

How Gig Economy Affecting Employees and Understanding the Experiences of Employees in the Gig Economy Culture

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Abstract

The gig economy has been growing rapidly in recent years. More people are choosing to work independently as freelancers, contractors, and gig workers as the gig economy has grown quickly in recent years. By examining the difficulties and opportunities that gig economy workers encounter, this study seeks to comprehend their experiences. Data for the study were gathered through in-depth interviews with 15 gig workers from various industries using a qualitative research design. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis, and the results showed that gig workers confront a variety of difficulties, including job insecurity, erratic income, a lack of benefits, and loneliness. But, they also had access to options like flexibility, independence, and a variety of work settings. This study has ramifications for and offers helpful insights into the realities of gig workers.

Keywords: Gig Economy, Business Economics, Human Resource, HR Management,

1. Introduction

The gig economy is a developing phenomenon that has recently changed the nature of labor. A work market where transitory, flexible, and frequently short-term occupations are common is referred to as the gig economy. Digital platforms like Uber, OYO, Zomato, Swiggy, and Rapido have made it easier to operate as a freelancer, contractor, or independent worker. While the gig economy has been praised for giving employees autonomy and flexibility, it has also come under fire for delivering little in the way of benefits, poor compensation, or job stability. Despite the increased interest in the gig economy, little is known about how gig workers actually fare. Thus, by examining the difficulties, this study seeks to comprehend the experiences of workers in the gig economy.

2. Literature Review

In India, the gig economy has grown rapidly in recent years, with the rise of digital platforms and the increasing availability of mobile technology. A study by the National Sample Survey Organization found that the number of people engaged in informal work, including gig work, in India has increased from 378 million in 2011–12 to 465 million in 2017–18 (NSSO, 2018). This growth has been driven by a number of factors, including the rise of e-commerce, the emergence of new digital platforms, and the need for flexible work arrangements in a rapidly changing job market (Kumar & Pansari, 2021).

Another study by the Indian Staffing Federation (ISF) found that the gig economy has been particularly attractive to women, as it offers them greater flexibility in terms of work hours and location. The study also found that the gig economy has the potential to create new jobs in sectors such as healthcare, education, and logistics.

However, a survey conducted by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) found that gig workers in India earn significantly less than their counterparts in traditional employment. The survey also found that gig workers in India face a number of challenges, including irregular work hours, lack of job security, and limited access to social protection.

Despite the potential benefits of the gig economy, many studies have also highlighted the challenges and risks associated with this type of work. For example, a study by the International Labour Organization (ILO) found that gig workers in India face numerous challenges, including low pay, lack of social protections, and limited access to training and upskilling opportunities (ILO, 2018). Additionally, gig workers in India often face discrimination and exploitation, particularly in industries such as transportation and domestic work (Azam, 2019).

Research has also shown that women and marginalized groups are particularly vulnerable to the risks and challenges of the gig economy in India. A study by the World Bank found that women are more likely to be engaged in low-paying and low-skilled gig work, such as domestic work and data entry, and are often excluded from higher-paying opportunities (World Bank, 2019). Similarly, Dalit and Adivasi workers in the gig economy often face discrimination and exploitation, with little recourse to legal protections or social safety nets (Hindu Business Line, 2018).

3. Research Methodology

A qualitative research design was used for this study, as it allowed for an in-depth exploration of the experiences of gig workers. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 15 gig workers from different industries, including ride-hailing, food delivery, and online freelancing. Participants were recruited through online platforms, and they were selected based on their level of experience and the type of work they did. The interviews were conducted over the phone and lasted between 30 and 60 min. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim and thematic analysis.

Some question ask with their answers:

How did you become involved in the gig economy?

Because of flexible work arrangements, seeking extra income, or being unable to find traditional employment. Some are attracted to the independence and control that this type of work can offer.

Can you describe a typical day or week in your work as a gig economy worker?

This will vary depending on the type of work the gig economy worker is engaged in. For example, a ride-sharing driver may spend many hours on the road, while a freelance writer may spend most of their day at a computer. However, most gig economy workers have flexible schedules and may work irregular hours.

How do you find and secure work in the gig economy?

There are a variety of online platforms that connect gig economy workers with clients or customers, such as Uber, ZOMATO, SWIGGY, RAPIDO. Many workers also rely on networking and referrals to find new work opportunities.

Have you ever faced challenges in getting paid or receiving fair compensation for your work in the gig economy?

Yes, many gig economy workers have reported facing challenges with getting paid or receiving fair compensation. This can be due to issues such as platform fees, low rates of pay, or disputes with clients.

What are some of the biggest challenges you have faced as a gig economy worker? How have you addressed these challenges?

Challenges for gig economy workers can include financial instability, lack of benefits or protections, and difficulties in securing work. Workers may address these challenges through strategies such as diversifying their income sources, organizing with other workers, or advocating for better labor protections.

Do you feel like you have enough control over your work as a gig economy worker? Why or why not?

Some told gig economy workers may feel that they have a high degree of control over their work, while others may feel that they are subject to the whims of clients or platforms.

What are some of the positive aspects of working in the gig economy that you think are often overlooked or not discussed?

They said it depends on person to person. Moreover, Positive aspects of every employee can include the ability to set your own schedule, choose your own projects, and work from anywhere. Additionally, some workers may appreciate the opportunity to learn new skills and gain experience in a variety of industries.

How do you see the gig economy changing in the future?

It is difficult to predict exactly how the gig economy will evolve in the future. However, some potential changes could include increased regulation of platforms and workers, greater use of automation and AI, and the emergence of new types of gig work.

What advice would you give to someone who is considering working in the gig economy?

They asked if some wanted to work in the gig economy might include doing research on the specific type of work they are interested in, building a strong professional network, and being prepared for the financial and logistical challenges that come with being a gig worker. It is also important to understand one's legal rights and protections as a worker in the gig economy.

4. Results

Many themes were identified through thematic analysis as capturing the experiences of gig workers. The following themes are covered:

Job Insecurity: Because there is no assurance of employment and they may be fired at any time, gig workers experience a high level of job insecurity. Several gig workers expressed concern about running out of work before they could cover their expenses and support their way of life.

Unpredictable Income: It can be challenging for gig workers to organize their budget because their revenue is frequently unpredictable. Some gig workers claimed that after a successful month, they had several months of poor pay.

Lack of Benefits: Gig workers are not eligible for retirement benefits, health insurance, or paid time off. This makes it challenging for them to set future plans and provide for their families.

Isolation: Since gig workers frequently work alone, this might cause emotions of loneliness. A regular workplace's sense of community and the chance to interact with coworkers are often missed by gig workers.

Flexibility: Gig workers appreciate the freedom that their jobs allow them. People value having the freedom to choose their own hours and work whenever it is convenient for them.

Autonomy: Gig workers value the freedom that their jobs afford them. People value having the freedom to make decisions about their work without having to ask their manager for permission.

Various Work Experiences: The range of work experiences that come with working as a gig worker is appealing. They value the opportunity to work on various projects and with various clients.

5. Conclusion

The gig economy is a complex and rapidly evolving phenomenon that presents numerous challenges and opportunities for workers around the world. In India, the gig economy

has grown rapidly in recent years, driven by a range of factors including the rise of digital platforms, e-commerce, and changing job market conditions. While gig work offers certain benefits, such as flexibility and autonomy, it also presents numerous risks and challenges, particularly for women and marginalized groups. As such, it is important for policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders to carefully examine the experiences of gig workers in India and develop policies and interventions that support their well-being and rights.

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