

Women's lived experiences as parking attendants at Wonokromo station, Surabaya

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Abstract

Women working as parking attendants represent an emerging gender dynamic within the informal employment sector. This study aims to explore the lived experiences of women working as parking attendants through a phenomenological approach. Drawing on Alfred Schutz's phenomenological theory, particularly the concepts of because-motive and in-order-to motive, this study employs a qualitative research design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and literature review, while informants were selected using purposive sampling. The primary subject of this study was a female parking attendant working at Wonokromo Station, Surabaya. The findings indicate that women's involvement in parking attendant work is driven by because-motives such as economic pressures within the household, limited educational background, the availability of informal job opportunities, and situational constraints. Meanwhile, their in-order-to motives reflect aspirations to leave this occupation and seek more secure and socially valued employment. Although this occupation provides a relatively sufficient income, the informants expressed a strong desire to transition to jobs that better align with their personal circumstances, long-term needs, and social expectations. This study contributes to discussions on gender, informal labor, and women's agency by highlighting how economic necessity intersects with personal aspirations in shaping women's participation in informal work.

Keywords: Woman, Parking Attendants, Alfred Schutz's phenomenological theory

Abstrak

Perempuan yang bekerja sebagai tukang parkir merepresentasikan dinamika gender baru dalam sektor pekerjaan informal. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi pengalaman hidup perempuan yang bekerja sebagai tukang parkir melalui pendekatan fenomenologis. Dengan merujuk pada teori fenomenologi Alfred Schutz, khususnya konsep *because-motive* dan *in-order-to motive*, penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian kualitatif. Data



dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan studi pustaka, sementara informan dipilih menggunakan teknik *purposive sampling*. Subjek utama penelitian ini adalah seorang perempuan yang bekerja sebagai tukang parkir di Stasiun Wonokromo, Surabaya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keterlibatan perempuan dalam pekerjaan sebagai tukang parkir didorong oleh *because-motive*, seperti tekanan ekonomi dalam rumah tangga, latar belakang pendidikan yang terbatas, ketersediaan peluang kerja di sektor informal, serta keterpaksaan situasional. Sementara itu, *in-order-to motive* mereka mencerminkan adanya aspirasi untuk meninggalkan pekerjaan tersebut dan mencari pekerjaan lain yang lebih aman serta memiliki nilai sosial yang lebih tinggi. Meskipun pekerjaan ini memberikan penghasilan yang relatif mencukupi, para informan mengungkapkan keinginan yang kuat untuk beralih ke pekerjaan yang lebih sesuai dengan kondisi pribadi, kebutuhan jangka panjang, dan harapan sosial mereka. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada diskursus tentang gender, kerja informal, dan agensi perempuan dengan menyoroti bagaimana kebutuhan ekonomi beririsan dengan aspirasi personal dalam membentuk partisipasi perempuan di sektor pekerjaan informal.

Kata Kunci: Perempuan, Tukang Parkir, Teori Fenomenologi Alfred Schutz

INTRODUCTION

The female phenomenon as a parking attendant in Surabaya has become common, especially at Wonokromo Station. This work is hard on women, so it is usually done by men. It is of interest to consider, as time went on, the work force of women became more available to provide for the daily needs of the household. According to data released by the 2022 Surabaya city statistical office, there is no doubt that the number of women is nearly the same as the number of men. It has been shown that the male population is 1,431,041 and the female population is 1,456,182, with a population of 25,141. The condition states that the current population of women in the city of Surabaya is higher than that of men (Maulidah et al., 2020).

The parking attendant is a nonformal job requiring that he be on the highway to arrange in and out of the vehicle and keep the vehicle safe. In Indonesia, however, parking was accessible to anyone and elsewhere, as it was not uncommon for such parking purposes to be used illegally or without authorization from the proper authorities. They usually offer public parking services, such as sidewalks, sidewalks, stations, terminals, or other places that do not belong to them and ask for money in return for the use of the parking lot.

For example, this is happening in the informal employment industry. Informal employment is a type of work based on our own efforts, willpower, and skills, and paid in erratic wage or wage, as stipulated by employment

regulations. Typically, female employees are the most likely to choose this position. The typical women, who often live near their homes and do additional household chores, tend to choose to work in the informal sector. Parking attendant and meter maid are examples. A growing and growing patriarchate culture in society causes gender inequality, which often makes women overemphasized.

The Parking attendant was usually male, but probably also female. In the struggle to become parking attendants, men and women alike, it is commonly believed that women play an important role in the work world. Women have the same opportunity to develop in all areas recognized by government, including economic, social, and cultural (Quinster et al., 2023). In the talk of gender, the warmest topic is the advancement in female development and the position and status of women in equality with the males. On the one hand, the question of women's liberation still requires a positive response from all quarters. On the other hand, gender relations remain a unique problem. It's a social situation where the male role continues to come first. Gender as the discourse and the movement to achieve equality between men and women has been a pretty interesting talk among the society, particularly among the developed.

A study conducted in 2016 by Yolanda Safitri and Muhammad Firdaus, students of Riau University, found that the women's parking lot on the front stage communicated with customers both verbally and non-verbally through gestures and characteristics they used. Besides, there's another side to real life women's Parking attendant in the house. At their workplace they run errands as parking attendant attendants, which set him apart from the seemingly strong and formidable male parking attendants. At home, however, women's parking attendants have strong maternal instincts, which can be seen from their ability to balance their jobs and their role as homemakers caring for their children (Safitri et al., 2016).

Unlike previous studies that describe the individual's attitudes as in front of the stage and backstage, this time research is trying to determine the experience of the female Parking attendant using a menus perspective that wants to provide an overall picture of the motives of women choosing a job as a parking attendant. Alfred Schutz theory of phenomena is used by researchers in this context, emphasizing how individuals give meaning to the social and everyday world. The Schutz theory is based on the idea that social action can be interpreted by interpretation. The behavior of one person or another in the past, the present, and the future is the principal emphasis of social action. In other words, experience, meaning and consciousness underlie social actions. Schutz

divides a person's actions in two stages to give an overview of their actions. The first stage is because motive that leads to past actions and has good reason to do so. The second stage is a motive that refers to future actions (in-order-to motive) that has good reason to do so.

It is possible that the "reason" for women working as parking attendants is the desire to help with the household finances. Next, the goal for women to become parking attendants is to earn money. The study aims to provide an overall picture of women's experience as a parking attendant in an approach to theoretical phenomena. This thorough description is revealed through the concept of because-motive and in-order-to motive, which can help identify and answer the problem of how the female parking attendant experience is.

METHOD

The study uses a qualitative approach to Alfred Schutz's theoretical perspective. This approach is used to develop theories based on data obtained in the field. Hence, qualitative research usually considers the process, events, and authenticity of data, in other words to know because-motive and in-order-to motive from the woman's parking attendant (Somantri, 2005). The research location was at Wonokromo Station, Surabaya. The location was chosen because researchers found a female parking attendant working there. The subjective or data source in this study is to use a purposive sampling technique, which is a call-taking technique based on one's judgment, such as certain characteristics or traits of a population that are relevant to the purpose of research. In this study, the subject included women who worked as parking attendants. Data obtained comes directly from informants (primary data) with data collection techniques of in-depth interviews, observation, and secondary data of previous studies, journals, e-books, and internet sites that have their relevance to women as parking clerks. Researchers use Miles and Huberman, which is the deduction of data, the presentation of data, and the drawing of conclusions. The final step in the process involves verifying data analysis to formulate the conclusions and findings of the discussion according to the purpose of the study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study were obtained by conducting an interview with the women's parking attendant, and then supported by previous observation and research data. Having a woman as a parking clerk is not in spite of the double weight she has. This is done to help the family economy (Mahda et al., 2025). The influx of women into the public space is also due to some of the underlying factors, such as low educational levels, economic

demands, employment opportunities in the informal sector, and coercion. In reality, though, female parking attendants also want a decent, steady job.

The discussion in this study is not off the point of using Alfred Schutz's string theory as a guide to analyzing research results. In the perspective of the phenomenon, the female parking attendant is regarded as a social actor who interacts with other actors in his or her actions. Schutz suggests that the female parking attendant service has one or even two motivations connected to the past and the future, which is because motive and in-order-to motive. These motives would certainly affect how they view their work as parking attendants (Asifani, 2025).

Schutz's thinking centers on understanding social action through interpretation, where social action relates to how one or another behaves in a context in the past, present, and future. The interpretation process helps explain its real meaning and reveals a hidden or implicit concept (Asifani, 2025). In other words, individual experiences, meaning, and consciousness define their social actions. Schutz divides one's actions into two categories to give a broader picture: a) because motive, which is where each act has a reason that stems from past experience; B) the in-order-to motive, which is a future-oriented act that involves a set goal. The study suggests that the female parking attendant has a variety of motives and goals. According to Alfred Schutz in theory, the action taken by a woman to be a parking lot is driven by a combination of motivated motives and future goals that underlie her.

- 1) Because motive refers to actions related to the past, where each action a person takes has a reason that stems from past experiences or conditions. In view of the findings of this study, the reasons underlying the decisions of the source or informer to become a parking attendant service include domestic economics, low educational levels, opportunities to work as a meter maid, and subject factors. In a modern-day, economically demanding life, many families need more than one source of income to meet their daily needs. Women, who may have previously been more committed to domestic roles, began to act as the backbone of the family to help reduce the financial burden (Mahda et al., 2025). It creates conditions in which women are forced to search for jobs that can generate revenue, such as becoming parking attendants. The second is lack education; the lower level of education often restricts a person's career choices. Women with less than an education level may have limitations in finding employment that requires higher specialized skills or academic qualifications. Thus, employment as a parking attendant may be regarded as one of the more accessible options, since it does not require higher education or special training. In some

contexts, the profession of parking attendant service may be one of the opportunities available. Sometimes opportunities to work in an informal sector or a job that doesn't require formal qualification come easily, and women who need income can see it as an opportunity that is not to be taken for granted. This condition makes them decide to enter that profession. Then, coercion often refers to a condition in which a person feels compelled to take a certain job because there is no other choice. In this context, informants do not have many other options that can provide sufficient income, so eventually choosing to be a parking attendant even though they may not be particularly interested or unwilling to be on the job.

- 2) Next, this term in-order-to motive refers to a thrust that focuses on the actions to come, where each step a person takes is driven by a predetermined purpose. Results suggest that the informant wanted to leave the job of the parking attendant and find another job. This in order to motive reflects an informant's desire to help them improve their future standard of living by finding a more stable job and not relying too much on physical force, with age. They want more flexible jobs, with less physical burdens, yet they can provide sufficient income. Small businesses such as opening stalls or selling vegetables in front of homes are selected alternatives because they can be more easily managed, with more flexible times, and with little physical strength. Moreover, such work gives a more sense of autonomy and control over its time and business and can be more easily adapted to the needs of the family. This, in order to motive, describes the informant's hope of having a job that is better suited to future physical and social conditions, which, in turn, could improve their and family's welfare.

According to Schutz, humans have social consciousness in their lives because they are social creatures. In this context, humans are required to understand and act in the same way to each other. There is no doubt that the woman's parking attendant's had unique perspective on their work. Here's the burial provided by the informant regarding the job as a parking attendant:

1. **Parking work as a primary source of income.** Working as a parking attendant is perceived by the informant as a crucial source of livelihood. Despite the uncertainty of daily income, this occupation provides essential economic support for herself and her family. In the absence of stable employment opportunities, parking work becomes a pragmatic choice to meet basic household needs and ensure economic survival.

2. **Parking attendant work as legitimate and dignified labor.** The informant regards work as a parking attendant as legitimate, honest, and morally acceptable labor. Although the profession is often stigmatized and undervalued by certain segments of society, she does not internalize these negative perceptions. For her, earning a living through hard work without harming others carries moral value and personal dignity. Limited educational attainment and the lack of financial capital restrict access to more formal or higher-status employment, making parking work one of the few viable options available. Nevertheless, she considers this occupation far more respectable than engaging in activities such as begging or deception, which she views as unethical and detrimental to others. In this sense, working as a parking attendant is understood not merely as economic activity, but as an expression of responsibility, self-respect, and moral integrity.

The female parking attendants believe that parking work is socially constructed as a male-dominated occupation, requiring physical strength, long working hours, and constant interaction in public spaces—characteristics traditionally associated with men. As a result, this type of work is often perceived as inappropriate for women, both socially and culturally.

However, despite these normative assumptions, women are compelled to enter this occupation as a survival strategy. Economic hardship, limited educational attainment, and restricted access to alternative employment opportunities leave them with few viable choices. In this context, working as a parking attendant becomes not a matter of preference, but of necessity.

This condition illustrates how structural constraints force women to negotiate between socially constructed gender norms and the realities of everyday life. Although they are aware that their work deviates from conventional expectations of femininity, they consciously choose to prioritize economic survival and family responsibility over social stigma.

From Schutz's phenomenological perspective, this decision reflects women's intersubjective understanding of reality, where meanings are shaped through lived experience rather than abstract norms. Their participation in parking work demonstrates women's agency in redefining gendered labor boundaries, even within highly constrained social and economic conditions.

CONCLUSION

The choice of women to work as parking attendant at the Surabaya Wonokromo station is protected by various motives and burial of the work. It

may be concluded that women worked as parking attendants because of household economic demands and the possibility of becoming parking attendant at the Wonokromo station. They were forced to enter the informal job of parking because of education and economic limitations. This work is defined as a means of survival, though not in line with their ideal expectations. These findings show the importance of gender equality in the work world as well as the need for more policy interventions in favor of women in the informal sector.

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