



ISSN NO. 2320-5407

ISSN(O): 2320-5407 | ISSN(P): 3107-4928

International Journal of Advanced Research

Publisher's Name: Jana Publication and Research LLP

www.journalijar.com

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-58068

Title: The Economics of Gig Work: Analysing Labour Market Flexibility, Wage Volatility, and Employment Security

Recommendation:

Accept as it is

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity	✓			
Significance	✓			

Reviewer's ID: JPR-002

Detailed Reviewer's Report

The manuscript presents a comprehensive review of the gig economy with particular emphasis on labour market flexibility, wage volatility, employment security, worker welfare, and the evolving regulatory environment. The study addresses a contemporary and socially significant issue as platform-based employment continues to reshape labour markets globally. The manuscript demonstrates extensive engagement with secondary literature and attempts to integrate economic, sociological, and policy perspectives to explain the opportunities and challenges associated with gig work. The structure of the chapters reflects a logical progression from conceptual foundations to discussion and policy implications, contributing to readability and thematic continuity.

One of the notable strengths of the manuscript is its broad theoretical and conceptual coverage. The discussion on labour market flexibility, wage volatility, and employment security provides a strong conceptual foundation and effectively explains the trade-offs inherent in gig employment. The inclusion of theoretical perspectives such as neoclassical labour theory, dual labour market theory, and precarious work theory strengthens the academic framing and demonstrates awareness of competing interpretations of labour market dynamics. Additionally, the manuscript appropriately differentiates between location-based and online gig work and recognises their varying implications for worker autonomy and earnings potential.

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The review of existing literature is extensive and includes influential contributions from international organisations and established scholars in labour economics and platform studies. The manuscript successfully synthesises literature relating to algorithmic management, employment precarity, wage determination, and regulatory developments across different regions. The comparative treatment of the United States, India, and the European Union provides useful international context and demonstrates an effort to situate the gig economy within broader labour policy debates. The discussion on India's regulatory developments, particularly the recognition of gig workers under the Code on Social Security, adds contextual relevance and policy value.

Despite these strengths, the manuscript requires substantial revision before publication consideration. The first major concern relates to the absence of a clearly articulated research problem and methodological framework. Although the work is presented as an analytical study, the manuscript relies entirely on secondary sources and does not clearly define whether it is intended as a systematic review, narrative review, conceptual paper, or theoretical synthesis. The methodology section should explicitly explain the process of literature identification, inclusion and exclusion criteria, databases consulted, search strategy, and rationale for selecting sources. Without methodological transparency, the credibility and reproducibility of the review remain limited.

Another significant issue concerns the originality and contribution of the manuscript. While the document provides extensive descriptive discussion, much of the content summarises existing literature rather than generating new theoretical insights or conceptual advancement. The manuscript should move beyond literature aggregation and present a stronger analytical contribution by proposing an integrated framework, conceptual model, or comparative interpretation that explains the interaction among flexibility, wage instability, and employment security. Developing a conceptual synthesis would significantly strengthen the originality of the study.

The discussion section requires further enhancement to improve analytical depth. Although Chapter 9 attempts to synthesise findings, the interpretation remains largely descriptive and does not sufficiently challenge or reconcile conflicting evidence in prior literature. Greater critical engagement is needed regarding whether gig work genuinely increases labour market efficiency or merely transfers economic risk from employers to workers. Similarly, the manuscript should examine differences across worker categories, platform types, and regional contexts to avoid broad generalisations.

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The manuscript would also benefit from stronger engagement with recent literature. While foundational studies are appropriately included, several references are relatively dated considering the rapidly evolving nature of platform work. Additional contemporary studies and recent policy developments would improve the currency and relevance of the analysis. Greater inclusion of empirical evidence from developing economies would also strengthen the global applicability of conclusions.

From a structural perspective, the manuscript is generally organised; however, certain sections are excessively descriptive and contain repetitive explanations regarding flexibility, insecurity, and algorithmic control. Condensing overlapping content and improving transitions between chapters would improve readability. The language is academically appropriate overall but would benefit from professional proofreading to address minor grammatical inconsistencies and improve sentence flow.

The conclusion appropriately summarises the central argument that flexibility in gig work is accompanied by increased income uncertainty and weaker employment protection. However, the conclusion should more clearly articulate the study's theoretical contribution, practical implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research. The manuscript identifies relevant future directions including primary data collection and longitudinal analysis, but these recommendations should be more detailed and connected to unresolved gaps in the literature.

Overall, the manuscript addresses an important and timely topic with clear practical relevance for labour policy, employment studies, and platform governance. The breadth of literature coverage and policy discussion are commendable; however, improvements are necessary in methodological clarity, analytical originality, conceptual integration, and critical discussion. Subject to substantial revision, the manuscript has the potential to make a meaningful contribution to the growing body of research on the gig economy and the future of work.