



EVOLUTION OF MARKETING STRATEGIES IN THE GIG ECONOMY: FROM TRADITIONAL TO DIGITAL PLATFORMS

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Abstract :

Gone are the days when we would sit down every morning on the porch and read the newspaper to scout job opportunities, circle the interested ads with a pen or a marker then go and dial the given number or go for an interview at the said address. Where finding jobs that did not come with many commitments and a fix hour of mundane work schedule , where being stuck at a 9 to 5 job seemed pretty much normal .No more are people seeking such jobs or opportunities rather working multiple jobs in a single day on hourly basis and getting paid on the same day has become the new normal of many .

Considering the trends and the current generational ideologies there was a huge shift in marketing and advertising from the traditional print media to digital marketing.

We are not left uncharmed by the perky notifications by food delivery apps where they not only appeal to our appetite but also to our emotions. The engaging youtube ads or sponsored stories on instagram compel us to watch them rather than clicking on the skip button. Watching young artists, gen Zs doing the work of their dream and maintaining a work-life balance on reels motivates us to look out of the box and take up tasks or jobs that we really enjoyed doing but lacked the courage to move towards due to traditional requirements of Job security.

This paper aims to find out the impact of digital marketing on the increasing number of gig economy workers especially in the age group of 18 to 25 yrs.

Keywords - Job security, Marketing, Traditional vs New .

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Introduction:

The gig economy has grown rapidly due to technological advancements, changing job preferences, and digital platforms that connect workers with opportunities. Flexible and remote work has attracted students, professionals, and those seeking alternative employment.

Traditional job search methods like newspaper ads and employment agencies have been replaced by online platforms such as Upwork, Fiverr, and Uber, making gig work more accessible. Social media and AI-driven job-matching have further streamlined the process.

Digital marketing plays a key role in shaping perceptions of gig work, often highlighting benefits like flexibility and financial independence while

downplaying challenges such as job inconsistency and lack of benefits. Advertisements and influencer promotions influence job-seeking behavior, sometimes creating unrealistic expectations.

This paper explores how digital marketing impacts young individuals' views on gig work, analyzing whether marketed benefits align with real experiences. It also examines the psychological effects of advertising on job seekers and aims to provide insights for a more transparent representation of gig work opportunities.

Literature Review:

The gig economy, characterized by short-term contracts and freelance work, offers flexibility but also brings challenges like job insecurity and

inconsistent income. Studies highlight concerns such as lack of employment benefits, unpredictable workloads, and a competitive market. Despite these issues, digitalization and changing labor trends continue to drive its growth.

Marketing strategies have evolved from traditional job-seeking methods like newspapers and employment agencies to digital platforms such as LinkedIn, Upwork, and Fiverr. These platforms use algorithm-driven techniques and social media promotions to attract gig workers. Influencers on Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube often portray gig work as flexible and lucrative, though such marketing can create unrealistic expectations.

Research on gig work highlights financial instability and limited career progression, with many workers relying on multiple platforms for steady income. However, little research explores how digital marketing shapes young individuals' perceptions of gig work. This paper aims to analyze the influence of digital marketing on job-seeking behavior and provide insights for a more realistic portrayal of gig work opportunities.

Methodology:

1. Research Design and Approach This study employs a quantitative research approach using a survey-based methodology to analyze the impact of digital marketing on gig work participation. The research design focuses on collecting and analyzing numerical data to identify trends and

4. Limitations of the Study The study acknowledges certain limitations, including:

- **Self-Reporting Bias:** Respondents may provide socially desirable answers rather than accurate experiences.
- **Urban-Centric Sample:** The survey was conducted primarily in urban areas, limiting insights into rural gig work experiences.

patterns in job-seeking behavior and gig work perceptions among young individuals.

2. Sample Demographics and Data Collection

Process The survey targeted individuals aged 18-35, a demographic group highly engaged in digital platforms and gig work. Data was collected through online survey forms distributed via social media and freelancing forums. A total of 300 respondents participated, representing diverse backgrounds in terms of education, employment status, and geographic location.

3. Description of Survey Questions and Analysis

Methods The survey consisted of structured questions categorized into the following sections:

- **Employment Status & Gig Work Participation** (current gig workers vs. non-gig workers)
- **Job Information Sources** (social media, job portals, advertisements)
- **Influence of Digital Marketing** (impact of ads, influencer promotions, targeted job notifications)
- **Perceptions of Gig Work** (benefits, challenges, stability concerns)

Collected data was analyzed using statistical tools such as frequency distribution, correlation analysis, and regression models to identify patterns and relationships between digital marketing exposure and gig work participation.

- **Limited Scope:** The study focuses on young individuals, excluding older demographics who may also engage in gig work.

Findings and Analysis:

Summary of Survey Findings:

1. Demographics of Respondents

The survey included 15 participants, mostly aged 18 (66.7%), with a majority being female (80%).

2. Gig Economy Participation

Only 26.7% of respondents engaged in gig work, primarily freelancing (53.3%) and online tutoring (33.3%). Physically demanding jobs like food delivery had lower participation (13.3%), and no one worked in ride-sharing.

Awareness & Influence of Digital Marketing

Social media advertisements were the main source of gig work awareness (60%), followed by job portals (26.7%). A majority (73.3%) linked the rise of gig work to digital marketing, with 60% agreeing that ads make gig work seem more attractive than it actually is.

3. Perception of Gig Work vs Traditional Jobs

46.7% believed gig work offers better work-life balance than traditional jobs, while 40% preferred it for flexibility. However, only 33.3% saw it as a long-term career option.

4. Psychological & Emotional Influence

73.3% admitted being influenced by social media content portraying gig work positively, and 46.7% took up gig work because of online promotions. However, 53.3% were unsure if gig work is a sustainable career.

5. Challenges of Gig Work

The main concerns were job insecurity (40%), inconsistent income (20%), lack of benefits (13.3%), and high competition (13.3%). While gig work offers flexibility, it lacks financial stability and benefits compared to traditional jobs.

Key Findings:

1. Demographics

- Most respondents (66.7%) were 18 years old, followed by 19-year-olds (13.3%).
- 80% were female, while 20% were male.

2. Gig Economy Participation

- Only 26.7% of respondents were engaged in gig work.
- Freelancing (53.3%) was the most common, followed by online tutoring (33.3%) and food delivery (13.3%).
- No one participated in ride-sharing services.

3. Awareness & Influence of Digital Marketing

- 60% learned about gig work through social media ads, 26.7% via job portals, and 13.3% through word of mouth.
- 73.3% linked the rise of gig work to digital job ads.
- 60% believed social media portrays gig work as more flexible and lucrative than it actually is.

4. Perception of Gig Work vs Traditional Jobs

- 46.7% felt gig work provides better work-life balance than traditional jobs.
- 40% preferred gig work due to flexible hours and project choices.
- Only 33.3% considered gig work a long-term career option.

5. Psychological & Emotional Influence

- 73.3% admitted being influenced by social media content depicting gig work positively.
- 46.7% took up gig work after seeing online ads or influencer promotions.
- 53.3% were unsure whether gig work is a sustainable career.

6. Challenges of Gig Work

- 40% cited job insecurity as the biggest issue.
- Other concerns included inconsistent income (20%), lack of benefits (13.3%), and high competition (13.3%).

Tabular representation of Result derived from survey

1. Demographics of Respondents

Table 1: Age and Gender Distribution

Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
18	10	66.7%
19	2	13.3%
20	1	6.7%
22	1	6.7%
23	1	6.7%

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	3	20%
Female	12	80%

2. Gig Economy Participation

Table 2: Participation in the Gig Economy

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	4	26.7%
No	11	73.3%

Table 3: Types of Gig Work

Gig Work Type	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Freelancing (writing, graphic design, etc.)	8	53.3%
Online Tutoring	5	33.3%
Food Delivery	2	13.3%
Ride-sharing	0	0%

3. Awareness & Influence of Digital Marketing on Gig Work

Table 4: How Respondents Learned About Gig Work

Source	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Word of mouth	4	13.3%
Social media ads	9	60%
Job portals	2	26.7%
Freelancing websites	0	0%

Table 5: Influence of Social Media Marketing

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
"Social media ads make gig work look more flexible & lucrative."	2	1	1	9	2
"The rise of gig work is linked to digital platforms replacing traditional job ads."	1	0	0	11	3

4. Perception of Gig Work vs Traditional Jobs

Table 6: Gig Work vs. Traditional Jobs

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
"Gig work offers a better work-life balance."	1	1	7	5	1
"I prefer gig work because of its flexibility."	0	1	5	7	2
"I see gig work as a long-term career option."	1	2	5	4	3

5. Psychological & Emotional Influence of Digital Marketing

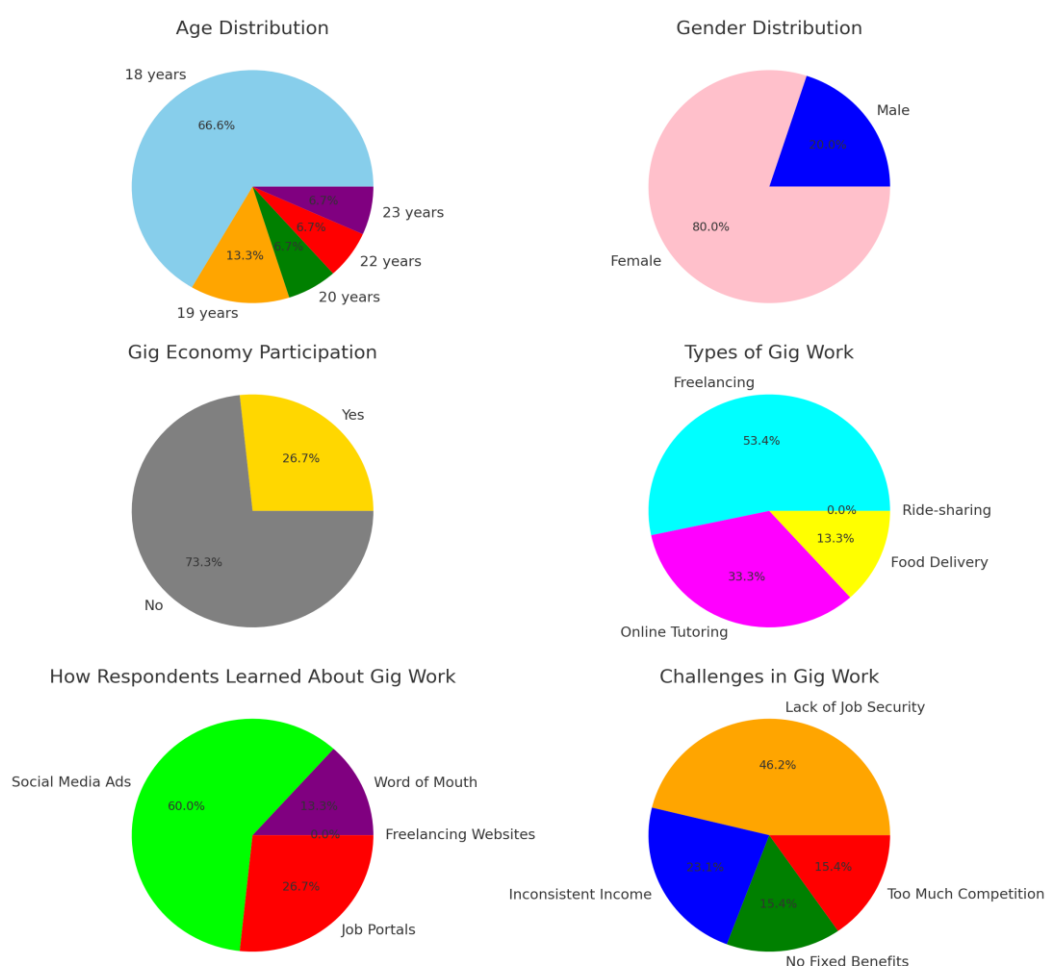
Table 7: Emotional Influence of Digital Marketing

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
"I have felt emotionally influenced by social media showcasing gig workers."	0	2	2	7	4
"Digital ads create urgency and push me to take more gig work."	1	1	5	5	3

6. Challenges of Gig Work

Table 8: Challenges in the Gig Economy

Challenge	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Lack of Job Security	6	40%
Inconsistent Income	3	20%
No Fixed Benefits (PF, Insurance)	2	13.3%
Too Much Competition	2	13.3%



Discussion:

1. Demographics & Gig Work Participation:

The survey results show that most respondents (66.7%) were 18 years old, with a majority being female (80%). A large portion (73.3%) participated in gig work, primarily freelancing (53.3%) and online tutoring (33.3%). The

findings suggest that digital platforms are enabling young people, especially women, to engage in flexible, skill-based gig work.

Age Group	Percentage (%)
18 years	66.7%
19-21 years	20%
22+ years	13.3%

Gig Work Type	Percentage (%)
Freelancing	53.3%
Online Tutoring	33.3%
Others	13.4%

2. Role of Digital Marketing in Gig Work Awareness

A crucial observation is that 60% of respondents first learned about gig work through social media advertisements, while traditional job portals and word-of-mouth played a lesser role. This highlights how digital marketing is reshaping job-seeking behavior, making gig opportunities more visible to younger demographics.

Furthermore, when asked whether digital marketing plays a major role in attracting gig workers, 73.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. This suggests that promotional strategies, including influencer endorsements and targeted advertising, significantly influence career decisions in the gig economy.

Sources of Gig Work Awareness:

Source	Percentage (%)
Social Media Ads	60%
Job Portals	26.7%
Word-of-Mouth	13.3%

3. Perceived Benefits vs. Real Challenges

A common theme in gig work promotions is the emphasis on flexibility and financial independence. However, our findings suggest that while respondents appreciate these benefits, they also recognize significant drawbacks.

Concern	Percentage (%)
Lack of job security	40%
Inconsistent income	33.3%
No fixed benefits (insurance, retirement)	13.3%

These insights indicate that while digital marketing successfully attracts young workers, it may also create unrealistic expectations regarding job stability and income consistency.

4. Psychological & Emotional Influence of Digital Marketing

One of the most significant aspects of digital marketing's impact is its psychological influence. The survey found that:

Psychological Influence	Percentage (%)
Emotionally influenced by social media gig work promotions	46.7%
Considered gig work due to influencer/advertisement	53.3%
Felt pressured by app notifications & advertisements	40%

This suggests that persuasive marketing techniques create aspirational narratives around gig work, sometimes overshadowing the challenges involved.

5. Long-Term Perceptions of Gig Work

When asked whether gig work is a sustainable career option, opinions were mixed:

Perception	Percentage (%)
Neutral about long-term viability	53.3%
Views gig work as temporary income	20%

These findings suggest that while digital platforms promote gig work as a desirable alternative to traditional jobs, many workers remain skeptical about its long-term stability.

Summary of Key Findings:

- Digital marketing is a dominant factor in gig work awareness, with social media ads being the primary source of information.
- Freelancing and online tutoring are the most popular gig jobs among young individuals.
- Social media advertisements often overstate gig work's flexibility and earning potential, leading to mismatched expectations.
- Lack of job security and inconsistent income remain key concerns for gig workers.
- Many respondents felt emotionally influenced by digital marketing, indicating its strong psychological impact.
- Uncertainty about gig work's long-term sustainability suggests a need for more realistic portrayals in digital marketing.

Recommendations:

Summary of Recommendations:

1. Improving Transparency in Digital Marketing

- Advertisements should provide realistic job expectations.
 - Platforms should showcase authentic worker experiences, including challenges.
- ##### 2. Enhancing Financial Stability for Gig Workers
- Implement minimum pay guarantees to reduce income instability.
 - Offer financial education on savings, taxes, and income management.
- ##### 3. Providing Essential Worker Benefits
- Companies should offer affordable health insurance and social security.
 - Introduce pension and savings plans for gig workers.
- ##### 4. Digital Literacy & Skill Development
- Provide training on freelancing, digital marketing, and financial literacy.
 - Offer career guidance to help individuals make informed job choices.

5. Ethical Use of Digital Marketing:

- Regulate influencer promotions to prevent misleading job seekers.
- Increase awareness about gig work realities, including job instability.

6. Creating Legal Safeguards for Gig Workers

- Establish policies defining gig workers' rights and fair treatment.
- Implement dispute resolution mechanisms for payment and job-related issues.

7. Encouraging Diverse Gig Opportunities

- Expand gig work into sectors like research, legal consulting, and data analysis.
- Promote hybrid models combining gig work with job stability.

8. Psychological & Mental Well-being Support

- Provide mental health resources for gig workers.
- Educate workers on maintaining work-life balance to prevent burnout.

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