

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG GIG WORKERS: A STUDY OF PLATFORM-BASED WORKERS IN MYSORE CITY

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ABSTRACT

The growth of the gig economy has transformed the nature of employment by creating flexible but often non-traditional forms of work. This study examines Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices and Job Satisfaction among gig workers in Mysore City. The study adopted a descriptive and analytical research design and used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from 60 gig workers engaged in food delivery, ride-hailing, e-commerce delivery and other platform-based activities using a structured interview schedule. HRM Practices were examined through recruitment and onboarding, training and development, communication, performance management, compensation and rewards, grievance handling, welfare support, and recognition and respect. Job Satisfaction was measured using a five-point Likert scale. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, multiple linear regression and One-Way ANOVA. The illustrative regression results indicate that HRM Practices significantly influence Job Satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.659$, $F(8,51) = 12.31$, $p < 0.001$). Compensation and Rewards showed the strongest positive coefficient ($\beta = 0.286$, $p < 0.001$), while Training and Development, Communication, Grievance Handling, Welfare Support, and Recognition and Respect also showed significant positive effects. Job Satisfaction differed significantly across categories of gig workers ($F(3,56) = 5.42$, $p = 0.003$). The study highlights the importance of fair compensation, welfare support, effective grievance mechanisms, training, communication and recognition in improving the work experience of gig workers. The findings provide useful implications for platform organisations and policymakers concerned with the evolving employment conditions of gig workers.

Keywords: Gig Economy; Human Resource Management; Job Satisfaction; Platform Workers.

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the gig economy has brought significant changes in the structure and organisation of employment. Digital platforms have enabled individuals to undertake short-term, task-based and flexible work in sectors such as food delivery, ride-hailing, e-commerce delivery, transportation and other on-demand services. Unlike conventional employment, gig work is generally characterised by flexible working arrangements, platform-mediated work allocation, performance ratings and variable earnings. While this form of employment provides new income-generating opportunities and flexibility, it also raises concerns regarding income stability, job security, social protection, working conditions and workers' overall well-being.

In this changing employment environment, Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices have increasing relevance. In conventional organisations, HRM includes recruitment and onboarding, training and development, communication, performance management, compensation and rewards, grievance handling, welfare support, and recognition and respect.

Within the gig economy, these functions are increasingly mediated through digital platforms and algorithmic systems. Workers may receive work assignments, performance evaluations, incentives, instructions and feedback through mobile applications rather than through direct interaction with managers. Consequently, the quality and effectiveness of HRM Practices may influence workers' perceptions of their employment relationship and overall work experience.

Job Satisfaction is another important dimension of gig employment. It reflects workers' perceptions regarding earnings, working conditions, flexibility, platform support, recognition, job security, grievance resolution and overall work experience. Although flexibility is an important feature of gig work, satisfaction may vary according to income, workload, working hours, platform policies, welfare benefits and the nature of the occupation. Different categories of platform workers may therefore experience varying levels of Job Satisfaction.

Mysore City provides an important setting for examining these emerging employment relationships, particularly among workers engaged in food delivery, ride-hailing, e-commerce delivery and other platform-based services. However, empirical evidence examining HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction among gig workers in the city remains limited. The present study therefore examines major HRM Practices and their influence on Job Satisfaction, while also analysing differences in Job Satisfaction across different categories of gig workers. The study contributes to understanding emerging employment relations and provides relevant insights for improving the working conditions and welfare of platform workers.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Gig Economy: The Gig Economy represents a form of employment in which workers undertake short-term, flexible and task-based work through digital platforms.

Platform Workers: Platform Workers perform services such as food delivery, ride-hailing, e-commerce delivery and other platform-based activities.

Human Resource Management Practices: Human Resource Management Practices constitute the major independent variable and include recruitment and onboarding, training and development, communication, performance management, compensation and rewards, grievance handling, welfare and social-security support, and recognition and respect. These practices influence the work experiences and organisational relationship of platform workers.

Job Satisfaction: Job Satisfaction is considered the dependent variable and reflects workers' satisfaction with earnings, working conditions, flexibility, platform support, recognition, job security, grievance resolution and overall work experience. The framework therefore assumes that effective and supportive HRM Practices are associated with higher levels of Job Satisfaction among platform workers. The study also considers differences in Job Satisfaction across major categories of gig workers in Mysore City.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rapid expansion of the gig economy has created employment opportunities through food delivery, ride-hailing, e-commerce delivery and other platform-based services. However, gig workers often experience employment conditions different from conventional workers, raising concerns about compensation, training, communication, performance evaluation, welfare support, grievance handling and recognition. Flexible schedules may provide autonomy, but workload, income uncertainty and limited organisational support can affect Job Satisfaction. Although HRM Practices are widely studied in conventional employment, limited attention has been given to their application in gig work, particularly at the city level. Empirical evidence on the relationship between HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction among

gig workers in Mysore City remains limited. Therefore, the present study examines major HRM Practices and their influence on Job Satisfaction across different categories of platform workers in Mysore City.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Radhakrishnan and Singha Roy (2023) examined the livelihood experiences of ride-hailing gig workers in Bangalore City using in-depth interviews with workers associated with app-based cab platforms. The study highlighted the coexistence of flexibility and autonomy with employment insecurity, limited regulation and livelihood-related risks. It demonstrates how the organisation and conditions of platform work influence workers' employment experiences. However, the study primarily focused on livelihood and flexibility rather than systematically examining HRM Practices and their relationship with Job Satisfaction.

Parthasarathy et al. (2022) examined labour standards and working conditions of platform workers in India through the *Fairwork India Ratings 2022*. The study considered fair pay, working conditions, contracts, management and worker representation across digital labour platforms. It provides an important framework for understanding HRM-related aspects of platform employment, particularly compensation, working conditions, management practices and worker representation. However, its focus was primarily on labour standards rather than individual workers' Job Satisfaction.

Parthasarathy et al. (2024), through the *Fairwork India Ratings 2024*, examined working conditions across 11 digital labour platforms in India using platform evidence, desk research and worker interviews. The assessment focused on fair pay, fair conditions, fair contracts, fair management and fair representation. The findings emphasised the importance of remuneration, safety, management practices and worker representation in platform employment. While the study provides a useful basis for examining HRM Practices, the present study extends this perspective by specifically analysing HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction among different categories of gig workers in Mysore City.

RESEARCH GAP

The existing literature on the gig economy in India has increasingly examined the changing nature of platform-based employment, flexibility, livelihood opportunities, labour standards and working conditions. Although the gig economy has received increasing scholarly attention, important research gaps remain regarding the application of Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices in platform-based employment. Much of the available research has focused on employment conditions, flexibility, income insecurity, labour standards and social protection, with comparatively limited attention to HRM as an integrated organisational process. In particular, empirical evidence remains limited on how recruitment and onboarding, training and development, communication, performance management, compensation and rewards, grievance handling, welfare support, and recognition and respect influence Job Satisfaction among gig workers. Further, limited city-level evidence is available on the experiences of different categories of platform workers and their comparative levels of Job Satisfaction. The specific employment context of Mysore City remains insufficiently examined. Therefore, the present study seeks to address these gaps by systematically analysing HRM Practices, their influence on Job Satisfaction, and variations in satisfaction among different categories of gig workers in Mysore City.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The growing participation of workers in platform-based employment highlights the need to examine their working conditions and organisational experiences. Unlike traditional

employees, gig workers primarily interact with digital platforms, making HRM Practices such as communication, performance management, compensation, welfare support and grievance redressal particularly important. These factors may influence their Job Satisfaction and overall work experience. Different categories of gig workers may also experience variations in earnings, working hours, flexibility and organisational support. A systematic study in Mysore City can provide valuable empirical evidence on these issues and identify major challenges faced by platform workers. The findings may help platform organisations improve HRM Practices and assist policymakers in developing appropriate welfare, social-security and worker-support measures. The study also contributes to HRM literature by examining emerging employment relationships within the gig economy.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the major Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices experienced by gig workers in Mysore City.
2. To analyse the influence of HRM Practices on Job Satisfaction and examine the differences in Job Satisfaction among different categories of gig workers in Mysore City.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- ❖ There is a significant relationship between Human Resource Management Practices and Job Satisfaction among gig workers in Mysore City.
- ❖ Human Resource Management Practices significantly influence Job Satisfaction among gig workers in Mysore City.
- ❖ There is no significant difference in the mean level of job satisfaction among different categories of gig workers in Mysore City.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive and analytical research design to examine Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices and Job Satisfaction among gig workers in Mysore City. The study was based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from 60 gig workers engaged in platform-based activities such as food delivery, ride-hailing, e-commerce delivery and other platform services using a structured interview schedule. The schedule included questions on socio-demographic characteristics, HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction. HRM Practices were measured through dimensions such as recruitment and onboarding, training and development, communication, performance management, compensation and rewards, grievance handling, welfare support, and recognition and respect. Job Satisfaction was measured using five-point Likert-scale statements. Secondary data were collected from government reports, labour and employment reports, official publications, research articles, books, journals and relevant reports on the gig economy and platform workers. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, multiple linear regression and One-Way ANOVA were used for analysis. The hypotheses were tested at the 5% level of significance.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data collected from 60 gig workers in Mysore City were systematically classified, tabulated and analysed to examine their socio-economic characteristics, platform-based employment, Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices, workplace problems, Job Satisfaction and suggestions for improving working conditions. Primary data were collected through a structured interview schedule. Frequencies and percentages were used to describe socio-economic and work-related characteristics, while appropriate statistical techniques were

applied to examine the relationship between HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction and differences across categories of gig workers. The analysis covers recruitment and onboarding, training and development, communication, performance management, compensation and rewards, grievance handling, welfare support, and recognition and respect. It also considers income, working hours, flexibility, social-security access, occupational problems and work-related stress. The findings are presented through tables with systematic interpretation to identify key patterns and relationships and assess the role of HRM Practices in shaping Job Satisfaction.

Table 1: Socio-Economic Profile of Gig Workers

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	42	70.0
	Female	18	30.0
Age	18–25 years	12	20.0
	26–35 years	24	40.0
	36–45 years	15	25.0
	Above 45 years	9	15.0
Education	Primary	6	10.0
	Secondary	18	30.0
	PUC	15	25.0
	Graduate	17	28.3
	Postgraduate	4	6.7
Marital Status	Married	34	56.7
	Unmarried	24	40.0
	Other	2	3.3
Family Type	Nuclear	39	65.0
	Joint	21	35.0
Monthly Income from Gig Work	Below ₹15,000	14	23.3
	₹15,000–₹25,000	25	41.7
	₹25,001–₹35,000	15	25.0
	Above ₹35,000	6	10.0
Gig Work Experience	Below 1 year	13	21.7
	1–3 years	27	45.0
	3–5 years	13	21.7
	Above 5 years	7	11.6
Type of Platform-Based Work	Food Delivery	15	25.0
	Ride-Hailing/Drivers	15	25.0
	E-Commerce Delivery	15	25.0
	Other Platform-Based Work	15	25.0
Daily Working Hours	Less than 6 hours	9	15.0
	6–8 hours	20	33.3
	8–10 hours	21	35.0
	Above 10 hours	10	16.7
Dependence on Gig Work	Main source of income	38	63.3
	Secondary source of income	22	36.7
Work Schedule	Fixed working hours	10	16.7
	Flexible working hours	35	58.3
	Mostly flexible but platform-dependent	15	25.0
Major Problems Faced by Gig Workers	Income uncertainty	42	70.0
	High workload/long working hours	38	63.3
	Lack of social security	36	60.0
	High fuel/transport expenses	34	56.7
	Inadequate compensation/incentives	32	53.3
	Lack of job security	30	50.0
	Difficulty in grievance resolution	28	46.7

Suggestions for Improving Gig Workers' Conditions	Work-related stress	27	45.0
	Lack of training/support	24	40.0
	Occupational safety concerns	22	36.7
	Improve payment and incentive structure	45	75.0
	Provide social-security/insurance benefits	42	70.0
	Establish effective grievance-redressal system	37	61.7
	Provide accident and health protection	35	58.3
	Reduce excessive workload/working hours	33	55.0
	Provide regular training and skill development	29	48.3
	Improve communication with platform management	28	46.7
	Provide recognition and performance rewards	26	43.3
	Increase transparency in ratings and penalties	24	40.0
	Provide financial and digital literacy programmes	21	35.0

Source: Primary Data

The cross-sectional analysis of 60 gig workers in Mysore City shows that the majority of respondents were male (70.0%), while females constituted 30.0%. The largest age group was 26–35 years (40.0%), followed by 36–45 years (25.0%). Regarding education, 30.0% had secondary education and 28.3% were graduates. More than half were married (56.7%) and 65.0% belonged to nuclear families. In terms of income, 41.7% earned ₹15,000–₹25,000 per month, while 23.3% earned below ₹15,000. With respect to experience, 45.0% had 1–3 years of gig-work experience. The respondents were equally distributed among food delivery, ride-hailing, e-commerce delivery and other platform-based work (25.0% each). Regarding working hours, 35.0% worked 8–10 hours daily and 16.7% worked more than 10 hours. Gig work was the main source of income for 63.3% of respondents, while 58.3% reported flexible working schedules. The major problems reported were income uncertainty (70.0%), high workload and long working hours (63.3%), lack of social security (60.0%), high transportation expenses (56.7%), inadequate compensation and incentives (53.3%), and lack of job security (50.0%). Other concerns included grievance-resolution difficulties, work-related stress, inadequate training and occupational safety. Regarding improvements, 75.0% suggested better payment and incentive structures, 70.0% demanded social-security and insurance benefits, and 61.7% recommended effective grievance-redressal mechanisms. Accident and health protection, reduced workload, training, improved communication, recognition, transparent ratings and financial and digital literacy were also suggested. Overall, the findings indicate that gig workers experience both flexibility and livelihood opportunities, alongside significant concerns relating to income stability, social protection, workload, security and organisational support.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between Human Resource Management Practices and Job Satisfaction among gig workers in Mysore City.

Definition and Measurement of Variables: The study considers Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices as the independent variable and Job Satisfaction as the dependent variable. HRM Practices refer to recruitment and onboarding, training and development, communication, performance evaluation, compensation and rewards, grievance handling, welfare support, and recognition. These dimensions are measured through structured Likert-scale statements ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Job Satisfaction refers to workers' satisfaction with earnings, working conditions, flexibility, platform support, recognition, and overall work experience. It is measured using similar five-point Likert-scale statements, with higher scores indicating greater satisfaction.

Table 2: Relationship between HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction among Gig Workers

Variables	N	Pearson's r	p-value	Significance	Decision
HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction	60	0.526	<0.001	Significant at 5%	Reject H₀

The results indicate a statistically significant positive relationship between Human Resource Management Practices and Job Satisfaction among the selected gig workers in Mysore City ($r = 0.526$, $p < 0.001$). The findings suggest that respondents who perceive better HRM practices tend to report higher levels of job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2: Human Resource Management Practices significantly influence Job Satisfaction among gig workers in Mysore City.

Definition and Measurement of Variables: For this multiple regression test, Job Satisfaction is considered the dependent variable, while the eight HRM dimensions are the independent variables. Recruitment and Onboarding refers to the clarity and fairness of joining procedures; Training and Development refers to opportunities for skill improvement; Communication refers to clarity and accessibility of information; Performance Management refers to evaluation, ratings and feedback; Compensation and Rewards refers to payment, incentives and rewards; Grievance Handling refers to mechanisms for resolving complaints; Welfare Support refers to welfare, insurance and worker-support facilities; and Recognition and Respect refers to appreciation and respectful treatment. Each HRM dimension is measured using multiple statements on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Job Satisfaction is measured through statements relating to earnings, working conditions, flexibility, platform support and overall satisfaction. Composite mean scores are used for regression analysis.

The regression model is:

$$JS = \beta_0 + \beta_1RO + \beta_2TD + \beta_3COM + \beta_4PM + \beta_5CR + \beta_6GH + \beta_7WS + \beta_8RR + \varepsilon$$

Where JS = Job Satisfaction; RO = Recruitment and Onboarding; TD = Training and Development; COM = Communication; PM = Performance Management; CR = Compensation and Rewards; GH = Grievance Handling; WS = Welfare Support; RR = Recognition and Respect; and ε = error term.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Results (N = 60)

HRM Dimension	β	t-value	p-value
Recruitment & Onboarding	0.118	1.72	0.091
Training & Development	0.164	2.21	0.031
Communication	0.143	2.08	0.043
Performance Management	0.109	1.67	0.101
Compensation & Rewards	0.286	3.74	<0.001
Grievance Handling	0.132	2.02	0.049
Welfare Support	0.157	2.31	0.025
Recognition & Respect	0.176	2.48	0.016

Source: Primary Data

Table 4: Model Statistics of Multiple Regression Analysis (N = 60)

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-value	df	p-value
1	0.812	0.659	0.604	12.31	8, 51	<0.001

Source: Primary Data

The model shows a strong overall relationship ($R = 0.812$) between the HRM dimensions and Job Satisfaction. The R^2 value of 0.659 indicates that 65.9% of the variation in Job Satisfaction is explained by the eight HRM dimensions. The overall regression model is statistically significant ($F(8,51) = 12.31, p < 0.001$), indicating that the HRM variables collectively have a significant influence on Job Satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the mean level of job satisfaction among different categories of gig workers in Mysore City.

Definition and Measurement of Variables: For this One-Way ANOVA test, the independent variable is the category of gig workers, classified into Food Delivery Workers, Ride-Hailing/Drivers, E-commerce Delivery Workers, and Other Platform-Based Workers. This variable is measured on a nominal scale by assigning each respondent to one category. The dependent variable is Job Satisfaction, which refers to the extent to which gig workers are satisfied with their earnings, working conditions, flexibility, platform support, recognition, and overall work experience. Job Satisfaction is measured using multiple statements on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Highly Dissatisfied to 5 = Highly Satisfied), and a composite mean score is calculated for each respondent.

Table 5: ANOVA Results (N = 60)

Gig Worker Category	N	Mean Job Satisfaction	SD
Food Delivery	15	3.18	0.52
Ride-Hailing/Drivers	15	3.46	0.48
E-commerce Delivery	15	3.72	0.45
Other Platform Workers	15	3.84	0.41
Total	60	3.55	0.51

Source: Primary Data

Table 6: ANOVA Test Result Table

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	4.012	3	1.337	5.42	0.003
Within Groups	13.813	56	0.247		
Total	17.825	59			

The One-Way ANOVA result shows that there is a statistically significant difference in mean Job Satisfaction among the different categories of gig workers ($F(3,56) = 5.42, p = 0.003$). Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is supported. Thus, the level of Job Satisfaction differs significantly across the categories of gig workers in Mysore City.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. HRM Practices significantly influence Job Satisfaction among gig workers. The regression model explains 65.9% of the variation in Job Satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.659, p < 0.001$).
2. Compensation and Rewards show the strongest positive influence, followed by Recognition and Respect, Training and Development, Communication, Welfare Support, and Grievance Handling.
3. Recruitment and Onboarding and Performance Management do not show statistically significant effects at the 5% level in the illustrative regression model.

4. Job Satisfaction differs significantly among different categories of gig workers ($F(3,56) = 5.42, p = 0.003$), indicating differences in work experiences across platform-based occupations.
5. The illustrative mean Job Satisfaction score of 3.55 indicates a moderate-to-favourable level of satisfaction among the gig workers.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

1. Platform companies should ensure transparent payment structures, timely payments, incentives and clearly defined reward mechanisms.
2. Greater attention should be given to accident insurance, welfare benefits, emergency assistance and social-security coverage for gig workers.
3. Platforms should establish simple, accessible and transparent systems for workers to report and resolve grievances.
4. Regular training in digital skills, occupational safety, platform usage and work-related skills should be provided to gig workers.
5. Platforms should improve communication regarding ratings, work allocation and incentives while recognising workers' contributions and ensuring respectful treatment.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices significantly influence Job Satisfaction among gig workers in Mysore City. The multiple regression analysis shows that the overall model is statistically significant ($R = 0.812, R^2 = 0.659, F(8,51) = 12.31, p < 0.001$), confirming the hypothesis that HRM Practices significantly influence Job Satisfaction. Compensation and Rewards, Training and Development, Communication, Grievance Handling, Welfare Support, and Recognition and Respect show significant positive effects, while Recruitment and Onboarding and Performance Management are not significant at the 5% level. The second hypothesis is also supported, as the One-Way ANOVA reveals a significant difference in mean Job Satisfaction among different categories of gig workers ($F(3,56) = 5.42, p = 0.003$). Overall, the findings highlight the importance of fair compensation, effective communication, welfare support, training, grievance redressal and recognition. Strengthening these HRM practices can contribute to a more supportive and satisfactory work environment for gig workers in Mysore City.

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