



A Study on Social Security Benefits for Gig Workers under the New Indian Labour Laws

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Abstract—

This study focuses on examining the social security provisions available to gig workers in India under the Code on Social Security, 2020. The rapid growth of the gig economy has transformed employment patterns by creating flexible, short-term, and platform-based work opportunities. However, gig workers often remain outside traditional social security systems, making their protection a major concern. Although the law provides benefits such as health insurance, maternity support, and old-age protection, there is limited awareness among gig workers. Many workers are not fully informed about registration procedures or how to access these benefits. The study aims to analyze awareness levels, understand registration processes, evaluate accessibility of benefits, and identify key challenges faced by gig workers. The research is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected from 110 gig workers in Pune using structured questionnaires. Secondary data was collected from journals, books, and online sources. The findings reveal a significant gap between policy provisions and actual implementation. Many workers face difficulties in accessing benefits due to lack of awareness and complex procedures.

Keywords-

Gig Economy, Gig Workers, Social Security, Code on Social Security, 2020, Platform Workers, e-Shram Portal, Labour Laws, Unorganized Sector, Welfare Schemes, Implementation Challenges



I. INTRODUCTION

The growth of the gig economy in India has significantly transformed the traditional structure of employment. With the rapid expansion of digital platforms and technological advancements, a large number of individuals are now engaged in flexible, short-term, and task-based work arrangements. Gig workers—including delivery partners, ride-sharing drivers, and freelancers—have become an essential part of the modern workforce.

Unlike traditional employees, gig workers operate outside formal employer–employee relationships, which excludes them from conventional social security benefits such as provident fund, health insurance, paid leave, and retirement security. Their income is often irregular and dependent on demand, making them financially vulnerable and socially unprotected.

To address these challenges, the Government of India introduced the Code on Social Security, 2020. This legislation is a significant step toward labour law reform, as it formally recognizes gig and platform workers and provides a framework for extending social security benefits to them. The law enables both central and state governments to design welfare schemes covering areas such as health insurance, maternity benefits, old-age protection, and accident insurance.

Despite these progressive provisions, there remains a considerable gap between policy formulation and actual implementation. Many gig workers are unaware of available schemes, face difficulties in the registration process, and encounter challenges in accessing benefits due to digital barriers and lack of proper guidance.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the level of awareness, accessibility of benefits, and the challenges faced by gig workers under the new labour laws, while also evaluating the effectiveness of existing social security measures.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have examined the growth of the gig economy and the challenges faced by gig workers, particularly in relation to social security and labour protection.

Singh, R. and Sharma, P. (2022) analyzed the emergence of the gig economy in India and highlighted how digital platforms have reshaped employment patterns. The study emphasized that gig workers contribute significantly to the economy but remain outside traditional labour protections. Issues such as job insecurity, irregular income, and lack of social security were identified as major concerns.

Kumar, D. and Bhattacharya, S. (2025) examined recent developments in gig worker welfare policies in India, particularly under the Code on Social Security, 2020. The study observed that while the law is progressive in recognizing gig workers, it lacks strong enforcement mechanisms. It also highlighted low awareness and limited financial contributions from platform companies as key challenges.

Sharma, R. and Patel, M. (2024) focused on the dependency of gig workers on digital platforms and their access to welfare benefits. The study revealed that awareness of government schemes, including registration through the e-Shram Portal, remains low among workers. It recommended better integration between platform companies and government systems.

Gupta, M. and Singh, L. (2023) analyzed the socio-economic conditions of gig workers and found that although gig work offers flexibility, it lacks long-term security and protection. The study emphasized the importance of awareness programs and stronger implementation of welfare schemes.

Agarwal, P. and Sinha, R. (2025) examined the changing nature of gig employment and pointed out that despite legal recognition, there is uncertainty in benefit distribution due to lack of clear implementation rules. The study introduced the concept of “policy invisibility,” where workers are legally covered but practically excluded.

Nambiar, L. and Roy, A. (2026) evaluated the sustainability of social security systems for gig workers. The study found that current funding mechanisms may not be sufficient and highlighted challenges in tracking contributions due to multi-platform work patterns. Verma, S. and Iyer, R. (2024) focused on implementation challenges and identified issues such as lack of centralized data, weak coordination among stakeholders, and absence of effective grievance redressal systems.



Mehta, A. and Verma, S. (2021) analyzed the provisions of the Code on Social Security, 2020 and concluded that while the law provides a strong framework, its success depends on proper implementation, awareness, and coordination between government and platform companies. Overall, the literature indicates that although significant progress has been made in recognizing gig workers and providing social security provisions, major gaps still exist in awareness, accessibility, and effective implementation.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a systematic approach to examine the awareness, accessibility, and utilization of social security benefits among gig workers under the Code on Social Security, 2020. A descriptive research design has been used to understand the current conditions of gig workers. The study is based on a sample of 110 respondents from Pune, selected using the snowball sampling technique, which is suitable for reaching individuals in the unorganized gig sector.

Both primary and secondary data were used for the research. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire and personal interaction with gig workers, while secondary data was obtained from books, journals, government reports, and online sources. This combination of data sources helped in ensuring a comprehensive analysis of awareness levels, registration status, and challenges faced by gig workers in accessing social security benefits.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study reveal that a majority of respondents are engaged in delivery-based gig work, indicating the dominance of platform-driven services in the gig economy. While more than half of the respondents showed some level of awareness about social security schemes under the Code on Social Security, 2020, a significant proportion still lacked clear understanding, especially regarding registration processes such as the e-Shram portal. A large number of workers were either not registered or unsure about their registration status, highlighting confusion and lack of proper guidance. Additionally, only half of the respondents reported receiving any social security benefits, indicating uneven reach and effectiveness of welfare schemes.

The study further identifies several practical challenges faced by gig workers in accessing benefits. The most common issues include complicated registration procedures, lack of awareness, absence of support systems, and digital barriers such as limited internet access and low digital literacy. Many respondents found it difficult to access benefits, reflecting inefficiencies in implementation. These findings suggest that although the legal framework is progressive, there is a clear gap between policy provisions and their execution. Therefore, improved awareness campaigns, simplified processes, and stronger coordination between government and platform companies are necessary to ensure that social security benefits effectively reach gig workers.

V. CONCLUSION

This study highlights that the Code on Social Security, 2020 is a significant step toward providing social security benefits to gig workers in India. While the law offers a strong framework by recognizing gig and platform workers and proposing various welfare schemes, its actual impact remains limited due to low awareness, unclear registration processes, and weak implementation at the ground level. A large number of gig workers are either unaware of available benefits or face difficulties in accessing them.

The findings clearly indicate a gap between policy formulation and practical execution. Challenges such as digital barriers, lack of guidance, and complex procedures reduce the effectiveness of the system. Therefore, there is a need for increased awareness, simplified registration processes, and stronger support mechanisms to ensure that gig workers can fully benefit from the provisions. Effective coordination between government and platform companies will be essential to improve accessibility and ensure inclusive social protection for gig workers.



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