

Revolutionizing Student Employment: The Rise of Unskilled Task Platforms

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Abstract

The gig economy and freelancing, even at an early age, are very important across the globe, both in developing and developed nations. India, being a developing country, is slowly developing but still lacks full establishment of formal job opportunities for students. Nevertheless, with technology, tremendous improvement has been witnessed. Individuals are now overcoming conventional thinking and venturing into new job opportunities. The overall aim is to minimize youth unemployment and enhance the financial independence of students and youth, making them realize the importance of work while developing their skills and creativity. The growth in digital platforms and new emerging technologies has thrown open opportunities for task-based work, which allows flexible employment opportunities for students.

The primary focus is on the socio-economic status of platform workers in India, especially student workers, and examines the influence of the gig economy. It seeks to bridge the gap between opportunity and challenge in task-based work, providing policy suggestions for sustainable growth. Finally, the research underscores how the

acceptance of the gig economy can benefit students, stem unemployment, and create a more resilient workforce in India.

Keywords: Gig Economy, Student Employment, Unskilled Task Platforms, Freelancing

I INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, the notion of work has seen a significant shift with the rise of the gig economy. Historically, student work was usually limited to part-time retail, hospitality, or internships related to their course of study. Nonetheless, the speed with which online platforms have evolved has introduced a novel type of labor — unskilled task platforms — that present students with a novel method to earn extra income through completing uncomplicated one-time tasks without professional qualifications or specific skills. Unskilled job platforms bring workers and individuals or companies requiring casual assistance with their daily tasks together. These tasks include washing a car, buying groceries, party setup, or cleaning up. The platforms harness technology to address the gap that exists between seekers of help in performing small chores and students on the lookout for flexible ways to earn money. This change has given power to students by making it possible to achieve

financial freedom while fitting the schedules of schools. The impact of the gig economy on student work goes beyond monetary advantages. It inculcates a sense of responsibility, punctuality, and social skills as students interact with job posters face-to-face. Above all, it defies the conventional understanding that work must be attached to long-term commitments or certain qualifications, rather supporting a dynamic, task-oriented conception of work. India's adoption of digital transformation, driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, has further accelerated the expansion of such platforms. As more people use mobile apps and online portals, students are now able to browse, apply, and accomplish work within their neighborhood — all by a few taps on their phone. This transformation not only alleviates youth unemployment but also promotes an entrepreneurial mindset, enabling students to try out multiple opportunities beyond traditional job markets. While having its strengths, unskilled task platforms also present problems. Issues of job security, equitable pay, and protection of employees need to be tackled so that there is an equitable and sustainable gig economy. With these platforms growing, it is now essential to consider their effect on the employment of students and to find the opportunities and challenges within. This review paper looks at the emergence of unskilled task platforms and how they are transforming employment for students. It seeks to shed light on the socio-economic effects, technological drivers behind the transformation, and the policy steps to be taken in order to maximize the capabilities of these platforms to benefit the student population as well as the wider economy.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

Prof. Anuradha Jain's 2024 study explores the gig economy, a shift in labor markets driven by technological advancements and changing socio-economic attitudes. Digital platforms like Uber, Airbnb, and TaskRabbit have enabled short-term, flexible work arrangements, replacing traditional full-time employment patterns. The gig economy has grown across sectors, facilitating entrepreneurship and skill diversification, and creating jobs for vulnerable groups like retirees and people in remote communities. However, the study highlights the tension between innovation and employee protection, urging responsive policy institutions to balance flexibility

with social well-being. The long-term sustainability of the gig economy depends on coordinated policymaking on labor rights, income security, and emerging patterns like AI embedding and worker categorization. The paper highlights the importance of balancing innovation with employee protection in the gig economy.[1]

Prof. (Dr.) Bhisham Kapoor, Dr. Sanyam, and Mr. Rupesh Kumar [2024] have researched the growth of gig workers in India, examining trends, challenges, and opportunities of the gig economy. The article explains how improvements in technology, demographic changes, and changing economic arrangements have boosted the growth of gig work, with India observing an increase in gig workers across various sectors of transportation, delivery, hospitality, and professional services. It examines two broad types of gig workers — platform workers working through digital applications (such as Uber, Zomato) and non-platform workers doing regular short-term employment. The study outlines major challenges of gig workers, including insecurity of employment, income instability, absence of social security benefits, and poor legal safeguards. In spite of such challenges, the paper recognizes the potential offered by gig work in terms of flexibility, freedom, entrepreneurial activities, and increased engagement of marginalized groups. The research stresses the imperative of policy action to fill the regulatory voids, protect workers' welfare, and strike a balance between innovation and social protection. Finally, the paper establishes that even as the gig economy drives economic development in India, cooperation among policymakers, enterprises, and stakeholders is needed to build a sustainable and inclusive gig environment.[2]

Ajay Sood and Ritesh Singh [2023]** have examined the expansion of the gig economy in India, highlighting its growth between 2011-12 and 2019-20. The study draws attention to the swift uptake of digital technology, which has made flexible job opportunities for part-time and freelance workers possible. It identifies a high rise in gig workers, from 25.2 lakh in 2011-12 to 68 lakh in 2019-20 with a CAGR of 16.78%. The study also indicates that 37.6% of the gig workers work in the formal sector, while 62.4% in the informal sector, and that the biggest sector to have

hired gig workers is retail trade followed by transport, real estate, and manufacturing. The article talks about the economic role of the gig economy, where it can generate 90 million jobs in non-farm activities and contribute 1.25% to the GDP of India. It also mentions problems such as job insecurity, income volatility, absence of social security, and bad working conditions. The authors conclude that although the gig economy promotes flexibility and entrepreneurialism, extensive policy changes are needed to guarantee equitable working conditions, reconcile flexibility with social security, and promote gig workers' long-term well-being.[3]

K. J. Thankachan [2024] has examined the growth potential of the gig economy in India by analyzing its growth based on tech adoption, urbanization, and shifting workforce dynamics. The paper points out the way digital platforms have driven flexible employment, and India's gig workforce is set to increase by 200% and contribute up to 2.5% to the country's GDP in the near future. The research highlights the gig economy's contribution to increasing employment, particularly in cities, and entrepreneurship through enabling workers to work as micro-entrepreneurs. It further mentions the economic effect of additional income, increasing aggregate demand and inducing quicker economic growth. The gig economy also narrows the rural-urban gap by offering digital employment opportunities to rural communities. But the paper also touches upon some of the challenges, including insecure incomes, absence of social security (such as health insurance and pension schemes), and inadequate legal protections for gig workers. The study concludes that though the gig economy increases flexibility and productivity, policy changes are important to weigh protection for the workers against innovation so that sustainable development can be ensured for India's changing labor market.[4]

S. Palhad, S. Onwubu, R. Singh, R. Thakur, S. Thakur, and G. Mkhize [2023] have investigated the advantages and disadvantages of the gig economy from the viewpoints of gig workers and Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) in South Africa. The article reports on how digital technologies and online platforms have transformed work by linking job seekers and firms, with a provision for

flexible, short-term working arrangements. The research highlights some of the most important advantages of the gig economy, including economic inclusion, business expansion, resource management, and flexibility. It highlights how SMMEs use gig workers to minimize fixed costs and expand operations cost-effectively. The paper also discusses important challenges, including occupational vulnerability, platform-based risks, and the precariousness of gig work, as well as a lack of policy development. The researchers discovered gig workers tend to experience income insecurity, are deprived of social protections, and are subject to abrupt contract cancellation. The research concludes that although the gig economy can promote entrepreneurship and offer low-hurdle jobs for youth, among others, there is an urgent need for policy interventions, skill upgradation, and the support of the government in order to safeguard gig workers' rights and maintain economic growth sustainably.[5]

S. Samanta and Dr. T. Sengupta [2024] have studied the growth and scope of the gig economy in India, focusing on freelancers and their working perspectives. The paper highlights how the gig economy has emerged as a transformative force in the Indian labor market, fueled by technological advancements, affordable internet access, and digital platforms like Upwork and LinkedIn. The study reveals that the gig economy is projected to grow to \$455 billion by 2023, contributing over 15% to India's GDP. A survey conducted among 100 respondents shows that flexibility (82%) and work independence (73%) are the most valued aspects of freelancing, while in-demand services include content writing, graphic design, digital marketing, and software development. The research also identifies essential skills for freelancers, such as computer literacy (MS Office, Canva), marketing, and networking. Despite its benefits, the paper points out challenges like income instability (70%), job insecurity, lack of social support, and limited worker protection. Interestingly, while 42% of respondents strongly believe in the bright future of the gig economy, only 21% intend to pursue freelancing full-time, with many opting for stable jobs due to AI's potential to automate certain tasks. The study concludes that while the gig economy offers significant employment opportunities, addressing policy gaps, providing skill development,

and ensuring worker protection are crucial for its sustainable growth in India.[6]

III OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To investigate the gig economy's expansion and patterns — Recognize how technology developments and digital platforms have aided in the growth of gig employment both internationally and in India.To determine which jobs are available through the gig economy — Emphasize how the gig economy offers flexible, part-time, and remote work, which helps underrepresented groups, freelancers, and students find employment.To assess how the gig economy affects entrepreneurship and skill development — Examine how gig employment encourages micro-entrepreneurship, enabling people to develop their talents and diversify their sources of income.To look into how much the gig economy contributes to the economy— Examine the effects of gig work on economic inclusion, GDP growth, and the employment dynamics between rural and urban areas.

IV METHODOLOGY

This research uses a mixed method to fully examine unskilled task platforms and their effects on student jobs. A critical exploration of academic papers, case studies, and current studies on gig economy platforms, in particular those that serve unskilled job and student jobs. This review sets up a theoretical basis and a shortfall in the current body of literature.This literature review reviews major trends in the gig economy, such as the growing utilization of digital platforms for temporary work. Special emphasis is paid to unskilled job platforms for students, with a focus on whether or not they are effective in offering flexible work opportunities. Moreover, studies of economic inclusion, employment security, and financial well-being of student workers are examined to gain an insight into the larger picture of such platforms. By looking into best practices and issues encountered by other such platforms, this research seeks to give a balanced view of their function in the job market.

Table 1.1: Comparison of Unskilled Task Platforms

Feature	TaskRabbit	Fiver	Upwork
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Focus Area	Unskilled	Freelance Services	Professional Freelance
Flexibility	High — on-demand tasks	Moderate — project-based	Low to moderate — contract-based
Payment Model	Hourly or task-based	Per gig or package	Hourly or fixed contracts
Verification	ID verification, background checks	Profile verification	Profile verification
Job Duration	Short-term, one-time tasks	Varies — short gigs to multi-day	Medium to long-term projects

Table 1.1 illustrates the comparison between existing platforms, providing insight into how different gig economy structures function and their potential impact on students seeking flexible, unskilled employment opportunities. Assessment of different unskilled task platforms on factors like job categories, payment models, verification of users, and cancellation policies. The objective of this step is to put the distinctive aspects, strengths, and weaknesses of various platforms under the spotlight to determine their suitability for student employment.The comparison is centered on determining the prominent operational features of prominent gig platforms like TaskRabbit, Fiverr, and Upwork. This includes a detailed evaluation of their users' policies, accessibility, flexibility, and affordability for students to find unskilled work. The research assesses the way these platforms connect students with job opportunities, providing fair compensation and employment security. The comparison also takes into account the effect of verification mechanisms, cancellation policies, and the frequency of job posting, which greatly contribute to the dependability of these platforms for student workers.This systematic approach offers a balanced view of the way unskilled task platforms function and their wider implications for student work and economic inclusion.

IV CONCLUSION

The gig economy has emerged as a revolutionizing force in the contemporary labor market, especially in India. The studies in total point out to the tremendous growth of gig work, facilitated by technological change, digital platforms, and evolving workforce preferences. The gig economy is expected to contribute substantially to India's GDP, with increasing numbers of workers doing freelance and platform-based work in sectors ranging from digital marketing and content writing to graphic design and software coding. This transition brings with it some significant advantages such as flexibility, independence, and the potential for marginalized sections and youth to generate income autonomously. Yet, the articles also speak of the vulnerability of gig workers, including income uncertainty, employment insecurity, and lack of social security and legal cover. Moreover, the advent of artificial intelligence also threatens the possibility of job losses, increasing complexity to the future of gig work. While most people welcome the autonomy and entrepreneurial nature of gig work, a significant majority still consider stable, full-time employment to be safer. The study concludes that for a sustainable growth of the gig economy, policy reforms are needed that address the trade-off between innovation and worker protection. It involves the installation of social security provisions, skill development schemes, and legal standards in favor of the rights of gig workers to ensure that the gig economy grows as an inclusive and stable force for economic progress.

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