Connecting with Workers in the Gig-Economy: An Organizational Identification Perspective

1. What is the Gig-Economy?

- Labour market of temporary independent workers
- On-demand, short-term contracts ('gigs')
- Organizations connect workers to customers via a digital marketplace

AIRBNB
UBER
LYFT **ODESK**
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2. Organizational Identification

- Managers cannot directly supervise work
- Workers must self-organize to achieve org. goals
- **Organizational Identification (OID)** is the extent that an organizational member perceives 'oneness' with an organization

- OID promotes:
  - employee commitment and performance
  - organizational success and survival
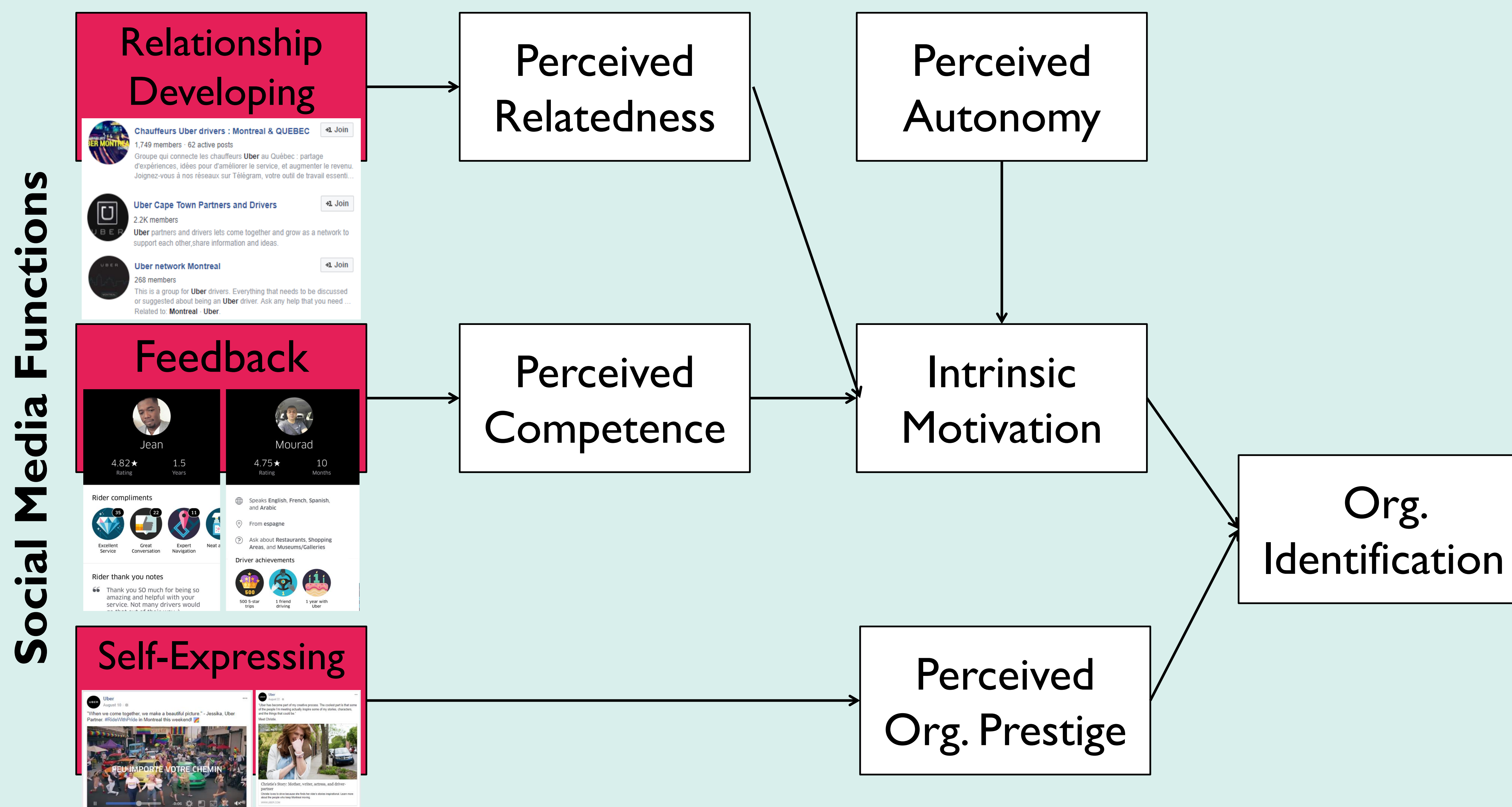
Uber's successes are my successes

3. Research Question

- OID is a crucial motivator for virtual work
- Yet, OID is threatened when workers are isolated and/or not physically present in the organization
- As social media can provide a platform to connect individuals & organizations, we ask:

How can organizations leverage social media to support OID among gig-workers?

4. Research Model: Leveraging Social Media

- Two paths to OID: **Intrinsic Motivation** and **Organizational Prestige**
- Social media functions can impact both paths to enhance OID

Social Media Functions

Relationship Developing → Perceived Relatedness

Perceived Autonomy

Feedback → Perceived Competence → Intrinsic Motivation

Self-Expressing → Perceived Org. Prestige

→ Org. Identification

5. Testing: Multi-Series Study

- Mixed methods approach → more reliable & robust
  - Study 1: Exploratory interview study with Uber drivers (n = 10)
  - Study 2: Full survey study with Uber drivers (n ≥ 200)
  - Study 3: Design & pilot enterprise social media platform at Uber
- Future research avenues → exploration of gig-economy for knowledge work. Generalization of theoretical framework.

45% of Canada's workforce will be freelancers, independent, and on-demand workers by 2020

6. Practical Contributions

- Better understanding of OID for virtual, on-demand work
- Evidence-based enterprise social media recommendations
- Improved management of gig-workers

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