service in the field of gender and culture that has been published in accredited national journals and reputable international journals. She is also a resource person at various workshops and seminars at national and global levels. E-mail : eryiswary@unhas.ac.id