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**Abstract**

Women are participating in the gig economy at a higher rate than males do because of the flexible work schedules and high earning possibilities. Nonetheless, there is a strong gender bias in the nature of these recently established job opportunities. Both a descriptive and an exploratory design are used in the investigation. The primary source of the data. Survey is the research methodology, and a questionnaire with two sheets—a socioeconomic sheet and a Likert scale—is the data gathering tool. 100 Mumbai-based women make up the sample, and the cluster cum convenience and The target respondents are women between the ages of 18 and 60 who are employed in a variety of gig jobs such as beauticians, masseuses, domestic workers, carers, and taxi drivers, either under the auspices of an organisation or independently. Anova test is applied to know the association of Benefits and Challenges with Demographic factors.

**Keywords:** Women, Gig Economy, Benefits, Challenges

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**Introduction:**

Over the past ten years, the gig economy has experienced exponential expansion in India. Some of the factors that have made this growth possible include the steady flow of low-end workers from rural to urban areas brought on by the decline in agriculture, as well as the low barriers to entry for platform workers; the widespread use of mobile devices with internet connectivity; the fact that India is the largest two-wheeler market in the world; and the growth of venture capital funding to support the market. (Fairwork India Report, 2020). Several chances for freelancing have arisen as a result of the expansion of app-based technologies during the past five years. The shift towards the gig economy has already begun. By the year 2020, more and more people would be working gigs, according to a study on the autonomous workforce. There are several factors to consider for the rise of short-term work. One of the key reasons is that in this age of digitization, the workforce is becoming

more mobile and capable of working from any location in the world, eliminating the necessity for work and location to always be together. As a result, individuals employed as temporary employees are free to accept any short-term projects or jobs from any location in the world.

The gig economy in India is primarily growing and prospering, starting in major cities and moving into towns. The biggest employers of the gig economy are Uber, Ola, Amazon, Flipkart, Urban Company, Swiggy, and Zomato. New opportunities are being created via digital labour platforms. Due to the flexibility of the work schedule and the high earning potential, women are taking part in the gig economy at a higher rate. But, the nature of these recently created work prospects is profoundly gendered. Women frequently end up working in conventional fields including domestic work, caring for others, the beauty industry, and wellness. With large, multi-service aggregator platforms like Urban Company, Housejoy,

and small-scale platforms like DoorTask, Unplan, and HeyDeedee, women are finding work as beauty and wellness service providers. Despite their informality, these positions offer more flexibility than regular and salaried salon based jobs, and women are better able to balance the realms of production and reproduction and cater to the needs of work and family. They may also prefer these jobs because of prevalent gender norms as well as safety and mobility issues. Also companies are

preferring this model as Companies adopting business structures that allow them to operate at a far cheaper cost by forgoing standard employee benefits, wages, and insurance has been blamed for the rise of gig work (Hunt and Samman,2019, p.10) These employees work alone and rarely contact with employers, businesses, or clients, further marginalising them and making collectivization more difficult (De Stefano, 2016).

### Projected Gross Volume of the Gig Economy

The Gig Economy is projected to grow to **\$455 B** by year-end 2023 in Gross Volume Transactions.



Source: <https://www.civildaily.com/burning-issue-gig-economy-in-india/>

According to a research by ASSOCHAM, India's gig economy is anticipated to grow to US\$455 billion by 2024 at a CAGR of 17% and has the potential to grow by at least two times the pre-pandemic projections.

India has surpassed the US, China, Brazil, and Japan to become the fifth-largest country for flex-staffing.

For flex employees, the states of Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, and Telangana offer the best prospects for growth.

According to another estimate, India will probably have 350 million gig jobs by 2025, providing a significant opportunity for job searchers to seize and adjust to the shifting nature of the labour market.

There are about 15 million freelancers working in India on tasks related to IT, HR, and design. India's

workforce is also expanding by ~4 million people annually.

And as most of them are young millennials, they are showing an increasing preference for gig contracts. This trend is expected to significantly impact gig economy in the near future.

#### Review of Literature:

Harris Poll (2018) The gig economy is expanding steadily in the US, replacing traditional employment for some citizens. Employers are embracing the gig economy in order to convert fixed costs to variable costs, reduce the cost of providing benefits to employees, quickly access the necessary skill sets, and create a workforce that is more adaptable. Reps are switching to gig work to meet a variety of needs depending on their stage of life, from presenting a more



flexible work environment to young parents to offering a few more long periods of cash in or near retirement. Due to the stress of domestic duties, women typically choose jobs that provide them some freedom and flexibility to balance their paid and unpaid work; for example, they typically select jobs that keep them close to their homes (Messenger, 2018; Zaidi and Chigateri, 2017). According to Kabeer (2012), the nature of the employment and the workplace arrangement frequently affect women's capacity to bargain with themselves and society. As the platform economy gives women the independence and flexibility to balance paid and unpaid employment, it appears to be a promising chance for those who are overwhelmed with domestic duties. Internet platforms, in contrast to traditional employers, do not mandate fixed working hours and may have less or no mobility constraints with fixed working hours, (Tandon and Rathi, 2018; Kasliwal, 2020; Messenger, 2018; World Bank, 2019).

Due to a number of variables, such as a lack of education, high childbearing rates, and the age of marriage, the lack of representation of women in the gig economy is a result of the diminishing female participation in the workforce (Chaudhary & Verick, 2014).

A significant contributing factor to the low incidence of female workforce participation has been identified as the digital gender barrier (Mawii, 2019).

#### Objectives:

1. To study the profile of women working as freelancers
2. To highlight the benefits experienced by women in Gig work and its association with demographic factors

#### Results and Discussions:

**Table 1: Demographic profile of Respondents**

Demographic profile and Variables	Respondents Details	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents

3. To examine the Challenges experienced by women in Gig work and its association with demographic factors

#### Hypothesis:

H0: There is no significant association of benefits of Gig work and Education of women

H1: There is significant association of benefits of Gig work and Education of Women

H0: There is no significant association of benefits of Gig work and Age of Women

H1: There is significant association of benefits of Gig work and Age of Women

H0: There is no significant association of Challenges of Gig work and Education of women

H1: There is significant association of Challenges of Gig work and Education of women

H0: There is no significant association of Challenges of Gig work and Age of women

H1: There is significant association of Challenges of Gig work and Age of women

#### Research Methodology:

The research is based on descriptive as well as Exploratory design. Source of Data is Primary in nature. The Method of research is survey and tool for data collection is Questionnaire consisting of two sheets- Socio Economic sheet and Likert scale. Sample size is 100 women belonging to Mumbai, technique is cluster cum convenience and Women pertaining to different gig works like beauticians, massagers, Domestic helpers, care takers, Cab drivers working under organization umbrella or without it between age group of 18 to 60 are target respondents. Anova test is applied to know the association.



Age	18-30	16	16.00
	31-40	38	38.00
	41-50	31	31.00
	Above 50	15	15.00
Total		<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Educational Background	SSC	42	42.00
	HSC	18	18.00
	Diploma	20	20.00
	Graduates	20	20.00
Total		<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Location			
	Mumbai Suburbs	25	25.00
	Western Mumbai	18	<b>18.00</b>
	Central Mumbai	29	29.00
	Harbour	28	28.00
		<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Gig work			
	Cab drivers	10	10.00
	Beauticians	28	28.00
	Fitness Trainers and Massagers	17	17.00
	Domestic helpers	25	25.00
	Miscellaneous- Delivery Girls	20	20.00
		<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

In the above table, it is seen that majority of respondents belong to age group of 18 to 50, Education background is SSC for majority of respondents i.e 42% .Beautician kind of gig work accounts for 28 % followed by Domestic helpers and care takers i.e 25%.

**Table 2: Anova test for Association of Benefits and Challenges with Age Group**

Benefits and Challenges		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Flexibility	Between Groups	60.000	3	20.000	8.727	.000
	Within Groups	220.000	96	2.292		
	Total	280.000	99			
Convenience	Between Groups	126.000	3	42.000	73.309	.000
	Within Groups	55.000	96	.573		
	Total	181.000	99			
WageStructure	Between Groups	41.500	3	13.833	2.448	.006
	Within Groups	542.500	96	5.651		



	Total	584.000	99			
Control	Between Groups	274.000	3	91.333	25.051	.000
	Within Groups	350.000	96	3.646		
	Total	624.000	99			
Insecurity	Between Groups	60.000	3	20.000	8.727	.000
	Within Groups	220.000	96	2.292		
	Total	280.000	99			
Policies	Between Groups	126.000	3	42.000	73.309	.000
	Within Groups	55.000	96	.573		
	Total	181.000	99			
Slack Season	Between Groups	41.500	3	13.833	2.448	.068
	Within Groups	542.500	96	5.651		
	Total	584.000	99			

In the above table, in all benefits like flexibility, Convenience, Wage structure and control factors, P value is less than 0.05, so we can say there is an association of Age with all benefits thereof. Challenges Like Insecured nature of work, Client policies, Slack seasonality etc. are associated with age factor as p value is less than 0.05 significance level.

Benefits and Challenges		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Flexibility	Between Groups	60.000	3	20.000	8.727	.000
	Within Groups	220.000	96	2.292		
	Total	280.000	99			
Convenience	Between Groups	126.000	3	42.000	73.309	.000
	Within Groups	55.000	96	.573		
	Total	181.000	99			
WageStructure	Between Groups	41.500	3	13.833	2.448	.068
	Within Groups	542.500	96	5.651		
	Total	584.000	99			
Control	Between Groups	274.000	3	91.333	25.051	.000
	Within Groups	350.000	96	3.646		
	Total	624.000	99			
Insecurity	Between Groups	360.000	3	120.000	37.770	.000
	Within Groups	305.000	96	3.177		
	Total	665.000	99			
Policies	Between Groups	360.000	3	120.000	37.770	.000
	Within Groups	305.000	96	3.177		

	Total	665.000	99			
SlackSeason	Between Groups	377.500	3	125.833	117.854	.000
	Within Groups	102.500	96	1.068		
	Total	480.000	99			

In the above table, in all benefits like flexibility, Convenience, Wage structure and control factors , P value is less than 0.05, so we can say there is an association of Education with all benefits thereof. Challenges Like Insecured nature of work, Client policies, Slack seasonality etc. are associated with Education factor as p value is less than 0.05 significance level.

Finding work in the gig economy has several advantages, like giving you more control over your schedule and the freedom to set your own pay rates. Although flexible and appealing, gig work has drawbacks, such as limited support to advance in a job, the undefined or uncertain nature of employment, unstable policy support, lack of social security, and other factors. The downside of working for an employer that pays in gig hours is poor compensation. These benefits and challenges are associated with Age of Women and Education Qualifications too.

#### Conclusion:

Women, who make up a large portion of the burgeoning gig economy in India, view gig employment as generally advantageous because it gives them a choice of jobs and flexible hours. They also deal with insurmountable issues including erratic income, a lack of upward mobility, weak bargaining strength, occupational segregation, and widespread computerised ratings in the gig economy. Also, there is rising concern over the lack of social protection. Notwithstanding these challenges, women mostly benefit from the gig economy. Looking ahead, the gig economy will keep growing outside of cities. The best course of action would be to bring policymakers and platforms together to debate the critical concerns

associated to platform work because more and more women will be entering the gig economy and ensuring access to decent work for these workers in the gig space.

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