

Gig Workers - Issues and Challenges

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Abstract: This research paper investigates the challenges faced by gig workers in the modern economy and explores their implications for worker well-being and job satisfaction. Through a quantitative analysis of survey data collected from a sample of gig workers, the study identifies key challenges, including income instability, lack of benefits, job insecurity, and limited career prospects. Furthermore, the research examines the demotivating effects of these challenges on gig workers' commitment to continue in the gig economy. The findings highlight the urgent need for comprehensive interventions to improve the work environment and support the well-being of gig workers, with implications for policymakers, gig platforms, businesses, and advocacy groups. Future research directions are also discussed, emphasizing the importance of longitudinal studies and comparative analyses to further our understanding of the gig economy and inform policy and practice.

Index Terms: gig economy, gig workers, challenges, well-being, job satisfaction, policy implications

I. INTRODUCTION

The gig economy has significantly changed the way people work and earn money, leading to a shift in how individuals participate in employment and generate revenue. The phrase "gig economy" describes a dynamic marketplace where transitory, flexible, and frequently freelance job arrangements are supported by internet platforms. In this emerging economic paradigm, individuals, commonly known as gig workers or independent contractors, carry out specific jobs or projects for different clients or consumers, usually for a limited period of time. The gig economy spans several industries, such as ride-sharing, food delivery, freelancing, and task-based projects, providing a plethora of chances for those seeking flexible job options. The growth of the gig economy has been driven by technological improvements, including the widespread use of digital platforms and mobile applications that facilitate connections between gig workers and potential clients or consumers. These platforms act as mediators, enabling the connection between the availability and need for different services, while giving gig workers the freedom to determine their own schedules and select the projects they take on.

The gig economy has facilitated equal access to job possibilities, enabling individuals to utilise their talents and knowledge to earn money outside of conventional employment frameworks.

Nevertheless, while offering the potential for adaptability and independence, the gig economy also brings up a range of problems and obstacles for gig workers, firms, and politicians alike. An important issue is the unstable and uncertain nature of gig employment, which is marked by inconsistent revenue, absence of job stability, and restricted availability of benefits such as healthcare, retirement savings, and paid time off. Contrary to conventional employment agreements, gig workers sometimes assume the whole weight of risk and uncertainty, without any or very limited means of redress in case of unexpected situations or emergencies. Furthermore, the emergence of the gig economy has triggered discussions regarding labour rights and safeguards, as gig workers frequently operate beyond the scope of conventional labour laws and regulations. This prompts inquiries on the sufficiency of current legal frameworks in protecting the rights and interests of gig workers, specifically concerning matters such as minimum wage, overtime pay, and workplace safety. In addition, there are worries about categorising gig workers as independent contractors instead than employees, which might result in their being denied important protections and benefits provided by labour laws. Moreover, the gig economy has ramifications for wider societal concerns, such as disparities in income, social welfare, and the trajectory of employment. While there are proponents who assert that the gig economy presents prospects for upward mobility and entrepreneurship, critics express apprehensions over its amplification of income inequalities and its capacity to erode conventional employment frameworks and social safety nets. Moreover, the gig economy connects with other significant societal developments, such as automation and globalisation, which adds complexity to the discussion about its influence on labour markets and economic development. Given these factors, it is essential for policymakers, companies, and researchers to comprehend the

problems and difficulties encountered by gig workers. This knowledge is necessary in order to effectively manage the intricate nature of the gig economy and its impact on the future of employment. This study seeks to provide a thorough analysis of the complex problems and difficulties faced by gig workers. It will utilise empirical data, theoretical frameworks, and real-world examples to contribute to the ongoing discussion about this emerging phenomenon. By conducting a detailed examination of these matters, we can clarify the consequences of the gig economy on labour markets, social policy, and economic growth. This will eventually help us adopt a more knowledgeable and fair approach to meeting the requirements of gig workers in the twenty-first century.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Caza, Reid, Ashford, and Granger (2022) make a substantial contribution to the comprehension of obstacles in gig labour by creating the Gig labour obstacles Inventory (GWCI). Gig workers have unique obstacles in contrast to conventional employees, which calls for a detailed analysis of their experiences. The authors define the fundamental attributes of gig labour and put forward a complete conceptual framework consisting of six primary challenges: viability, organisational, identity, relational, emotional, and career-path uncertainty. This framework serves as the foundation for the GWCI, which goes through thorough validation in five investigations. The authors establish the reliability and validity of the GWCI by generating, reducing, and exploring the factor structure of items. This demonstrates the usefulness of the GWCI in measuring the many stresses experienced by gig workers. The GWCI plays a crucial role in advancing theory, implementing practical treatments, and formulating policies. It provides academics with a strong instrument to examine the distinct concerns and challenges faced by gig workers in various demographic, job type, and geographical settings. Hence, the study conducted by Caza et al. (2022) addresses a significant void in the existing literature about the problems and difficulties associated with gig labour. Their research provides valuable insights that may contribute to both academic investigations and practical initiatives aimed at assisting this expanding portion of the labour market. Baxriddin o'g'li and Axmad o'g'li (2024) explore the complex world of the gig economy, providing a

clear understanding of the various opportunities and problems it offers to both workers and enterprises. The essay offers a thorough examination of this employment paradigm, including the benefits of flexibility for workers and the availability of on-demand talent for businesses. This analysis examines the several sectors present in the gig economy, including ride-sharing, food delivery, freelance labour, and task-based projects. It emphasises the wide range of options that exist within these sectors. In addition, the writers discuss the fundamental difficulties faced by gig workers, including employment instability, lack of benefits, and fluctuating income. They also analyse the consequences for enterprises in terms of managing their personnel, legal responsibility, and reputation. The article emphasises the importance of workers and businesses understanding the complexities of the gig economy and implementing strategies to manage risks and take advantage of opportunities. This is crucial for achieving success in the digital age, considering current trends, regulatory factors, and technological advancements. Roy and Shrivastava (2020) analyse the changing nature of the gig economy, which is defined by temporary agreements or payment based on specific projects, enabled by enterprises, intermediaries, or online platforms. This phenomenon has greatly transformed the conventional employment model, introducing a new age characterised by flexibility and independence for workers. The authors emphasise the extensive influence of the gig economy across several industries, underscoring its revolutionary impact on the whole economy. The essay recognises the many benefits of this developing paradigm, such as its flexibility and job prospects. However, it also highlights the issues it presents, notably in terms of its influence on the traditional working environment. Roy and Shrivastava offer unique insights into the prospects and problems of the gig economy by analysing current trends and evaluating its benefits and demerits in both global and Indian settings. Their analysis sheds light on the developing job environment.

Bajwa, Gastaldo, Di Ruggiero, and Knorr (2018) provide insight into the complex relationship between the gig economy and the health of workers worldwide. The authors define the gig economy as a network that links customers with contractors via online platforms, providing advantages as well as intricacies. Although this model offers companies

and customers affordable and readily available labour, gig workers face difficulties due to the uncertain nature of their job and their interactions with platform enterprises. Significantly, the authors emphasise that the experiences of gig workers differ greatly across the Global North and South. Based on their study of Canadian workers in the gig economy, the authors provide valuable insights into how the globalised online platform labour market affects the health and well-being of gig workers, not just in Canada but also worldwide. This article highlights the necessity of conducting further research and taking action to tackle the distinct health difficulties encountered by gig workers in the changing environment of digital labour platforms. Malik, Visvizi, and Skrzek-Lubasińska (2021) add to the continuing discussion about the gig economy by clearly defining its conceptual limits and analysing the present level of research in this area. By conducting a comprehensive examination of the literature accessible in the Web of Science database until February 2020, the authors pinpoint and emphasise the principal topics and patterns in gig economy research. Their research uses the scientific mapping technique, supported by the SciMAT programme, to clarify the complex relationships and growing collaborations in the corpus of literature. The study provides several important perspectives. Firstly, it examines the extensive body of literature on the gig economy, providing insights into potential study avenues and economic consequences. Furthermore, it highlights the frequently unclear differentiation between the "platform" and "gig" economy in academic examination, emphasising the need for enhanced clarification about this issue. Furthermore, the authors stress the importance of developing a more targeted study strategy to improve the ability to explore and explain debates related to the gig economy. Finally, the study presents a plan for creating a thorough research plan in this area by identifying areas where research is lacking and considering the methods that should be used. In summary, Malik et al.'s (2021) study offers a helpful paradigm to enhance comprehension and investigation of the gig economy, therefore facilitating future scholarly work in this field. Harpur and Blanck (2020) provide a thorough analysis of gig employment among persons with impairments, specifically emphasising technologically-driven, on-demand, independent contractor arrangements. Based on previous and current research, the essay clarifies the

characteristics of gig labour for this specific group of people, emphasising the advantages and difficulties it brings. Although traditional job opportunities for those with disabilities are typically restricted, gig labour provides a feasible option that allows them to actively engage in the mainstream economy. The authors emphasise the importance of implementing legal changes to address the specific requirements of gig workers with disabilities, especially in the context of the COVID-19 epidemic. They stress the significance of reimagining current methods to guarantee ongoing access to significant employment opportunities in the face of changing conditions. The gig economy offers new opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in independent employment, requiring creative regulations to promote inclusion and tackle developing issues in the modern labour market. Lauren and Anandan (2022) analyse the many difficulties and uncertainties encountered by gig workers in the ever-changing digital labour environment, adding to the ongoing discussion on the gig economy. The study examines the lack of advantages, uncertainty in employment, and fluctuations in income, providing insight into the social and psychological consequences of gig labour, including challenges in keeping a balance between work and personal life, feelings of alone, and discontent with one's job. Moreover, the research investigates how technology either helps to reduce or worsen the difficulties faced by gig workers. The study highlights the need for business policies and laws that prioritise the rights and protections of gig workers. It emphasises the importance of understanding and addressing the complexities and uncertainties of gig labour in order to create a fair and inclusive labour market in the digital age. The findings provide useful insights for regulators, employers, and workers in understanding the complexities of freelance labour in the gig economy. This enriches the continuing discussion about how the gig economy affects workers' lives. Tan et al. (2021) conducts a comprehensive analysis of the ethical implications associated with the gig economy, a sector known for its fast growth and transformation of conventional employment frameworks. The essay methodically examines the primary ethical dilemmas presented by the gig economy, classifying them into three principal domains: work organisation, job type, and worker status. The authors conduct an extensive examination of pertinent literature and highlight

challenges encountered by gig workers, including algorithmic control, discrimination, exclusion, and disconnection. They provide a thorough assessment of a recent effort implemented by the European Union with the purpose of tackling these difficulties. They emphasise both its positive aspects and the areas that need more policy intervention. The study finishes by highlighting the necessity of ongoing discussion and regulatory measures to guarantee the ethical treatment of gig workers in the ever-changing realm of digital labour platforms. Tan et al.'s (2021) review provides significant insights for policymakers and stakeholders who are dealing with the ethical consequences of the widespread growth of the gig economy. Overall, the literature examined offers unique perspectives on the complex difficulties and advantages that are inherent in the gig economy. Researchers have explored the effects on workers' health and well-being, as well as the ethical challenges that arise from algorithmic control, discrimination, and worker status. Their studies have provided insight into the intricate dynamics of this changing economic environment. Nevertheless, despite the extensive study undertaken thus far, there is a significant lack in research regarding the intersectionality of gig labour, namely in terms of its impact on marginalised people, including those with disabilities, women, and minority groups. Furthermore, there is also a want for additional research to examine the extended consequences of gig employment on the financial stability, social safety nets, and professional paths of workers. It is crucial to address these areas of research that are currently lacking in order to create thorough strategies for reducing the difficulties experienced by gig workers and promoting a labour market that is fair and inclusive in the digital age.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the issues and challenges gig workers face.
2. To make suggestions to overcome issues and challenges.

IV. HYPOTHESES

- H1: Gig workers face major issues and challenges.
 H2: Such issues and challenges demotivate them to continue gig work.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed a quantitative research methodology to investigate the issues and challenges

faced by gig workers and to propose suggestions for overcoming them. A structured questionnaire was designed based on the objectives of the study, consisting of items addressing various aspects of gig work challenges. The questionnaire was administered to a sample of 172 gig workers selected through purposive sampling techniques. Data collection took place over a time period of 3 months, during which participants were requested to respond to the questionnaire items. Statistical analysis techniques, including descriptive statistics and inferential tests such as one sample T tests were employed to analyse the data and test the hypotheses. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, were carefully addressed throughout the research process. Overall, the quantitative research methodology facilitated a systematic investigation of the issues and challenges faced by gig workers, allowing for empirically grounded suggestions to be made for addressing these concerns.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS

Table I: Age of the respondents

Age (in years)	Frequency	Percent
18-30 years	15	8.7
30-40 years	101	58.7
40-50 years	29	16.9
50-60 years	17	9.9
Above 60 years	10	5.8
Total	172	100

Table I presents the distribution of respondents' ages in five categories. The majority of respondents fell within the 30-40 years age group, accounting for 58.7% of the total sample, followed by the 40-50 years age group at 16.9%. Participants aged 18-30 years comprised 8.7% of the sample, while those in the 50-60 years and above 60 years age groups represented 9.9% and 5.8%, respectively.

Table II: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	96	55.8
Female	76	44.2
Total	172	100.0

These findings indicate a relatively diverse age range among the respondents, with a notable concentration in the middle-age brackets. Overall, the distribution suggests that the study attracted participants across different stages of adulthood, providing a varied perspective on the issues and challenges faced by gig workers.

Table II presents the distribution of respondents' gender. The majority of respondents identified as

male, comprising 55.8% of the total sample, while 44.2% identified as female. This gender distribution suggests a slightly higher representation of males among the respondents. Overall, the findings indicate a gender-diverse sample, allowing for a

varied perspective on the issues and challenges faced by gig workers across different genders.

H1: Gig workers face major issues and challenges.

Table III: One Sample Test for H1

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
I often experience uncertainty regarding my income stability in gig work.	13.781	171	0	1.2442	1.0660	1.4224
Balancing multiple gigs simultaneously is challenging for me.	8.505	171	0	0.9361	0.7188	1.1533
I frequently encounter difficulties accessing essential benefits such as healthcare and retirement savings.	10.965	171	0	1.1279	0.9249	1.3309
Managing irregular work schedules is a significant source of stress in my gig work.	11.925	171	0	1.1512	0.9606	1.3417
I find it challenging to establish long-term career prospects in the gig economy.	12.478	171	0	1.2209	1.0278	1.4141

The results of the one-sample test support Hypothesis 1, indicating that gig workers indeed face significant issues and challenges across various dimensions of their work. Specifically, respondents reported experiencing considerable uncertainty regarding their income stability in gig work, with a mean difference of 1.24 (95% CI [1.0660, 1.4224], $p < .001$), suggesting a substantial level of concern in this regard. Furthermore, respondents indicated that balancing multiple gigs simultaneously posed a significant challenge, with a mean difference of 0.94 (95% CI [0.7188, 1.1533], $p < .001$), highlighting the complexity and demands associated with managing multiple sources of income in the gig economy. Additionally, gig workers frequently encountered difficulties accessing essential benefits such as healthcare and retirement savings, as evidenced by a mean difference of 1.13 (95% CI [0.9249, 1.3309], $p < .001$). Moreover, managing

irregular work schedules emerged as a significant source of stress, with a mean difference of 1.15 (95% CI [0.9606, 1.3417], $p < .001$), underscoring the disruptive nature of gig work on workers' work-life balance and well-being. Finally, respondents expressed challenges in establishing long-term career prospects in the gig economy, with a mean difference of 1.22 (95% CI [1.0278, 1.4141], $p < .001$), reflecting the uncertain and precarious nature of gig work in terms of career progression and stability. Overall, these findings provide comprehensive evidence supporting the notion that gig workers encounter significant challenges across various aspects of their work, aligning with Hypothesis 1.

H2: Such issues and challenges demotivate them to continue gig work.

Table IV: One Sample Test for H2

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
The lack of job security in gig work discourages me from continuing in this line of work.	8.398	171	0	0.88372	0.676	1.0914
Feeling undervalued and underappreciated in gig work demotivates me.	10.02	171	0	1.0814	0.8683	1.2945
The absence of adequate benefits makes me reconsider my commitment to gig work.	9.263	171	0	0.88372	0.6954	1.072
Experiencing frequent income volatility in gig work negatively impacts my motivation to continue.	10	171	0	1	0.8026	1.1974
The challenges I face in the gig economy make me question whether it's worth continuing in this line of work.	12.07	171	0	1.19186	0.997	1.3867

The results presented in Table IV confirm Hypothesis 2, indicating that gig workers experience demotivation due to significant issues and challenges inherent in their work environment. Specifically, respondents reported feeling discouraged from continuing gig work due to the lack of job security, with a mean difference of 0.88 (95% CI [0.6760, 1.0914], $p < .001$), highlighting the adverse impact of insecurity on their commitment to this line of work. Moreover, respondents indicated that feeling undervalued and underappreciated in gig work serves as a demotivating factor, with a mean difference of 1.08 (95% CI [0.8683, 1.2945], $p < .001$), underscoring the importance of recognition and respect in maintaining workers' motivation. Additionally, the absence of adequate benefits emerged as a significant factor prompting gig workers to reconsider their commitment, as evidenced by a mean difference of 0.88 (95% CI [0.6954, 1.0720], $p < .001$). Furthermore, experiencing frequent income volatility negatively impacted respondents' motivation to continue gig work, with a mean difference of 1.00 (95% CI [0.8026, 1.1974], $p < .001$), highlighting the destabilizing effect of irregular income streams on their motivation levels. Finally, respondents expressed doubts about the worthiness of continuing in gig work due to the challenges they face in the gig economy, with a mean difference of 1.19 (95% CI [0.9970, 1.3867], $p < .001$), emphasizing the critical need to address systemic challenges to maintain workers' motivation and commitment. Overall, these findings provide comprehensive evidence supporting Hypothesis 2, highlighting the demotivating effects of significant issues and challenges faced by gig workers in their work environment.

VII. FINDINGS

The findings of the study reveal significant challenges encountered by gig workers across various dimensions of their work environment. Firstly, gig workers face substantial uncertainty regarding income stability, with many expressing concerns about the unpredictability of their earnings. Balancing multiple gigs simultaneously emerged as a prevalent challenge, indicating the complexities associated with managing diverse sources of income in the gig economy. Furthermore, gig workers reported difficulties accessing essential benefits such as healthcare and retirement savings, underscoring the vulnerability of gig workers in

terms of financial security and social protection. Additionally, managing irregular work schedules was highlighted as a significant source of stress, reflecting the disruptive nature of gig work on workers' work-life balance and well-being. Finally, establishing long-term career prospects in the gig economy proved challenging for many workers, indicating the precariousness of gig work in terms of career progression and stability.

On the other hand, the study also unveiled the demotivating effects of these challenges on gig workers' commitment to continue in the gig economy. The lack of job security, feeling undervalued and underappreciated, and the absence of adequate benefits were identified as key factors contributing to workers' reconsideration of their commitment to gig work. Moreover, experiencing frequent income volatility negatively impacted workers' motivation to continue, highlighting the destabilizing effect of irregular income streams on their overall job satisfaction and engagement. Ultimately, the challenges faced by gig workers led many to question the worthiness of continuing in gig work, signaling the critical need for systemic interventions to address these issues and foster a more supportive and sustainable work environment for gig workers.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of the study highlighting the challenges faced by gig workers, the following suggestions are proposed to address these issues and improve the work environment for gig workers:

1. Enhance Financial Stability:
 - a. Implement policies to provide gig workers with access to financial tools and resources aimed at improving income stability, such as income smoothing mechanisms or financial planning assistance.
 - b. Explore options for offering gig workers access to benefits traditionally associated with full-time employment, such as healthcare, retirement savings plans, and unemployment benefits.
2. Support Work-Life Balance:
 - a. Develop strategies to help gig workers better manage their work schedules, including the implementation of scheduling tools that allow for greater predictability and flexibility in work hours.
 - b. Provide resources and support for gig workers to maintain a healthy work-life balance, such as

offering access to mental health resources, wellness programs, and time management workshops.

3. Strengthen Career Development Opportunities:
 - a. Create pathways for gig workers to access training and skill development programs that can enhance their employability and facilitate long-term career advancement.
 - b. Foster partnerships between gig platforms, educational institutions, and employers to facilitate the transition of gig workers into traditional employment roles or other career opportunities.
4. Address Job Insecurity and Recognition:
 - a. Implement measures to enhance job security for gig workers, such as introducing minimum wage guarantees, contract protections, and avenues for dispute resolution.
 - b. Promote a culture of appreciation and recognition within the gig economy by recognizing the contributions of gig workers and providing opportunities for feedback and engagement.
5. Advocate for Policy Reforms:
 - a. Advocate for policy reforms at both the local and national levels to address the unique needs and challenges faced by gig workers, including advocating for legislative changes to improve labor rights and protections for gig workers.
 - b. Collaborate with policymakers, industry stakeholders, and advocacy groups to develop comprehensive policy frameworks that promote the well-being and rights of gig workers while supporting the growth and sustainability of the gig economy.

Overall, by implementing these suggestions, stakeholders can work towards creating a more supportive and inclusive environment for gig workers, ultimately enhancing their overall well-being and job satisfaction in the gig economy.

IX. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of this study shed light on the significant challenges faced by gig workers, ranging from income instability and lack of benefits to job insecurity and limited career prospects. These challenges underscore the need for comprehensive interventions to improve the work environment and support the well-being of gig workers. Furthermore, the demotivating effects of these challenges on workers' commitment to continue in the gig economy highlight the urgency of addressing

systemic issues and implementing supportive measures to retain talent and foster a more sustainable gig workforce.

The implications of these findings are manifold, extending to various stakeholders including policymakers, gig platforms, businesses, and advocacy groups. Policymakers are urged to enact legislative reforms aimed at enhancing labor rights and protections for gig workers, including measures to ensure fair wages, access to benefits, and job security. Gig platforms and businesses can play a pivotal role in improving the gig work environment by implementing policies and practices that prioritize the well-being and rights of gig workers, such as offering benefits, providing training and skill development opportunities, and fostering a culture of recognition and appreciation. Additionally, advocacy groups can continue to advocate for the rights of gig workers and push for systemic changes to address the systemic inequalities and challenges prevalent in the gig economy.

Looking ahead, future research should delve deeper into understanding the nuanced experiences of gig workers across different sectors, demographics, and geographic regions. Longitudinal studies can provide valuable insights into the evolving nature of gig work and its impact on workers' well-being and career trajectories over time. Moreover, comparative studies examining the gig economy in different countries and regulatory contexts can help identify best practices and policy recommendations to support gig workers and promote a more equitable and inclusive gig economy globally. Ultimately, by addressing the challenges identified in this study and building upon its findings, stakeholders can work towards creating a more sustainable and supportive gig economy that benefits workers, businesses, and society as a whole.

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