

Employment Status Classification of Gig Workers and Access to Statutory Benefit

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Abstract

The emergence of the gig economy has changed the structure of employment relations by bringing about flexible employment and digital employment. There is an increasing tendency for gig workers to offer their services using digital platforms and in employment relations which can be different from the traditional ones. However, the ambiguity concerning the employment relation may have implications for the access of gig workers to statutory benefits, including social security, health care, insurance, maternity protection, pensions, and compensation. This paper will examine the classification of gig workers as to various types of employment relations and will assess how the classification impacts their access to statutory benefits. The paper will pay attention to important factors such as control of employers, autonomy of workers, economic dependency, contracts of employment, involvement of platforms, and type of work performed. These are some of the areas that have been discussed under the issue of gig work in terms of eligibility for the benefit, income volatility, awareness level, portability of benefit, platform accountability, and regulatory implementation. There is also an examination of the methods being applied to strengthen social protections without undermining the flexibility that comes with gig employment. Some of the lessons from this analysis are the need to come up with employment classification strategies that take into account the unique nature of platform employment while still protecting the employees.

Keywords: Gig Workers, Employment Status, Gig Economy, Statutory Benefits, Social Security, Platform Work, Labour Protection, Employment Classification, Worker Welfare, Digital Labour.

Introduction

Background of Gig Employment

Gig employment has become one of the crucial parts of the contemporary labour market, thanks to technological advancements and shifts in worker preferences. In contrast to traditional employment, gig employment typically revolves around temporary assignments, tasks, or service-oriented projects. The employment is based on connecting workers with clients via digital platforms to perform activities such as transportation, food delivery, home services, professional projects, and freelance services online. Gig work offers more flexibility in terms of choice of tasks, work schedules, and services offered. However, at the same time, gig workers may have an irregular flow of income, lack of employment security, and uncertain prospects of receiving social protection because of the absence of a traditional employer–employee relationship and hence ambiguity about the party responsible for the employment-related benefits. Thus, the growing importance of digital platforms has generated the need to study how gig workers should be categorised in the employment context. It is crucial to understand the essence of gig employment to establish worker protection measures, benefits, and obligations.

Growth of the Gig Economy and Platform Work

With the emergence of technology-based platforms that link workers with clients or organizations, the gig economy has expanded. Platform work has been witnessed in the transportation sector, food delivery industry, logistics, domestic services, freelance online work, professional services, among others. The emergence of platform work has resulted in individuals joining the workforce in ways different from traditional long-term engagements in employment. Digital platforms can be used to make work easier by simplifying task acquisition, communication with clients, and payment processes. Workers may be able to take up flexible scheduling as far as task selection and working time are concerned. However, there are certain downsides to platform work as well including earning instability, reliance on platform-generated opportunities, performance monitoring, and job insecurity as far as employee benefits are concerned. This has resulted in a workforce model that comprises elements of both independent work and platform-enabled work. This trend has increased the significance of studying the interaction between platform engagement, employment status, rights of workers, and access to statutory benefits.

Employment Status and Worker Classification

The employment status dictates the legal and organizational link between the employee and the organization receiving the labor services or coordinating it. In the case of traditional employment, employees are typically considered employees who work under certain terms of employment that involve employer control, responsibility assignment, and employment benefits. Workers can also choose to function as independent contractors or self-employed persons who have considerable control in the way services are performed. Gig workers have a different position from that of traditional employment because they are able to work under both employment and independent contracting circumstances. Digital platforms can connect workers and customers, determine terms of service provision, measure performance, determine the mode of compensation and implement rating systems. At the same time, the gig workers can control the tasks and working schedules. These mixed factors make classification of gig workers difficult under traditional employment terms. Classification is very crucial because the employment status affects statutory benefits and social protection of the worker. The factors that could be used include the level of platform control, economic dependency, contractual terms, the autonomy of the worker and nature of work, among others.

Need for Statutory Social Protection

The statutory social protection is essential for gig workers since their employment models may not offer the same degree of protection offered to employees under a normal employment model. Gig workers may be subjected to various risks including injury at work, income disruptions, sickness, disability, and lack of retirement benefits and insurance benefits. The lack of stable employment relationships may mean that it is difficult for workers to access proper protection from a normal employment system. Some of the advantages of social protection include financial and welfare protection offered by health care, insurance against accidents, maternity allowance, retirement and other types of benefits. This is especially true in the case of gig workers since income earned may be dependent on tasks and opportunities on platforms. Portable benefit system can allow gig workers to retain their protection even in situations where workers are working on several platforms or changing their work environment. The delivery of appropriate social protection services would require collaboration between government agencies, digital platforms, workers and other actors. A proper model for such protection should consider flexibility of gig employment as well as gaps in worker protection.

Objectives and Scope of the Study

In this regard, the first research aim of this study is to investigate how the employment status of gig workers affects the access to statutory benefits and social protection. Specifically, this study will investigate the various characteristics that are employed in distinguishing the difference between employees, independent contractors, self-employed workers, and platform-based gig workers. It will also consider the various characteristics like control over the platform, autonomy of the worker, economic dependency, contractual relationships, and nature of work. The scope of the study includes key areas associated with the issue of gig work, including platform-based gig work, employment classification, social security, health care, insurance, maternity protection, retirement, and others. The problems associated with the access to the above-mentioned social protection measures for gig workers include uncertainty regarding employment status, irregular incomes, lack of knowledge about the benefits, portability of benefits, among others. In addition to these factors, this study will focus on the roles of the digital platform, workers, and regulatory institutions in designing social protection measures.

Review of Related Works

Current literature on employment classification of gig workers emphasizes the challenges of employment status determination in the context of non-traditional employment relations. Challenges in the area of contractual classification and the need for labor rights improvement that goes beyond traditional employment statuses have been raised in connection with emerging gig work (Abitha, 2026; Ryan & Murphy, 2026). The issue of employment classification of ride-hailing drivers and employment relations interpretation in a legal context has been studied as well (Ryan & Murphy, 2026; Shalihah & Aka, 2026). The employment-status criteria approach to addressing emerging digital labour has been investigated as well (Cohen, 2026; Nocella, 2026). Previous research has looked at policy models for social protection extension, as well as deficiencies in healthcare, job safety, and other types of worker protection (Namukasa, 2026; Kwanya, 2026). Other studies have looked into the impact of employment conditions, employment statuses, and worker literacy on participation in gig employment and its protection mechanisms (Wibowo & Kodrat, 2026). These studies emphasize the need to consider employment conditions as well as access to social-protection systems. Gig worker working experience and economic situation have also been studied. A worldwide review of gig worker perception and experience gives a better understanding of the problems faced by the workers in the platform economy (Hussain-Khan et al., 2026). The labour protection issues and employment practices of rideshare firms have also informed the classification of workers (Newkirk, 2026). Financial security has also proven to be an important factor, especially income stability and socioeconomic status of gig workers (Ahmar et al., 2026).

In addition, the literature includes the investigation of the novel ways of employment relationships identification and access to the protection. The concept of algorithmic subordination has been analysed as one of the criteria that can be used to determine the status of the employees in non-standard employment (Tomaszewska, 2026). The issue of the deservedness of gig workers has been also discussed in terms of their welfare provision (Bae, 2026). Moreover, legislative innovations that concern the issue of employment classification have been investigated in the context of the effect of such changes on the market of online labor (Wang et al., 2026). In general, the literature covers such aspects as employment classification, working conditions, social protection, financial security, and regulation.

Research Gap

Although the questions of gig-worker classification and social protection have attracted increasing attention, there are some important aspects that remain to be addressed. First of all, the issues of employment classification and access to statutory benefits tend to be seen as two interlinked but separate topics. Thus, a common approach that will integrate the criteria for employment-status classification with the access to benefits should be developed. Secondly, the impact of platform control, worker autonomy, economic dependence, and algorithmic management should be taken into account while analyzing the classification of gig workers. Thirdly, the question of accessibility and continuity of benefits, including health care, accident protection, maternity protection, pensions, and income security, should be analyzed for different types of gig work. Fourthly, the contribution of workers, digital platforms, and regulatory institutions to continuous social protection should be studied together. The paper is devoted to filling these gaps.

Automated HR Service Delivery Framework

Employment Categories and Criteria for Determining Worker Status

Work relations may usually be distinguished from each other based on the control exercised, the contractual responsibilities, the economic dependence, and the independence involved in the employment situation. Employees normally work under the guidance and supervision of their employers and may enjoy set pay, employee benefits, and

statutory rights. Independent contractors normally offer their services under certain contracts, and they exercise more freedom as to how, when, and where the services are offered. Self-employed people normally conduct their business affairs independently and are responsible for all the risks involved in the undertaking. Gig workers may at times display features of more than one of these four types of employees, thereby making it hard to classify their employment situations using traditional categorization. Employment situation should normally be classified based on the true nature of the work relation. These include the extent of control over the worker, the extent of the worker's independence while carrying out his tasks, the way and frequency of payments made, the length of the relationship and how continuous it is, the duties that each party undertakes through contracts, and the extent to which the worker is economically dependent on the business or platform. In case of platform work, some of the indicators could include automatic task assignment, digital surveillance, ratings by customers, performance obligations, standards of services set by the platform, and limitations on delivery of services.

Employer Control, Worker Independence and Platform-Mediated Relationships

The extent of control and independence becomes very crucial when the discussion is on gig work. Traditional employees mostly perform their tasks following organizational policies with regards to work practices, scheduling, supervision, performance review, and place of work. Independent workers are typically given more leeway regarding the delivery of services and they may work for several different clients or organizations. Gig workers are usually in an intermediate state insofar as they get the leeway to decide when to work and which jobs to undertake in addition to the ability to select where to work, despite having numerous conditions set by the platforms. Platform-mediated work entails the use of digital intermediaries who connect the workers with the customers using technological mechanisms. Even when a platform formally classifies its workers as independent contractors, technology used by the platform may affect several dimensions of the relationship. Algorithms automatically may decide which assignments will be available, how money will be paid, when an assignment is completed, how customers evaluate the worker's performance, or whether to allow a worker access to the platform. Hence, the choice of working hours by the worker does not mean that the worker is fully independent from the control of the employer. One should look at the working relationship while taking into account the combined effect of contract, technology, platform regulations, economic dependence, and actual working conditions.

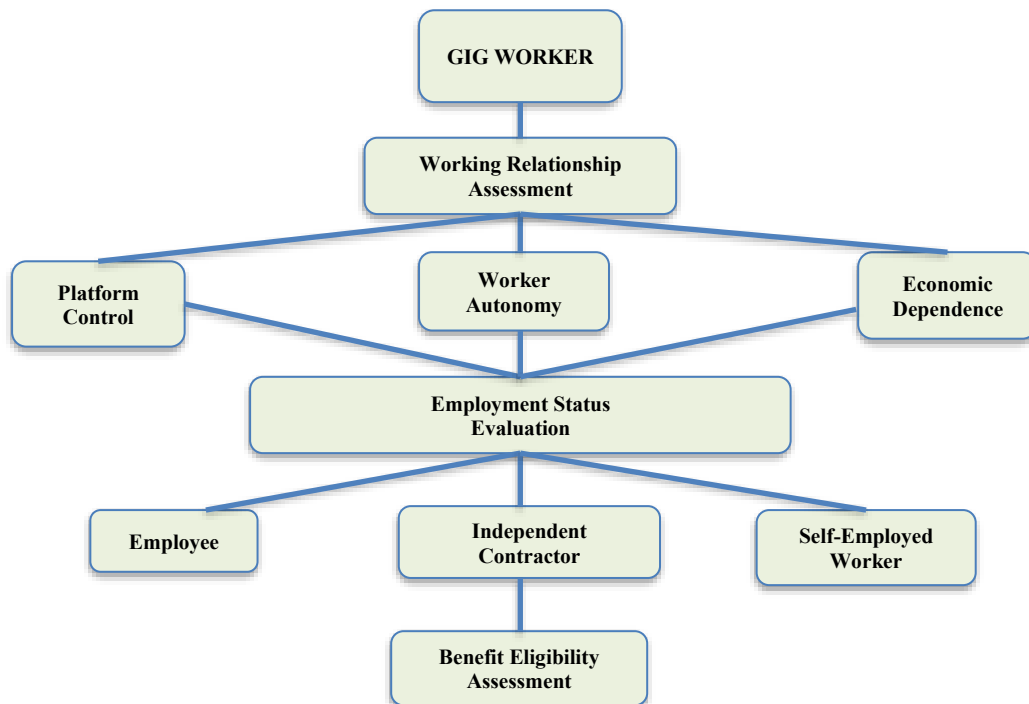


Fig. 1: Framework for Employment Status Classification of Gig Workers

Fig. 1 presents the evaluation process regarding employment status of the gig workers depending on the characteristics of the employment relationship. In this case, first comes the identification of the gig worker and then the assessment of platform control, worker autonomy and economic dependency. These three characteristics together help define the

characteristics of the employment relationship. The employment status evaluation process can place the worker in such categories as employee, independent contractor and self-employed worker. Moreover, the model relates employment status assessment with employment and social protection, implying that the determination of the worker's status affects the amount of employment and social protection the worker enjoys. In general, the figure shows the necessity of taking into account different aspects in assessing the employment status of gig workers rather than the mere terminology used.

Challenges in Classifying Gig Workers and Access to Employment Protection

The categorization of gig workers poses many challenges since gig work through digital platforms can include aspects of traditional employment, independent contracting, and self-employment. Gig workers can be autonomous and flexible, but at the same time, they are dependent on digital platforms for their source of income, access to customers, transaction services, and future engagements. Hence, the terms used in contracts may not reflect the reality faced by gig workers. Gig work also does not fall into one homogenous category since gig workers can range from delivery workers, taxi drivers, online freelancers, domestic workers, creatives, or even consultants, each facing different conditions in terms of contract and technology. Using one categorization method for all gig workers may thus miss out on some distinctions. Employees in the workforce are often subject to the systems of social security, minimum employment standards, insurance, leave, or other statutory protections, while independent contractors or self-employed individuals may be covered by different protections. This is why classification of the gig workers goes far beyond mere legal definitions of the term used, as it affects the economic, social, and legal aspects of life of those individuals. It is necessary to undertake a detailed evaluation of the actual working conditions, control over the platform by the contractor, economic dependency of the worker, contractual obligations, autonomy of the worker, payment terms, and other criteria, in order to properly understand the status of the gig worker and determine suitable forms of statutory protection.

Technological Foundations of HR Automation

Meaning, Scope and Categories of Statutory Benefits

Statutory benefits mean those benefits which are legally recognized types of social and economic protections meant for workers in order to help them overcome certain risks and uncertainties that come with work and income earning. Such benefits may include social security contributions, health care support, insurance, maternity protection, retirement plans, accident benefits, disability, leave related benefits and any other welfare schemes provided for under the relevant laws and regulations. While statutory benefits for conventional workers are usually connected to their work and the employer-employee relationship and thus involve the duties of both parties as per the relevant legal framework, this cannot necessarily be the case with gig workers due to the differences in their employment status. Their access to such benefits may depend on several factors like their classification, laws, eligibility criteria, contribution system and the nature of the platform. Social security, in particular, is important since workers may have the risk of diseases, disabilities, workplace accidents, loss of income and old age. Insurance systems would offer an extra level of financial security regarding medical costs, injuries incurred at the place of work, and diminished earning potential. Given that gig workers might work on various platforms or have more than one source of income, portable benefits programs would assist in ensuring continuity of coverage when the workers shift from one platform to another or alter their mode of working. Thus, the breadth of statutory benefits for gig workers needs to be looked at holistically.

Healthcare, Maternity, Accident and Income Protection

Health insurance, maternity insurance, and accidents insurance become crucial for gig workers since their earnings will be directly linked to their performance of tasks. The delivery, transport, logistic, and domestic services gigs may be associated with occupational hazards leading to a loss of the ability to earn. In contrast to the regular workers who may be covered by employers' health insurance and accidents insurance, gig workers might be forced to rely on private health insurance, platform insurance programs, or other social safety net programs. Another area of significance here would be maternity protection due to the fact that workers who do not have typical labor contracts might find it challenging to access benefits related to maternity, healthcare services, and any kind of income replacement while they are temporarily unable to work. Proper protection mechanisms can help lessen the cost implications of healthcare, work-related injuries, maternity periods, or any other interruptions of work. Protection of income is also relevant here since the income received through the platform depends on such factors as demand, task availability, customer reviews, and working hours. When a worker receives payment only for each individual task, then any periods of illnesses, injuries, or decreased demand can negatively impact income.

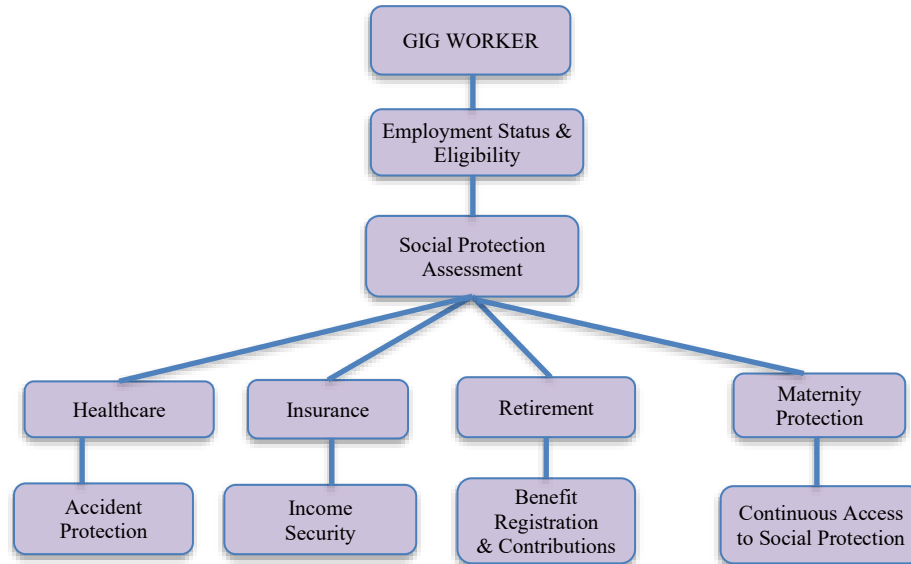


Fig. 2: Statutory Benefit Access and Social Protection Framework for Gig Workers

Fig. 2 depicts a model of analysis of statutory benefits accessibility of gig workers. First of all, it starts from a gig worker and takes into account issues of their employment and eligibility, then social protection conditions are analyzed. Main aspects of protection such as health care, insurance, pension, maternity protection, accident protection, income security, and registration of benefit and contributions are identified within the framework. At the same time, continuous accessibility of social protection is pointed out by the framework and becomes especially important when people change platform or do different types of gig works. The figure shows that benefit accessibility is not only related to one aspect of protection but also encompasses several ones.

Retirement, Leave, Compensation and Long-Term Financial Security

A further element of protection by statute in relation to gig work is that of retirement and long-term security. Conventional employment relationships may have some kind of system of making retirement payments or even an employer-sponsored saving scheme, but the gig worker will have to find his or her own means of achieving financial security after the work years. Income that is irregular and unpredictable makes it challenging for workers to be able to maintain any contribution for future retirement or other long-term saving schemes. Portable retirement and social security can ensure that any benefit the worker has accrued is kept safe even when they are moving from one platform or type of work to another. In the case of gig workers whose salaries are dependent on their performance of tasks, the lack of work is bound to lead to an immediate lack of earning potential. Thus, accident compensation, disability services, welfare schemes, and other income replacement methods may prove significant in terms of mitigating their financial vulnerability. However, benefit schemes must take into consideration the flexible nature of gig work, rather than merely replicating traditional employment schemes. Methods of flexibility in contributions, portability of benefits, insurance schemes, and proper compensation mechanisms may be beneficial in providing such continuity of protections despite the type of work done. Hence, benefit schemes for gig workers should also take into account their welfare along with retirement.

Gig Workers' Access to Statutory Benefits

Employment Status, Benefit Eligibility and Barriers to Social Security

Employment status is an essential factor that determines whether a worker is eligible and accesses statutory benefits. Traditional employees are usually part of an existing social protection system since there is a statutory linkage between statutory benefits and the existence of the employer-employee relationship. On the other hand, gig workers are sometimes excluded from existing benefit programs where they are considered independent contractors or self-employed individuals. Such status affects their access to healthcare benefits, insurance coverage, pension contributions, accidents compensation, and other social security elements. Thus, the pragmatic nature of the employer-employee relationship becomes relevant when determining if and how the worker qualifies for statutory protection. Gig workers may face several challenges in accessing social security systems. Among such challenges

include irregular employment, varied work patterns, platform relationships, lack of documentation, uncertainty on eligibility, and incomplete contribution history. It might be difficult for workers shifting from one platform to another to keep up with the continuous documentation of their performance and contributions. There are also issues with administrative processes, contribution obligations, registration, and lack of knowledge about the existence of schemes, which would hinder the accessibility of these social protection schemes. There could also be instances where workers are unsure about the institution or the platform through which the information can be accessed for them to be able to receive benefits. These are some of the examples of issues regarding how availability does not always equate to access in social protection schemes.

Platform Responsibilities, Worker Contributions and Income Instability

Digital platforms play a key role in the organization of gig labor and could also affect how the process of delivering social protection is carried out. Platforms could keep worker information, provide information regarding available social protection benefits, help with the registration process, contribute to insurance agreements or contribution processes where necessary. At the same time, workers also have duties to fulfill in regards to keeping the registration information up to date, providing accurate information and making contributions where necessary. Thus, a coordinated approach involving platforms, workers and regulators could help ensure that there is a certain degree of continuity in the social protection of gig workers while maintaining flexibility characteristic to gig labor. Instability of income could be another issue faced by gig workers. Where the contributions are set or entail periodic payments, workers who have irregular income streams may struggle to achieve continuous membership. The worker might have enough income at one point in time but much less income at another point in time, making traditional contribution schemes less viable for certain platform workers. The flexible contribution schemes can solve this problem by facilitating varying contributions based on income levels, work frequency, or the ability to contribute. Portability of benefits will also enable workers to retain their accrued benefits even when moving from one platform to another or having multiple streams of employment. Affordable insurance schemes, flexible payment options, and simple contribution systems will further alleviate the costs associated with accessing social protection programs. These mechanisms can help to ensure a balance between the instability of gig economy earnings and the necessity of security all the time.

Awareness, Accessibility and Effective Participation in Social Protection

Awareness and accessibility are critical factors that need to be considered when it comes to enabling the use of social protection schemes among gig workers. The existence of such benefits and insurance schemes is often not enough for the workers to use the system since they might lack the knowledge of how to apply for these services or the terms and conditions of applying. Hence, awareness might become an important factor preventing the effective use of such benefits. Access could be facilitated using digital platforms that would allow workers to get all necessary information about the programs via mobile applications, dashboard for workers, notifications, digital documents, and multilingualism. Digital platforms could also remind workers about registration and payment deadlines as well as insurance coverage and available welfare programs. Government bodies and other regulating organizations could also make their contribution to facilitating the process by streamlining the registration process, improving the provision of digital services, offering information, and avoiding excessive administration. Moreover, workers should have access to their social protection records when working on multiple platforms. The use of portable digital files is one way to decrease gaps in contributions and enable benefits transferability between various forms of employment. Making the system accessible thus calls for coordination between gig workers, platforms, government bodies, insurers, and other stakeholders. A system combining transparency, simplicity, flexibility, portability, and accessibility through digital solutions can enhance participation in such a way that the provision of social protection becomes real protection for gig workers.

Legal And Policy Framework

Labour and Social Security Frameworks for Gig and Platform Workers

The construction of the labour and social security systems has always been based on existing employment structures where there is an understanding of the rights and obligations of both the organizations and workers. These usually include issues such as salaries, working conditions, occupational safety, social security, insurance, maternity protection, pensions, compensation, and other worker welfare. The development of gig and platform-based employment, however, has led to employment structures that might not entirely fall into the realm of employment relations as it is known today. Gig workers offer their services independently but use digital platforms to get customers, get tasks, payments and even job opportunities. The circumstances surrounding their employment might be quite different from those of employees and the application of existing labour and social security regulations on them could

depend on several issues including the classification of employment, employment contract terms, type of work and others. Growing awareness about gig and platform workers in labour policy debates creates a foundation to develop more precise definitions, criteria of eligibility, rights and responsibilities, as well as ways of ensuring their inclusion into social protection regimes. Recognition of these categories of workers in an official capacity would also enable distinction between various categories of non-standard workers and recognition of unique features of platform work. The development of such regulatory framework is vital for reducing the ambiguity surrounding the status of gig workers and providing adequate mechanisms for their social protection.

Social Security Provisions, Government Responsibilities and Implementation Mechanisms

The legal systems of social security are taking into account those workers who work in a relationship that does not fall within the traditional employer-employee relationship. Under the Code on Social Security, 2020 in India, there are specific definitions such as of gig workers and platform workers, providing a legal base for social security schemes for such workers. The success of this system would be based on such things as identification and registration of the workers, conditions for being eligible, schemes of contributions, administration of the schemes, and cooperation among the institutions involved. Legal recognition may not be sufficient for ensuring the benefits for the workers without proper implementation procedures being put in place. Access could be increased through simplified registration process, clarity on eligibility criteria, use of information technology for delivery of services, and provision of clear information regarding benefits. Coordination between different government agencies, platforms, workers, insurance companies, among others is also necessary as gig workers may work in several platforms or even work in other types of employment alongside platform-based jobs. Monitoring and evaluation would assist in determining any problems associated with registration, contribution collection, provision of benefits, and participation by gig workers. Thus, the provision of such access would require the existence of a suitable legal framework together with functional administrative processes.

Analysis of Employment Status and Benefit Access

Classification Models and Employment Categories of Gig Workers

Classification of gig workers can be done by considering the actual nature of conditions under which the job is done, rather than depending only on the language used in the contract. Some aspects that should be considered include control, level of autonomy, dependency, contracts, payment, duration of the working arrangement, and type of services provided. Regular employees tend to have closer organizational links with the organization controlling the employment in terms of supervision of the way the work is done, scheduling, performance, and procedures in the organization. Independent contractors tend to enjoy freedom of determining how the service delivery will be done and tend to work for several different clients and organizations. Gig workers working on platforms can share some of these features. They can enjoy freedom of scheduling work and acceptance of jobs while at the same time being subject to platform regulations, automated surveillance, client rating systems, task assignment systems, and performance requirements. This means that classification of gig employment based on actual working conditions will bring more meaning in the context of gig work. Classification will also help in determining the roles of platforms and gig workers in accessing statutory benefits.

Employment Categories, Benefit Eligibility and Social Protection

Various categories of employment will have different types of access to statutory benefits. Traditional employees are likely to function within a set employment structure where health care, insurance, social security, retirement, accident coverage, leave, and other benefits will be related to employment. Independent contractors and self-employed individuals will instead be responsible for providing themselves with their insurance, retirement saving, and other form of protections. Gig economy workers will be in a slightly complicated situation in that they rely on digital platforms for earning and customers' reach without necessarily having a traditional employer-employee structure. Eligibility for these benefits will thus be determined by factors like employment status, continuity and duration of work, earnings, contractual agreement, regulations, and contributions among others. In the case of platform workers, platform engagement and continuity of work will also determine access to the protection systems. Working relationships will need to be well documented to make it easier to determine eligibility, while portable records will enable workers to maintain their benefit history even as they change platforms and employment arrangements.

Comparative Analysis of Traditional and Gig Employment

Traditional and gig jobs vary in terms of organizational relations, working flexibility, earning, and statutory protections. Generally, traditional jobs involve a more structured relation with well-defined roles, organizational

control, fixed working conditions, and better provision of benefits related to the job. Gig jobs offer more flexibility in terms of schedule and task choice, but the worker could earn varying amounts, have inconsistent work opportunities, and unclear eligibility for benefits. This reflects the need to establish protection systems based on the nature of digital and flexible work. Portability of benefits helps workers to enjoy their protection in different platforms, and clear classification standards increase clarity in worker's status and eligibility for benefits. Flexible contribution schemes can also be suitable for handling the irregularity of the earnings. Shared responsibilities among the workers, platforms, and the public organizations can help in the administration of the social protection. These systems will help in the handling of the disparities between the traditional employment and the gig employment while maintaining the flexibility of the platform employment. The above comparison reveals that the gig workers have a unique place between the traditional employment and the independent contractors in table 1. While the flexibility and independence can make the gig work similar to the independent contractor work, the control of the platforms, economic dependence, and algorithmic management can lead to the creation of the features related to employment relationships.

Table 1: Comparative Findings on Gig Worker Classification and Statutory Benefit Access

Criteria	Traditional Employee	Independent Contractor	Gig Worker
Employer control	High	Low	Variable
Work flexibility	Low–Moderate	High	High
Income stability	Relatively stable	Variable	Often variable
Platform dependence	Usually absent	Usually absent	High/Moderate
Social protection	Generally broader	Limited/individual	Depends on applicable framework
Statutory benefit access	Generally established	More limited	Can be fragmented

Future Directions and Recommendations

Flexible Classification, Portable Benefits, and Shared Responsibility: Future Directions for Gig Worker Protection

A flexible classification based on platform control, worker independence, and economic dependence needs to be considered in future policy on gig work so that different groups of workers are entitled to adequate protection. Social protection needs to be reinforced through healthcare provision, accident insurance, pension arrangements, and income support, with contribution schemes being made flexible enough to reflect task-based or demand-based pay structures. Portability of benefits and creation of digital records for workers would mean that benefits and contributions become tied to individuals rather than the platforms where they work. Registration, verification, and claims will become easier without compromising security and privacy of data. Shared responsibility and regulation, taking into account the differences in types of gig work, will also become an important element of protection. In any case, the final objective of gig work should be flexibility and social protection.

Conclusion

Gig economy has changed the traditional employment structure through the development of technologically advanced flexible models of work. This study was undertaken to examine the link between employment status classification and the ability of gig workers to enjoy statutory benefits. Several issues were considered in this research, including platform control, worker independence, economic dependency, contracts, income predictability, and nature of work done. From the findings of this research, it is clear that gig workers might possess aspects of both traditional employment and self-employment, thus becoming hard to classify. Access to statutory benefits is important to gig workers since they have unpredictable income, occupational hazards, low job security, and lack of continuous social protection. Medical care, accident insurance, social security, maternity protection, pension, and disability insurance will offer vital financial security. Nevertheless, ambiguity in classifying, awareness, processes involved, contributions, and lack of portability of benefits might be among the factors that hinder such accessibility. It is evident that flexible approaches in classifying workers' employment status based on realities in the work environment are key according to the findings. In this regard, portable benefits, digitized records of workers, simplified registration, transparency in platform operations, and shared responsibilities might enhance gig workers' protection. It would be possible to achieve a balanced policy that will maintain the flexibility of gig workers while ensuring socio-economic security.

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