

The Study on The Forthcoming Opportunities and the Possibility of Diversity Gap Reduction in Women Gigs (South India)

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ABSTRACT

Little emphasis has been given to the obstacles that women encounter while looking for gig work, despite the contribution of the gig economy to India's economic growth is significant. The women's workforce in India ranges from 16% to 28% at the moment. It represents less than half of the global average. Despite the flexibility that the gig economy provides involvement in the gig economy is still low, currently around 28%, according to the Taskmo Gig Index (TGI). The existing literature has yet to investigate the exact causes for the Diversity gap as to why women are not opting for Gig. This study is to fill that void by examining the employment relationship through the eyes of Gig workers as well as employers. The study was investigated using a quantitative survey methodology. According to the study, we found that there is a possibility to reduce the diversity gap in Gig workers, by implementing proper Government laws and Company policies that are usually given to traditional workers.

Keywords : Gig workers, Gender gap, Gigians, women gig, Platform workers, and freelancer

I. INTRODUCTION

The rate of digitalization has accelerated throughout the world, transforming societies with significant implications for the future of work and employment. India is at the forefront of this economic revolution due to its favorable demographic structure and the rapid expansion of digital technologies. This evolving paradigm shift is centered on the gig economy. According to the Entrepreneurship Development Cells at academic institutions, the Small Industries Development Bank of India provides promising

income opportunities for workers with a variety of skill sets, as well as increased market access for businesses. Due to gig work, which has witnessed a gender divide similar to that of normal labor, FLPR has not directly increased in India. By examining the platforms through the perspective of gender, assesses the barriers that prevent women from participating in gig work and made a significant impact.

The term "gig employee" refers to various worker statuses such as employers, employees, project-based employment contracts, and temporary workers. A gig

economy is typically defined as an associated environment in which organizations contract with freelance workers for short-term and temporary assignments. Gig workers offer their services in a specific organization. Historically, 'gig' employees, also known as 'giggers,' were referred to as freelancers. However, the staff may accept temporary agency workers. Personnel on-call and regular part-time employees Giggers are in high demand as a profession. A gig economy is also a task-based approach to work that allows greater flexibility for employees, as well as corporates that participate in gigs.

By 2029–30, the number of gig workers in India is projected to reach 2.35 crore. According to the report by NITI Aayog the gig economy employed 77 lakh (7.7 million) employees in 2020–21. They made up 1.5% of India's overall labor force or 2.6% of the non-agricultural workforce. The Indian gig labor is predicted to grow to 23.5 million workers by 2029–30, an increase of about 200 percent from 7.7 million at the moment. However, gig workers are not guaranteed minimum security or a minimum wage. Though the government promised to investigate it and take steps to improve the working conditions of gig workers, that remains a paper tag. The proposal to extend the Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) safety net to gig workers has also fallen through.

India is in a transition period in which the gig economy is replacing the traditional economic system. The new generation is far more inclined to do freelance work rather than the traditional format of 9-5 jobs. The new generation of workers prefers to work part-time or only a few days per month or week and enjoy the freedom of working across multiple platforms. Gig workers will be protected if better-paying, secure jobs with social and occupational security are created. The social security code should be implemented as soon as possible. Its implementation will allow gig workers to receive

social security benefits under the organized sector. The gig economy can employ skilled or unskilled professionals, which may help to reduce unemployment. This progress has created new business opportunities, necessitating a change in a business mindset.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Chatterjee et. al (2021) This essay does a literature assessment on the financial situation of platform workers in India and other countries. According to a number of surveys, people choose platform jobs because of the freedom they provide and the high pay they promise. However, in reality, the income of platform workers varies significantly from month to month.

Abigail Hunt et al (2019) focus on the "demand" gig, which usually gives jobs with low-performance levels and lower income than other types of gig work, is reviewed in-depth in this article along with its position within broader technical, and economic, and labor market changes.

Ria Kasliwal (2020) In addition to analyzing the service and privacy policies for Indian platforms that support women's gigs, this essay looks at the body of literature on issues faced by women gig. This article analyses the platforms through the prism of gender, identifies the barriers that prevent women from participating in gig employment, and offers practical suggestions.

S.Dokuka et.al (2022) The employment market has traditionally been hostile to women. A complicated web of variables, including the slower rate of female professional advancement within enterprises, their marginalization in leadership roles, and the unequal distribution of household, caregiving duties between men and women, may be employed to explain this. Researchers and politicians are debating the effects of

online and flexible work schedules on gender parity in the labor market as a result of the emergence of the gig, market structure where hiring contract workers and freelance workers rather than creating full-time contracts is the norm rather than the exception.

A. Bhandari et.al (2021) With a focus on the time during the Covid virus outbreak, this article tries to assess the gig economy's impact on women in its entirety. It then makes recommendations for changes that may be made to the system to better serve women.

Abigail Hunt et.al (2019) It seeks to comprehend how this involvement affects employees' life, taking into account the standard of labor provided and its implications for how workers manage paid jobs, unpaid caregiving, and household duties.

Lisa Gussek et.al (2021) The gig economy has altered many people's working habits recently. A burgeoning topic of research has drawn scientists from many other fields due to this research occurrence. The need to compile and connect research observations that are the foundation for future discussion due to the relevance of the subject and the diversity of viewpoints.

Huang et.al (2019) Gig works have fewer entry barriers, enable flexible working, and give employees the freedom to engage in contract work whenever they want and, in some cases, anywhere they want, like with online labor marketplaces. Growth of the gig work has partially been in addition to the emergence of flexible work arrangements that have been made feasible by technological advancements. The impact of different driving factors, instead in this study, economic recessions and associated economic burdens in the offline sector, such as redundancy, are considered. Because the exact nature of the relationship between these two factors is not well understood, we intend to quantify it in this work

by examining variance across a variety of country-specific parameters.

Radoslaw Malik et.al (2021) Study defines the concept made boundaries of notions based on the context of the platform economy and gig economy debates in order to search the gig research contained in the Web of Science database. The first research with the goal phrase "gig economy" and a cutoff date of February 2020 produced a sample of 378 papers on the subject. We were able to thoroughly query with the body of research pertaining to the gig economy through the analysis that followed, which used the science mapping method and associated software (SciMAT).

Dr. Rajeshwari M. Shettar (2015) Makes an effort to assess women's empowerment and highlights its problems and issues. Today, most of the crucial issues currently are women's empowerment. However, in actuality, women's empowerment remains a fantasy. We see in daily life how different societal ills target women as victims. Women's empowerment is a crucial tool for increasing women's access to resources and ability to make wise life decisions.

Sreemoyee Das et.al (2015) This research proposal focuses on a few key aspects related to the potential and limitations of promoting rural entrepreneurship that is solely controlled by rural women. The importance of fostering rural business by utilizing expertise, local resources, and the female labor force has long been recognized. SHGs have been a focal point for rural entrepreneurship development in the last three decades for practitioners of rural development.

Cody Cook et.al (2022) Some have hypothesized that women will benefit from the increased worker flexibility brought forth by the "gig" economy. By analyzing the labor supply decisions and profits of more rideshare drivers on Uber in the U.S., investigate this. We find that among drivers, the

gender wage difference is about 7%. We fully justify this disparity and demonstrate that it can be wholly ascribed to three factors: learning by doing, primarily determined by where drivers reside, and to a lesser extent, safety.

Radoslaw Malik et.al (2021) This research considers the conceptual framework of both concepts in platform economy and gig debates as the Web of Science database may search gig economy research. The "gig economy" was the primary focus of the initial search, which had a February 2020 deadline and sampled 378 papers on the topic. An easy way to comply with the conference paper formatting requirements is to use this document as a template and simply type your text into it.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

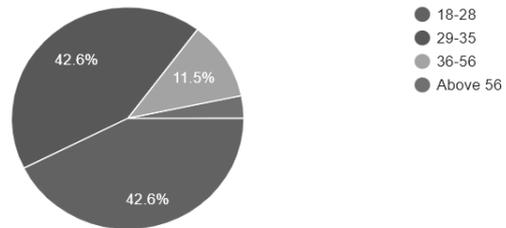
We opted for the descriptive research strategy for the investigation. The data collection was done digitally through which we got 129 respondents who were either looking for jobs, were gig workers, or were traditional workers. The study focused on gig workers in South India and examines their motivations for choosing the work arrangement, as well as its potential for women's gigs in particular. The snowball sampling approach was used for primary data collection, and the data collected was examined using percentage analysis and mean analysis.

IV. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The primary data which we collected was analyzed and examined as per our defined objective. We used percentage analysis to categorize the respondents into different groups drawing a clear picture as to which category is looking for what kind of benefits, what according to them is the problem for women's gigs, and what can be the possible solution to rectify it and we used Mean analysis to find out the factors which are highly affecting the women gig workers. During

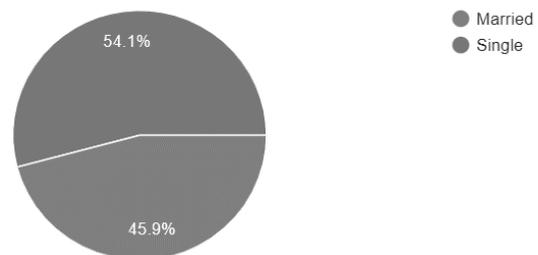
our research, we found out that most people are opting for gig work due to its flexible timing and independent work but lack interest due to no benefits and low wages.

Age



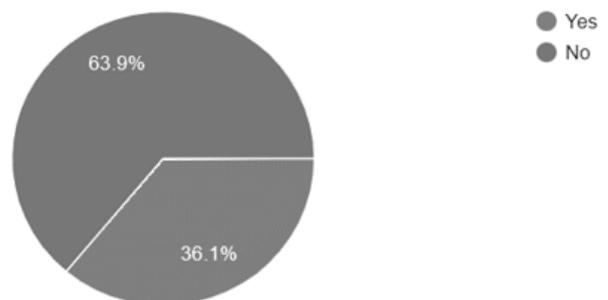
43% of the respondents fall in the age group between 18-28 and 29-35 age group. 11% were from the 36-56 age group. Only 3% of the respondents fall above age 56. The majority of the respondents are GenZ and millennials.

Marital Status



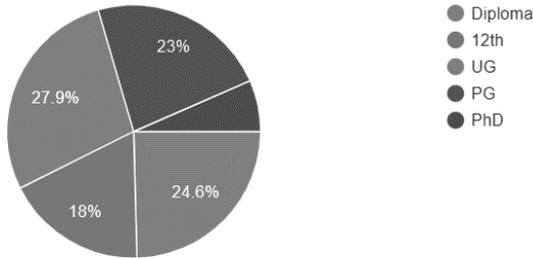
54% of the respondents are married while 46% are Single.

Do you have Children?



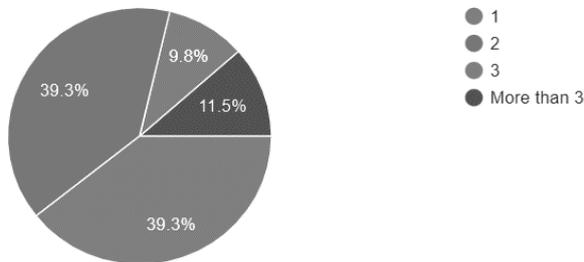
64% of the respondents have children and the rest 36% doesn't have children.

What is your educational Qualification?



28% of the respondents are Under Graduates. 25% of the respondents are having Diplomas. 23% of the respondents are Post Graduates. 18% of the respondents are 12th pass out. 7% of the respondents are having Ph.D.

How many gig works are you engaged in at a time?



39% of the respondents are engaged in 1 or 2 gigs works. 12% of the respondents are engaged in more than 3 gig works. Only 10% are engaged in 3 gig works at a time.

Factors that motivate you to take up a Gig role:

	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	\bar{X}
Flexible Timing	55 (42.6%)	39 (30.23%)	28	4	3	105.2
Independent Job	39 (34.88%)	36 (35.66%)	25	18	11	97.8
Income	38 (29.36%)	34 (26.36%)	29	13	15	90.8
Networking	19 (14.73%)	28 (21.71%)	25	28	29	73.4
Skill Development	25 (19.38%)	26 (20.16%)	20	25	33	74.4

The study shows that about 43% strongly agreed and 30% agreed that flexible timing is the factor that motivated them to take up gig work. About 35% of the employees who responded are agreeing that the factor which motivated them is that gig work is an independent job that we can do based on our interest and skill set. About 34-38% of the respondents are considering Income as a motivating factor to take up gig work. 25% agree that Skill Development is the factor that motivated them in taking up gig work. Networking is considered the least agreeing factor among the other factors listed out, which is only 19% agreeing.

Though Gig work offers flexibility, according to you why women are not taking Gig Work?

	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	\bar{X}
Domestic Work	56(43.41%)	52 (40.31%)	13	4	4	109.4
Safety Issues	54 (41.86%)	39 (30.23%)	15	12	9	100.8
Societal Pressure	52 (40.31%)	47 (36.43%)	14	9	7	103
Low Income	34 (26.36%)	40 (31.01%)	29	14	12	91.4
No Benefits	26 (20.36%)	20 (15.50%)	19	39	25	74

43% of the respondents to our survey strongly agreed that Domestic work is the factor that prevents women from taking up gig work.

42% of respondents agree that women are not taking Gig work due to safety issues. Many in-person jobs require workers to be alone with the

customers they serve in some capacity, and while employees are typically background-checked and vetted, the customers are not. According to the responses, personal safety is top of mind for most women, which is why women are hesitant to do Gig work.

40% of respondents agree that due to Societal Pressure, women are not taking up gig work. 26% of respondents agree that low income is the reason why women are not taking up gig work. Only 20% of respondents agree that women do not take up gig work as they provide no benefits.

Businesses in the gig economy have a responsibility to close the gender gap in the industry. Women are willing to join the gig work when they feel safe, secure, and valued. Some methods include vetting clients, ensuring on-site supervisors, establishing clear paths to more senior positions, and providing traditional benefits. Women are more likely to participate when a safe, secure working environment is provided, in addition to traditional employee benefits.

In order to attract more woman gig workers, what are the benefits you would like to get from the company?

	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	\bar{X}
Incentive	39 (30.23%)	49 (37.98%)	34	2	5	100.8
Sick Leave	28 (21.71%)	39 (30.23%)	22	21	19	88.8
Health Benefits	29 (22.48%)	32 (24.81%)	24	35	9	91.8
Performance Bonus	43 (33.33%)	43 (33.33%)	29	12	2	102.4
Upskilling	43 (33.33%)	33 (25.58%)	27	10	16	94.8

30% of respondents agree that Incentives should be provided by the company to attract more women gig workers. 33% of respondents believe that Upskilling should be done to attract more women gig workers while another 33% believed that performance bonuses should be provided as a

benefit to attract more women gig workers. 22% of respondents agreed that Health benefits should be provided to women gig workers to attract them. 21% of respondents agreed with the provision of sick leave as a benefit to be provided to women gig workers.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

To the company:

From the study which we have conducted with the gig employees, we would like to recommend to the employers on 2 matters:

1. How to attract and motivate Women gig workers and;
2. What can be the factors that Gig workers expect from the company.

About 77% of the employees opted for Gigs rather than Traditional work; which shows the majority of the employees would like to do an independent job with high flexibility. From the employer’s perspective, appointing a gig worker is economically better, as it doesn’t require any obligation towards the employee in terms of statutory and non-statutory compliances like PF, Gratuity, and other benefits.

Platforms may develop better infrastructure and work design to encourage more women, improve skill development, asset ownership, access to digital skills and technology, and conduct initiatives to educate workers and their families about gender sensitization and accessibility to encourage the participation of more women.

The requirements demanded by the Gig employees, who took part in our survey are as follows:

Incentives can be provided by tying them to milestones, which are primarily intended to retain gig workers and may also motivate new sign-ups. The companies could offer a monetary bonus after six

months of service or after completing a certain number of jobs successfully. Companies may look for ways to highlight the employee's skills rather than their tenure. Offering a reward for a certain number of 5-star ratings emphasizes the significance of an employee's accomplishments. Companies could provide an insurance program that provides workers with social security benefits in the event of medical emergencies or accidents or occupational diseases. These could be provided in collaboration with the government. Platforms may provide sick leave, health access, and insurance coverage for workers as part of their workplace or work-engagement policies. This will have a positive impact on providing social security coverage to platform workers employed by these companies. Platforms for gig work can collaborate with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and the National Skill Development Corporation to improve the skills of gig workers. Transformational upskilling for workers currently employed in the informal sector in trades such as construction, driving, and other services can open doors for workers to pursue jobs in the gig and platform sectors, allowing them to augment their earnings.

To the Policy Makers:

India requires a framework that balances the security and flexibility of gig workers. Platform firms and governments must design policies with specific characteristics in mind. Based on the survey we conducted and the good practices identified from various countries, the following suggestions have been made for the Policy Makers:

Companies that offer gigs and platforms can implement retirement plans, benefits, as well as other insurance coverage for unexpected events like work-related accidents that could lead to loss of income-producing employment. Such policies and plans might be created and offered by a company working with health plans, or they could be formed and issued by

the government. Platform businesses can have access to simple loan and funding options. This can be accomplished through collateral-free working capital funding and grants provided by state and central government institutions such as the Small Industries Development Bank of India, Entrepreneurship Development Cells, academic institutions' Entrepreneurship Development Cells, and so on. As the process of filing income tax returns for platform workers is currently cumbersome, we recommend that they be recognized as a separate category of workers on income tax return forms. The recent inclusion of app-based auto rides in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime may be harmful to such workers. This tax will result in higher platform fares and a corresponding drop in demand, directly affecting driver income. As a result, supportive tax mechanisms that aid in the growth of the platform economy are required.

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