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Analysis Of The Deactivation Of The Order Planning Feature On The Income Of Grab Drivers In Jambi City From A Sharia Economic Perspective

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Abstract

*This study analyzes the impact of deactivating the Order Planning Feature (Scheduled Bookings and Selected Slots) on the daily earnings of Grab drivers in Jambi City, examines the policy from a Sharia economic perspective (*maqashid sharia), and formulates strategies to mitigate declines in daily earnings. A qualitative descriptive approach was used, drawing on in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation involving 50 Grab drivers and 20 Gojek drivers selected through purposive and snowball sampling, analyzed inductively with the Miles and Huberman interactive model and triangulation. The findings show that while the feature was in use, Grab drivers' daily earnings were lower because the scheduled scheme was tied to low base fares. After deactivation, the daily earnings of the 12 informants whose data are presented rose by about 83% on average (from IDR 120,625 to IDR 220,500, based on range midpoints). This pattern can be explained through Marginal Productivity Theory, the Theory of Reasoned Action, and the Technology Acceptance Model. Within the maqashid sharia framework, deactivation can be read as prioritizing hifz al-nafs (preservation of life) without fully resolving hifz al-mal (preservation of wealth) concerns; this reading is interpretive, and issues of transparency and fairness for vulnerable partners remain. Mitigation strategies include service diversification, use of the Heat Maps feature, maintaining high order acceptance and completion rates, and more transparent and participatory platform policies.

Keywords:Order Planning Feature, Grab Driver Income, Sharia Economics, Maqashid Sharia, Jambi City

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INTRODUCTION

The growth of online transportation platforms is transforming the way urban communities access mobility and delivery services, while also opening up new income sources for driver-partners. Driver income is essentially a reward for services and work time, so the amount depends on the number of orders, fares, working hours, and incentives available in the app (Alamsyah et al., 2025; Rupbianti, 2024). Based on preliminary data from researchers, the number of Grab drivers in Jambi City is around 1,000, while Gojek drivers are around 310.

One of Grab's efforts to help partners optimize their income is the Order Planning feature in the Grab Driver app, which allows partners to plan and select their work times and areas. This feature consists of Scheduled Orders (reservations from consumers with estimated higher earnings than regular orders), Preferred Slots (selection of schedules and areas with the potential for higher orders), and Rush Hour Challenges (bonuses for partners who complete target orders within a certain time) (Grab Indonesia, 2024; interview with Grab office staff in Jambi City).

Field experience differed from the feature's intended purpose. Initial observations of 50 Grab drivers in Jambi City showed that all users of the feature considered it not to increase their income, and in fact, it decreased it. Initial data from 15 drivers showed an average daily income of Rp259,667 under normal conditions and Rp146,000 when using the feature, a decrease of approximately 43.8% (calculated from the midpoint of the income range). In the Gojek app, a similar feature was considered beneficial for new accounts, but was not recommended for existing ones. After the feature was disabled, most drivers reported improved daily income. This phenomenon is interesting to study because the removal of a feature designed to provide order certainty was actually associated with increased income.

This study is also relevant from a sharia economic perspective. The majority of drivers in Jambi City are Muslim and are required to earn a living in a halal, fair, and voluntary manner (QS. An-Nisa [4]: 29). The relationship between the platform and driver partners can be seen through ijarah (service rental) and musyarakah (partnership) contracts (Budianto, 2025), so application feature policies need to be assessed not only in terms of income, but also in terms of fairness, safety, and partner welfare.

Previous studies generally discuss the determinants of online driver income (Alamsyah et al., 2025; Asri et al., 2025; Juwandi et al., 2026), compliance with safety features (Adriansyah et al., 2023), and the policy of online motorcycle taxis' cost-saving features in Medan City using the theory of al-maslahah (Jannah & Yazid, 2025). Studies specifically examining the deactivation of schedule-based features on Grab, its impact on income, and its assessment through maqashid sharia in Jambi City have not been found in the literature reviewed by the author. This article fills this gap with three objectives:

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1. Analyzing the impact of deactivating the Order Planning Feature on Grab driver income in Jambi City;
2. Examine the Islamic economic perspective on the deactivation of this feature; and
3. Formulate efforts to address the decline in daily income of Grab drivers in Jambi City.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Marginal Productivity Theory

This theory, developed by John Bates Clark (1899), states that a worker's income is determined by their marginal contribution to output: the greater the additional output produced by a unit of labor, the greater the reward (Ashar & Pangestu, 2023). Employers increase labor until marginal productivity equals wages, after which productivity declines according to the law of diminishing returns (Naparin, 2024). This theory has been criticized for assuming a perfect labor market and for being difficult to apply to jobs with uncertain output (Cahyantini et al., 2024). In the context of online drivers, this theory is applied analogously: labor time is the input, and earnings per hour of work are a measure of the marginal contribution.

Theory of Reasoned Action and Technology Acceptance Model

*Theory of Reasoned Action*Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) theory of acceptance (TRA) explains that behavior is determined by behavioral intentions, which are shaped by attitudes toward the behavior and subjective norms (Santi & Erdani, 2021). The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) introduced by Davis (1989) adapts the TRA to explain the acceptance of information technology; perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influence interest and technology utilization behavior (Destrity et al., 2024; Hidayah & Bharata, 2025).

Driver Income Factors and Application Efficiency

Empirical studies show that driver income is influenced by working hours, fares, and age (Alamsyah et al., 2025), fuel prices (Asri et al., 2025), incentive points and hotspot areas (Rupbianti, 2024), work experience (Juwandi et al., 2026), and location and operational costs (Salsabilla, 2024). Efficiency in online transportation is interpreted as a way to achieve higher productivity and output for workers (Ayuningsih & Sembiring, 2021).

Maqashid Sharia

In sharia economics, policies concerning human benefit are weighed through the five main objectives of sharia, namely protecting religion (hifz al-din), soul (hifz al-nafs),

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reason (hifz al-'aql), offspring (hifz al-nasl), and property (hifz al-mal) (Abidin, 2023; Widjaja, 2024). If there is a conflict between protecting the soul and protecting property, protecting the soul takes precedence, in line with the rules of dar'ul mafasid muqaddamun 'ala jalbil mashalih (Fattah, 2024) and the rules of la dharara wa la dhirara (Salikin & Nuroniyah, 2026).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a qualitative approach with descriptive methods to deeply explore the impact of feature deactivation on Grab driver income in Jambi City, with the researcher as the primary instrument in a naturalistic setting (Harahap, 2020). The scope of the analysis was limited to the Grab Food service and active drivers who had been operating for more than one year. Interviews were conducted in September 2026.

The informants consisted of 50 Grab drivers and 20 Gojek drivers selected purposively and through snowball sampling, plus one Grab office staff member in Jambi City. The criteria for driver informants were active partners in Jambi City, members of the community for at least one year to allow for comparison of income before and after the deactivation, having used the feature before it was deactivated, being willing to be interviewed openly, and being Muslim to consider the relevance of the maqashid sharia analysis. Gojek drivers were included as a comparison because the application has similar features. The identities of informants in this article are disguised with initials or codes.

Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews and participant observation, while secondary data came from documentation (income reports, app usage statistics, and Grab policy documents) and literature. Daily income was reported by informants as a range; in the analysis, the range was represented by its midpoint, and the increase was calculated as the difference between pre- and post-deactivation income divided by pre-deactivation income. Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's interactive model, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Rachmad et al., 2024; Sangadji & Sopiah, 2024). Data validity was tested through triangulation of sources, techniques, and time, as well as member checking and researcher reflexivity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Impact of Feature Disabling on Driver Income

Before being disabled, the Order Planning feature guaranteed orders at specific times, but at a relatively low cost. This is evident in the preliminary data in Table 1. For Grab drivers, earnings using the feature were lower than normal. For Gojek, the pattern differed by account age: accounts that started operating in 2025 averaged higher

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earnings using the feature, while accounts that started operating in 2023–2024 all experienced a decline.

Table 1. Average Daily Revenue When Using the Order Planning Feature

Group (number of drivers)	Average normal conditions (Rp/day)	Average when using features (Rp/day)	Change
Grab (n = 15)	259,667	146,000	−43.8%
Gojek, accounts starting 2025 (n = 7)	121,429	135,000	+11.2%
Gojek, accounts from 2023–2024 (n = 4)	157,500	103,750	−34.1%

Source: Interviews with Grab and Gojek drivers in Jambi City, processed by the author (midpoint of income range).

Informants described a similar pattern. One driver K stated that the feature was initially intended to provide order certainty and encourage partner commitment, "but in reality, it actually reduces income," so he only activates it when orders are very low and deactivates it after receiving two or three orders. Another driver S activates it only when his account is quiet because keeping it active for a distance of about 4 km only generates a small fee. Driver P compared a full day's income of around Rp140,000 with the feature active to up to Rp270,000 without it. From the platform perspective, Grab Jambi City office staff stated that the feature will not be deactivated as long as there are still users using it. Therefore, deactivation in this study is interpreted as the feature ceasing to function as a binding scheme for partners, either through platform policy or the partner's decision to no longer activate it. Based on the author's research, Grab has also discontinued another commitment-based feature, Order Turbo, for several partners, citing declining order completion rates due to cancellations.

Following the deactivation, the majority of informants reported an increase in daily income (Table 2). The median income of 12 informants increased from Rp120,625 to Rp220,500, or approximately 82.8%, with individual increases ranging from 57.7% to 102.2%. Some informants also reported receiving large orders with long distance travel, and some described their accounts as “back to normal” after previously relying too heavily on the feature.

Table 2. Informant's Daily Income Before and After Feature Deactivation

Informant code	Before deactivation (Rp/day)	After deactivation (Rp/day)	Ascension
I-01	120,000–140,000	230,000–260,000	88.5%
I-02	100,000–130,000	214,000–240,000	97.4%

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Informant code	Before deactivation (Rp/day)	After deactivation (Rp/day)	Ascension
I-03	130,000–140,000	220,000–245,000	72.2%
I-04	125,000–135,000	190,000–220,000	57.7%
I-05	110,000–130,000	218,000–240,000	90.8%
I-06	95,000–120,000	190,000–220,000	90.7%
I-07	110,000–130,000	200,000–235,000	81.2%
I-08	105,000–120,000	190,000–210,000	77.8%
I-09	100,000–125,000	220,000–235,000	102.2%
I-10	110,000–125,000	195,000–210,000	72.3%
I-11	120,000–135,000	220,000–245,000	82.4%
I-12	115,000–125,000	215,000–230,000	85.4%
Average (midpoint)	**120,625**	**220,500**	**82.8%**

Source: Primary data from interviews with Grab drivers in Jambi City, 2026 (processed by the author). The average line is calculated from the midpoint of the range.

These findings should be read with caution. Income is self-reported and range-based, the sample was not randomly selected, and other factors influencing income, such as working hours, fuel prices, and seasonality, were not controlled. The study also found that the benefits of deactivation were not shared equally: a small number of informants actually struggled to obtain consistent orders. Researchers suspect that the most vulnerable groups are new partners or partners with limited working hours, who previously relied more on order security, but this hypothesis has not been systematically tested.

Theoretical Explanation

Within the framework of Marginal Productivity Theory, the Scheduled Booking and Preferred Slot schemes bind partners to specific schedules and areas with relatively low base rates. The work time devoted is not commensurate with the additional income, so marginal productivity per hour tends to decline. After the feature is disabled, partners revert to regular orders that follow real demand, including orders with higher rates and distances (Table 2). This change can be interpreted as a reallocation of work time toward more productive areas. This reading aligns with the notion of efficiency as achieving higher output for workers (Ayuningsih & Sembiring, 2021). Because this theory assumes a perfect market, its application to platform drivers is analogous.

From the TRA perspective, observations of 50 informants showed that all feature users considered it ineffective, leading to negative attitudes toward using the feature.

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Widespread similar experiences within the driver community created a consistent subjective norm. The combination of the two weakened behavioral intentions, which was evident in low feature utilization. From the TAM perspective, the feature interface was relatively easy to access through the order planner menu, but perceived usefulness was low because the economic benefits were perceived as small. Consistent with the TAM proposition, low perceived usefulness undermines utilization intentions even when the system is easy to use. Claims from Grab office staff that the feature should be maintained as long as it is still used are consistent with this logic.

Sharia Economic Perspective

Disabling a feature isn't simply a matter of revenue growth; it needs to be weighed against the maqasid sharia. The scheduling scheme requires partners to be present at specific times and locations. This demand has the potential to encourage drivers to rush or neglect safety, especially on busy city roads and unpredictable weather. Driver Pd described a similar situation: the feature allows two orders to be placed simultaneously, but the slow preparation time of the merchant often makes them rush when delivering to customers. From this perspective, disabling it can be interpreted as better preserving the hifz al-nafs (self-control), even though it reduces order certainty (hifz al-mal). This position is in line with the rules of dar'ul mafasid muqaddamun 'ala jalbil mashalih and la dharara wa la dhirara (Fattah, 2024; Salikin & Nuroniyah, 2026), as well as with the prohibition against throwing oneself into destruction (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 195) and respect for human life (QS. Al-Ma'idah [5]: 32).

Several points need to be made. First, the safety argument here is interpretive: the research data indicates time pressure on drivers, but does not indicate that Grab cited safety as the official reason for the deactivation. Second, it was also found that income welfare (hifz al-mal) actually improved for the majority of informants, so the two objectives of sharia are not necessarily in conflict in this case. Third, procedural justice issues were identified: there was no official communication or notification to partners before the feature stopped working, even though the change directly affected daily income. In ijarah and partnership relationships, the principles of justice ('adl) and willingness (QS. An-Nisa [4]: 29) require such transparency. Fourth, vulnerable partners need attention, for example through transition incentives or on-demand navigation assistance features.

This finding aligns with Jannah and Yazid (2025), who assessed that the savings feature for online motorcycle taxis in Medan City did not meet Islamic principles because it reduced net income and failed to protect drivers' lives and property. However, in the case of the Order Planning feature, deactivation was associated with improved income for the majority of drivers.

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Strategies to Overcome Daily Income Decline

From the partner side, the strategies found are as follows.

1. Managing operating hours according to real demand patterns (morning, afternoon, and evening) without relying on automated slots. Driver D stated that peak hours are busy with orders even without the slot feature. This strategy aligns with the Marginal Productivity Theory because time is allocated to the periods with the highest yield.
2. Diversifying services and applications, for example, activating all types of services on the Grab Driver app and concurrently using other apps. Driver Sd stated that he uses three apps to avoid wasting time when one is idle.
3. Utilize the Heat Maps feature to identify high-demand areas and times instead of scheduling certainty.
4. Maintain ratings and order acceptance and completion rates to remain competitive in the order distribution system, meet incentive tier targets, and join the driver community to exchange order distribution information.
5. Maintaining fuel and vehicle maintenance cost efficiency to maintain net income margins.

This independent strategy aligns with the principle of ikhtiar (effort), which is to strive for maximum sustenance accompanied by trust in God, without neglecting patience and gratitude when faced with policies beyond partners' control. From a platform perspective, recommendations include providing outreach before disabling features that impact revenue, providing a transition period or temporary compensation for affected partners, and involving input from regional partners in algorithm-based policy evaluations to ensure equitable benefits for both parties.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes the following three things.

1. The disabling of the Order Planning feature aligns with the feature's original purpose, which is to help partners optimize revenue. The majority of informants reported higher daily revenue after returning to regular, higher-rate orders, although a small number faced uncertainty about order volume. This pattern can be explained by Marginal Productivity Theory, TRA, and TAM.
2. From the perspective of maqashid sharia, deactivation can be interpreted as prioritizing hifz al-nafs while still opening up room for improvement in the aspects of hifz al-mal, transparency, and justice for vulnerable partners.
3. Mitigating the decline in revenue can be achieved through independent partner strategies (managing operating hours, diversifying services, utilizing Heat Maps,

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maintaining account performance) and transparent and participatory platform policies, in line with the principles of ikhtiar and tawakal.

Theoretically, this research enriches Islamic economic studies on the relationship between digital platforms and gig workers, particularly the assessment of algorithmic policies through muamalah jurisprudence. Practically, the results can serve as evaluation material for Grab in formulating more transparent policies, for partners in developing adaptation strategies, and for the government in developing protections for the economic rights of platform workers.

Limitations of the study include the income derived from informant reports in the form of a range, a non-random sample and income increase data presented covering only 12 informants, the lack of control for other factors that influence income, and the limited scope of coverage to drivers in Jambi City and Grab Food services. Future research is recommended to expand the number of informants or compare other cities, use a quantitative or mixed approach with transaction data to measure the impact of deactivation more measurably, and examine other muamalah contracts relevant to digital platform partnerships.

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