



CHALLENGES FACED BY GIG ECONOMY WORKERS IN INDIAN FACILITY MANAGEMENT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MUMBAI CITY

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Abstract:

The Gig economy, which offers flexibility and cost-effectiveness, has become a significant employment source worldwide, leading to concerns about job security, income stability, and worker rights.

India's growing urban population has led to a significant increase in gig-based employment opportunities, with facility management services like housekeeping, plumbing, security, and maintenance work being the most popular. Gig-based labour is rapidly emerging in the financial hub of India, specifically Mumbai.

The Topic "The Challenges Faced by Gig Economy Workers in Indian Facility Management with Special Reference to Mumbai City" by Author "Pooja Singh", email id poojaas1987@gmail.com and contact number 9833643729 investigates the obstacles that facility management gig workers in Mumbai face unpredictable income, lack of legal recognition, inadequate social security benefits, and exploitative work conditions. The study draws on surveys and interviews with 130 gig workers in Mumbai to gather primary data, as well as analysing secondary data from government reports, international labour studies, private research organizations. It also examines policy gaps and provides recommendations to enhance protection of gig workers in India. The case studies highlights the need for policy reforms, better enforcement of labour laws and better working conditions for gig workers in Mumbai's facility management sector.

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Introduction:

1. Understanding the Gig Economy

The gig economy is characterised by a labour market that relies on short-term, contract-based, or freelance work, typically provided through digital platforms or temporary staffing agencies. Workers can have flexibility in their work schedules while still experiencing less job security with this type of employment.

A Gig Economy is a free market system in which temporary positions are common, and organizations hire independent workers for short-term commitments. A gig is a popular phrase for a temporary work assignment. Historically, this term has been used by musicians refers to a live performance. The Gig Economy is a type of

employment where companies engage temporary employees in a place of full-time, permanent employees.

Gig workers typically include:

1) Platform workers: Platform workers are those whose jobs rely on online software applications or digital platforms. They are characterized by flexible but also instability and uncertain income.

- Ride-hailing drivers (Uber, Ola)
- food delivery providers (Swiggy and Zomato, Uber eats)
- Home services: like Urban Company.
- E-Commerce: Companies like amazon
- Freelancing (IT, content writing, graphic design)

1) Non- Platform Workers: - Non- platform Gig workers typically earn a casual wages and work on their own account. Unlike platform workers, they operate outside of online software apps or Digital platforms to Secure work opportunities.

- Construction worker, Street Vendors, Farm Labourers.
- Delivery Boys (not working thorough online app)
- Domestic workers (Maids, cooks)
- Home based Workers (Such as handicrafts, tailoring, etc.)

With the rise of AI-driven job platforms, automation, and the demand for flexible workforces, the World Economic Forum (2023) forecasts that gig workers will constitute more than 60% of the world's workforce by 2030.

2. The inception and scale of the Gig Economy worldwide.

The jazz industry of the 1920s gave rise to the gig economy, which involved short-term gigs organized into events. Freelancing on websites like Upwork and Fiverr marked the beginning of a new era in the modern gig economy during the late 1990s and early 2000s.

Key developments in the Global Gig Economy:

- Elance (now Up work) is an early example of a freelance marketplace that was launched in 1999.
- From 2008 to 2012, the transportation and service industries are transformed by the emergence of Uber, Task Rabbit, and Airbnb.
- Facility management, home services, education, and logistics are all part of the gig model.

In 2023, McKinsey & Co. reported that gig workers contribute more than \$4.5 trillion to the world's economy each year, with countries such as the U.S, China, and India enduring the most of this contribution.

3. India's Gig Economy growth

The rapid growth of India's gig workforce is a result of urbanization, digital platforms, and economic changes. Additionally, India's 2022 report by NITI Aayog indicates that there were 7.7 million gig workers in 2020-21 and this figure is expected to climb up to 23.5million by 2029-30, representing 4.1% of the country's total workforce. NITI Aayog, 2022 provides the following key figures:

- The majority of gig workers, 47%, earn less than 10,000 per month.
- Food delivery, logistics, and facility management are responsible for over 60% of gig workers' employment.
- India's gig workforce is composed of just 11% women, primarily due to safety and wage disparities.

4. Mumbai's Gig Economy:

A Point of Interest! As the financial heart of India, Mumbai has a robust gig economy, with specialized sectors such as facility management, delivery services and ride sharing. Affordable, versatile labor has made a significant impact on the gig economy.

Gig Economy statistics in 2021:

Mumbai, BCG & Michael n Susan Dell Foundation

- 12% of the workforce in Mumbai is made up of over 500,000 gig workers.
- Including housekeepers, security guards and other repair workers, facility management employs over 90,000.
- Full-time employees earn 25,000 less than the median monthly income of gig workers, which is a mere 8,000 KPH.

Even though gig workers in Mumbai have job opportunities, they face challenges such as low pay and unsafe working conditions. Additionally, there are unpredictable salaries.

Objectives of the Study.

- To Examine the obstacles faced by facility management gig holders in Mumbai
- To Assess the societal and economic effects of gig work on income stability, job security. And health?
- To Explore the labour laws and legal safeguards for gig workers in India.
- To Provide practical policy guidance to enhance worker protections and benefits.
- To Understand the Socio-Economic Status of Gig workers.
- To examine the Limited collective Bargaining power of Gig worker.
- To know about the types of job opportunities in Gig platform.

Research Methodology:

A mixed-method research approach has been employed in this study, which includes:

- Primary Data: Conducted surveys & interviews with 130 facility management gig workers in Mumbai. Work with labour economists, policy makers and industry professionals.
- Secondary Data: Reports from NITI Aayog, ILO, World Bank, and India's Ministry of Labour & Employment. Harvard Business Review, IIM Ahmedabad and Azim Premji University for academic studies

Literature Review:

- ILO's Global Wage Report (2023): 60% of gig workers globally lack stable earnings and social security.
- NITI Aayog Report (2022): Only 8% of Indian gig workers receive insurance or pension benefits.
- India Labour Review (2022): The Code on Social Security, 2020, recognizes gig workers, but lacks strong enforcement mechanisms.

Findings and Discussion:

1. Income Instability

- 63% of Mumbai's facility gig workers earn

below ₹18,000/month (Survey Data, 2024).

2. Lack of Social Security

- 91% lack pension, health insurance, or maternity benefits (ILO, 2023).

3. Legal Ambiguities

- Only 3% of gig workers are aware of the Social Security Code, 2020.

4. Poor Working Conditions

- 72% work more than 10 hours/day without formal contracts.

5. Limited Collective Bargaining Power.

- Gig workers lack strong unions, leading to low wage bargaining power.

Facility Management Sector in Mumbai is the focus of this Case Study.

A variety of gig workers are employed in Mumbai's facility management industry, primarily dealing with housekeeping and sanitation services as well as plumbing, security personnel. We utilized in-depth interviews and case studies of individual employees to comprehend their difficulties.

1. A Case Study on Housekeeping Worker Sunil Kumar provides a case study.

Profile:

- Age: 38.
- Education: Class 8 dropout.
- Commercial offices' contract-based housekeeping services are available for employment.
- Monthly Income: ₹16,000 (variable)
- Work is scheduled for 12 hours a day, 6 days p.m.

Challenges:

- Job security is not guaranteed as Sunil works as a contractor.
- Contractors who postpone their salaries by 2-3 weeks frequently affect household expenses. Why is this?
- The individual in case of illness covers medical expenses, as there is no employer-sponsored insurance available.

2. Security Guard Pooja Gupta is the subject of a Case Study in their second case.

Profile:

- Age: 29.
- Education: Class 12.
- Work: Night shift security guard at a residential property.
- Monthly Income: ₹13,500.
- Work Hours: 14-hour shifts.

Challenges:

- Often, Pooja is unpaid and works extra hours to make ends meet.
- She is frequently left alone at night without proper safety protocols, making her working conditions unsafe.
- Her contract employment does not provide her with paid maternity leave.

3. Ramesh Tiwari, a building maintenance worker, is the focus of this case study.

Profile:

- Age: 42
- Education: High School
- Domestic buildings are the primary location for electrical and plumbing repairs.
- Monthly Income: ₹20,000 (fluctuates)
- Work Hours: 10+ hours/day

Challenges :

- The risk of occupational exposure to electric shocks and hazardous materials is often high.
- Lack of formal technical training: The lack of training is because it was learned on the job without any external help.
- Law does not protect workers when there is a dispute with their clients.

Insights from Case Studies:

- More than three-quarters of Mumbai facility gig workers are without any form of social security.
- Over 60% of employees reported being unable to

receive their payment on time.

- The safety of women is also compromised, especially during night shifts.;

These case studies highlight the need for policy reforms, better enforcement of labour laws and better working conditions for gig workers in Mumbai's facility management sector. "

Recommendations:

1. Strengthening Policy Implementation

- To improve pension, insurance, and accident coverage, the Social Security Code 2020 is being fast-tracked..

2. Employer Accountability

- The mandate to provide minimum wage protections for facility management gig employees.

3. Worker Organization & Unionization.

- Support the growth of worker cooperatives and gig economy unions to enhance wage bargaining.

4. Financial Literacy & Support.

- Begin government-sponsored savings and loan programs for gig workers.

Conclusion

Mumbai's facility management gig economy is experiencing growth, but workers are finding it difficult. These require stronger labour protections, regulatory enforcement, and worker empowerment to ensure sustainable and dignified employment. Why?

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