

## **STUDY EFFECT ON CHALLENGES AND IMPACT OF THE GIG ECONOMY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ERNAKULAM, KERALA STATE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study investigates the challenges and impacts of the gig economy on college students in Ernakulam, Kerala State. With the rise of digital platforms offering flexible job opportunities, many students are engaging in gig work to support their education and lifestyle. This study aims to understand the socio-economic effects of gig work on students, assessing both the benefits and challenges they encounter. The objectives of the study was used to analyze the participation of college students in the gig economy in Ernakulam. To assess the impact of gig work on their academic performance, financial stability, and overall well-being. A sample of 234 college students will be selected are currently engaged in gig work will be targeted for the survey. This approach will help capture diverse experiences and challenges. Survey data will be analyzed using statistical tools such as SPSS. Descriptive statistics will summarize the demographics and gig work characteristics. Inferential statistics, such as regression analysis, will explore the relationships between gig work and academic performance, financial stability, and well-being. Through a mixed-method approach, including surveys and interviews with college students engaged in gig work, this research provides a comprehensive analysis of how the gig economy influences their academic performance, financial stability, and overall well-being.

**Keywords:** Challenges, Gig Economy.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The gig economy, characterized by flexible, short-term, and freelance work opportunities facilitated by digital platforms, has rapidly grown worldwide. This trend is particularly noticeable in urban areas such as Ernakulam, Kerala State. College students, in their quest for financial independence and work experience, are increasingly participating in the gig economy. They engage in various gigs, including ride-sharing, food delivery, and freelance digital work, balancing these roles alongside their academic responsibilities.

#### **Definition and Scope of the Gig Economy**

The gig economy refers to a labor market characterized by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs. Digital platforms such as Uber, Swiggy, and Upwork have significantly facilitated the growth of the gig economy by connecting workers with temporary job opportunities. This sector encompasses a wide range of jobs, from ride-sharing and food delivery to freelance digital services like graphic design

and content writing. The flexibility and autonomy associated with gig work attract many individuals, particularly students who seek to balance work with their academic commitments

### Global Trends and Context

Globally, the gig economy has expanded rapidly, driven by technological advancements and changing attitudes towards traditional employment. Studies indicate that a significant portion of the workforce in developed countries engages in gig work either as a primary or secondary source of income. In developing countries, the gig economy offers an alternative for those facing high unemployment rates and limited formal job opportunities

### College Students and Gig Work

College students represent a significant segment of the gig economy workforce. Research indicates that students engage in gig work primarily for financial reasons, such as paying tuition fees and meeting personal expenses, as well as gaining work experience and enhancing their resumes. The flexibility of gig work allows students to choose their working hours, which helps them manage their academic schedules more effectively

### Challenges Faced by Student Gig Workers

The primary challenges faced by student gig workers include balancing academic responsibilities with work commitments, managing time effectively, and coping with the physical and mental demands of gig work. Additionally, the lack of legal protections and benefits for gig workers in many regions exacerbates these challenges. Research has shown that the irregular and often long working hours associated with gig work can lead to fatigue and reduced academic performance.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Tran, B., & Sokas, R. K (2017) made a study on *The Gig Economy: Implications for Organizational Behavior and Occupational Health*. This study discusses the organizational behavior and occupational health implications of the gig economy, with a focus on how gig work arrangements affect workers' well-being. It examines the challenges faced by gig workers, including job insecurity, lack of benefits, and stress, and offers insights into potential interventions to address these issues.

Kathuria R, Kedia M, Varma G, Bagchi K, Khullar S (2020) in their work "Future of Work in a Digital Era: The Potential and Challenges for Online Freelancing and Microwork in India." assesses the growth of Microwork and Online Freelancing in India, an opportunity to work independently and temporarily by the rise of web-based platforms that are pairing talent with businesses. Online Freelancing and Microwork have evolved as rewarding prospects of what is primarily India's informal labour market. Along the continuum of rudimentary to complex business processes, the digitally enabled labour force finds opportunity for employment and maximising productivity. The study finds out that online platforms are constantly innovating to increase participation of freelancers in this steadily expanding

ecosystem, including training facilities that ready its users for technological developments. Platforms have also acknowledged teething issues related to payments, bidding and navigating websites – algorithmic upgradations are targeted towards simplifying the use of platforms for clients and freelancers.

Smith, J (2021) conducted a study on The Gig Economy and Student Engagement in Higher Education. This study explores the intersection of the gig economy and higher education, focusing on how college students engage in gig work to support their educational pursuits. It examines the motivations behind student participation in the gig economy and the implications for student engagement and academic success.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology section of this study outlines the systematic approach undertaken to explore the impact of the gig economy on college students in Ernakulam, Kerala. Given the dual role that these students play as both learners and workers, a mixed-method research design was deemed most appropriate to capture the comprehensive and multifaceted nature of their experiences. This research combines quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a nuanced understanding of how gig work affects students' academic performance, financial stability, and overall well-being.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

This study employs a mixed-method research design, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the gig economy on college students in Ernakulam, Kerala. The quantitative component involves structured surveys to gather broad data, while the qualitative component consists of in-depth interviews to obtain detailed insights into personal experiences and perceptions.

## **NEED FOR THE STUDY**

The rise of the gig economy has garnered significant attention in recent years, reshaping traditional notions of employment and labor dynamics. In the context of Ernakulam, Kerala, where the gig economy is gaining traction, understanding its implications, particularly on college students, becomes crucial. The following points highlight the pressing need for studying the impact of the gig economy on college students in Ernakulam. College students are increasingly turning to gig work to supplement their income, gain practical experience, and support their education. The rapid expansion of gig economy platforms in Ernakulam suggests a significant shift in the employment landscape, particularly among the youth population. The gig economy's influence on students' academic performance remains a topic of debate. While gig work offers flexibility, it may also detract from students' focus and commitment to their studies. Investigating the relationship between gig work participation and academic outcomes can provide valuable insights into the trade-offs involved and inform educational policies and practices.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The gig economy has emerged as a prominent feature of the contemporary labor market, offering flexible employment opportunities to individuals across various demographic groups. In the context of Ernakulam, Kerala, where the gig economy is rapidly expanding, college students are increasingly turning to gig work to supplement their income and gain practical

experience while pursuing their education. However, this trend raises several critical issues and challenges that warrant investigation. The motivations driving college students to engage in gig work, as well as the barriers they face in doing so, remain poorly understood. Factors such as financial need, desire for flexibility, skill development opportunities, and access to traditional employment options may influence students' decisions to participate in the gig economy. However, the specific motivations and barriers relevant to college students in Ernakulam, Kerala, have not been adequately explored.

### **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The research focuses on college students in Ernakulam who are engaged in various gig economy sectors. By examining their experiences and challenges, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how gig work influences their academic and personal lives. This investigation is crucial for informing policies and practices that support the well-being and academic success of student gig workers. The study delves into the socio-economic impacts of gig work on students, analyzing aspects such as financial stability, job satisfaction, and work-life balance. It also investigates the challenges these students face, including time management, job security, lack of social benefits, and the effects on physical and mental health. By employing a mixed-method approach, the study gathers quantitative data through surveys and qualitative insights through in-depth interviews with student gig workers. Moreover, the research evaluates the impact of gig work on academic performance, attendance, and engagement in college activities, providing a comprehensive understanding of how gig economy participation influences educational outcomes.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- ✚ To analyze the participation of college students in the gig economy in Ernakulam.
- ✚ To assess the impact of gig work on their academic performance, financial stability, and overall well-being.
- ✚ To identify the key challenges faced by student gig workers.

### **HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY**

- ✚ There is no significant difference between participation of college students in the gig economy in Ernakulam.
- ✚ There is no significant difference between impact of gig work on their academic performance, financial stability, and overall well-being.
- ✚ There is no significant difference between challenges faced by student gig workers.

### **Data Collection**

#### **Primary Data:**

- **Surveys:** Structured questionnaires will be distributed to college students in Ernakulam who are engaged in gig work. The survey will include questions on demographics, types

of gig work, hours spent on gig work versus academic activities, financial earnings, challenges faced, and perceived impacts on academic performance and well-being.

- **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with a selected sample of student gig workers. These interviews will explore their motivations for engaging in gig work, detailed challenges, coping strategies, and the nuanced impacts on their academic and personal lives.

### **Secondary Data:**

- Analysis of existing literature, reports, academic papers, and market studies related to the gig economy, student employment, and related socio-economic factors.

### **SAMPLING**

A sample of 234 college students will be selected are currently engaged in gig work will be targeted for the survey. A purposive sampling method will be used to ensure that the sample includes students from different colleges and various types of gig work. This approach will help capture diverse experiences and challenges.

### **STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED**

Survey data will be analyzed using statistical tools such as SPSS. Descriptive statistics will summarize the demographics and gig work characteristics. Inferential statistics, such as regression analysis, will explore the relationships between gig work and academic performance, financial stability, and well-being.

The following applied mathematics techniques were wont to analyze the info:

- computation of descriptive statistics like mean and std. deviation of etc.
- t-test.
- Pearson's product moment constant of correlation(r).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

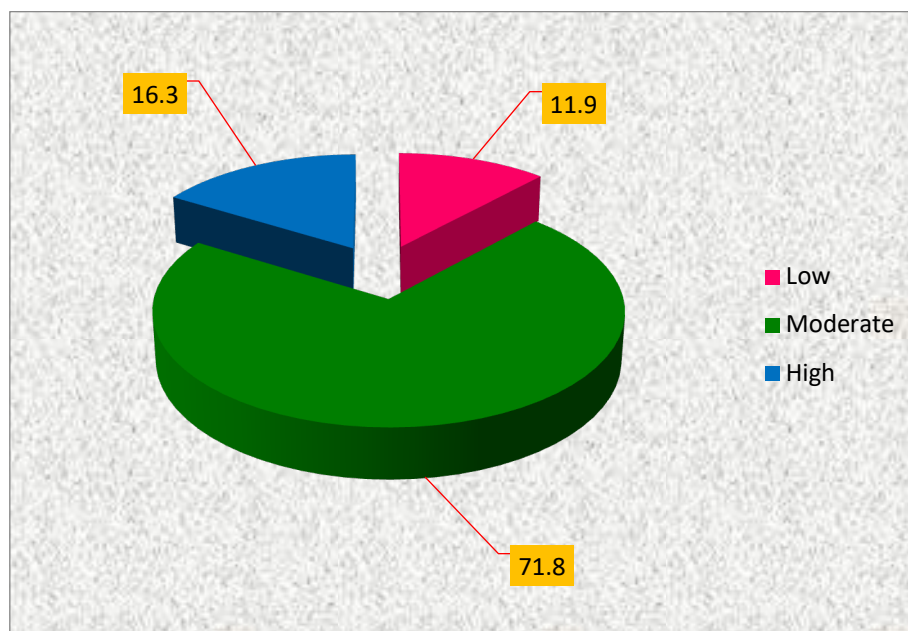
**Table: 1**

**Frequency and the Impact of Gig Economy Levels at Low, Moderate, and High Levels on the college students of Selected Kerala state**

Variables	Group	No. of Respondents	Percent
Challenges of Gig Economy	Low	28	11.9
	Moderate	168	71.8
	High	38	16.3

**Source: Primary Data**

Table 1 shows the frequency of low, moderate, and high levels of challenges on Gig economy. The table shows that 28 (11.9%) respondents have a low level of Gig economy, 168 (71.8%) respondents are moderate, and 38 (16.3%) respondents have a high level of Gig economy.



**Table:2**

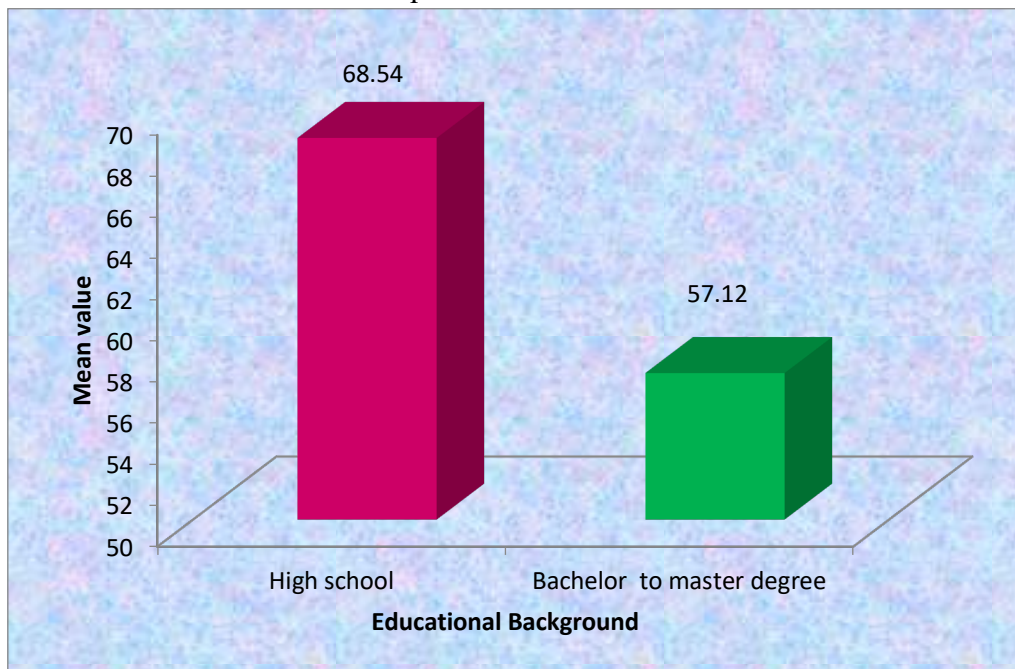
**Comparison of Gig economic on college students based on educational qualification**

Educational background	Mean	SD	SE <sub>M</sub>	t-value	Sig
High school	68.54	9.74	1.59	3.16	0.01 Significant
Bachelor to Master degree	57.12	7.45	1.24		

**Source: Primary Data**

The t-value estimated on evaluating the Gig economic on college students based on educational qualification is large at 95% self-assurance interval. Its ability that there is an authentic big difference between Gig economic on college students based on educational qualification. Considering the calculated t-value, which is enormous at the 0.01 level (3.16). As a result, the alternative hypothesis is accepted and the previously specified null hypothesis

is rejected. As an give up end result concluded that respondents in their Gig economic on college students based on educational qualification.



**Table:3**  
**Inter – Correlation Among the Variables**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Challenges Gig economy</b>	<b>Motivations</b>	<b>Barriest</b>	<b>Skill development</b>
Challenges Gig Economy	1.000	0.203*	0.273*	0.188*
Motivations	0.203*	1.000	0.315*	.345*
Barriest	0.273*	.315*	1.000	.209*
Skill development	0.188*	.345*	.209*	1.000

**Source: Primary Data**

The above table suggests the correlation amongst the chosen variables access to challenges, motivations, barriest and skill development. It is contingent from the above table result proved that there is a positive and considerable relationship between the respondent’s challenges, motivations, barriest and skill development. The bought correlation values are wonderful and significant. The mentioned null hypothesis is disproved. Finally, it is determined that there is a strong correlation between socioeconomic characteristics and challenges, motivations, barriest and skill development.

## FINDINGS

- ✓ The findings indicate that respondents' levels of gig economy vary depending on their educational backgrounds and how well college students of Gig economy workers.
- ✓ Analysis showed that the chosen variables, including challenges, motivations, barriers and skill development, are significantly correlated.

Survey famous that 47.4% of the variance can be anticipated from the unbiased variables challenges, motivations, barriers and skill development are significantly influence the Gig economy.

## CONCLUSION

The study has provided valuable insights into the challenges and impacts of the gig economy on college students in Ernakulam, Kerala. Through a combination of quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, key findings have emerged, shedding light on the complex dynamics of gig work participation among students. The study revealed a significant level of participation among college students in the gig economy in Ernakulam. Various sectors, including ride-sharing, food delivery, and freelance digital work, attract students seeking flexible employment opportunities. While gig work offers students financial independence and practical experience, it also has a detrimental impact on their academic performance. Students report struggling to balance work commitments with academic responsibilities, leading to increased stress and decreased engagement in coursework. In conclusion, the gig economy presents both opportunities and challenges for college students in Ernakulam. While gig work offers financial benefits and practical experience, it also poses significant risks to students' academic performance and overall well-being. By addressing the challenges identified in this study and implementing the proposed recommendations, stakeholders can create a more supportive and inclusive environment for student gig workers, enabling them to thrive academically and economically in the evolving labor market landscape. In the new era of fourth industrial revolution, Gig economy is on rise and it has potential to bring huge amount of benefits for developing countries like India. Challenges can be converted into opportunities with the help of collaboration between Government, workers and educational institutions. Government policies and labour laws will go a long way in deciding scope of Gig economy in India. Individuals also must be ready for lifelong learning as they will have to upskill or reskill themselves in the changing environment.

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