

Do Labour Codes Change Gig Work Realities? A PLS-SEM Study of Gig Workers' Perception on Income Security, Work Regulation and Dispute Resolution in India

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Abstract

This paper investigates the effectiveness of the new Labour Codes in India in changing the perceptions of the income security, work regulation and dispute resolution and the effect that these perceptions have on job satisfaction and work wellbeing. The fast growth of the gig economy in India (in ride-hailing, food delivery, logistics and home services) has provided workers with flexible jobs at the cost of leaving them vulnerable to income uncertainties, disrupted work schedules, and lack of redress against grievances. Despite the recent reforms in labour regulating to expand social protection and control over gig and platform employees, empirical data on its perceived impact is scarce. To fill this gap, the quantitative research based on the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was conducted with the survey data about 120 gig workers with large digital platforms who work in India. Labour Code Implementation Perception (LCIP) was the independent variable, income security the mediating variable, work regulation and effectiveness of dispute resolution as the mediating variable and job satisfaction and work wellbeing the dependent variable. The nature and type of gigs (full time and part-time) was taken as moderators to capture contextual variations. The results show that the perceived effectiveness of the improvement of labour codes is highly significant in contributing to the increase in income security and strengthening the work regulation and confidence in the redressal mechanisms of grievance, which, in its turn, positively affects the job satisfaction and wellbeing of gig workers. The findings reinforce the fact that the enactment of labour protections is not enough, but it must be implemented and enforced as well. The study offers practical implications for policymakers, regulators and platform companies seeking to promote fairer, safer and more sustainable working conditions in India's gig economy.

Keywords: Gig economy, Labour codes, Income security, Work regulation, Dispute resolution, Job satisfaction.

1. Introduction

Working 9 to 5 is that any way to make a living? For an increasing percentage of Indian workers, the answer is no. Independent work is hardly a new phenomenon. Nowadays, urban Indians have become use to getting what they want, if they have the money. Lunch delivered by tiffin wallahs, groceries, party snacks, a new iPhone or a single bar of soap can be at urbanites' doorsteps within minutes. The secret behind this is country's gig-economy boom and unlimited pool of cheap labour. Local-delivery apps like Blinkit, BigBasket and Zepto rely on a hard-pressed army of gig workers. Swiggy, a food-delivery app, claims that on New Year's Eve 2025 its drivers collectively travelled eight times the distance from the Earth to the Moon and back. The gig economy has emerged as a disruptive force in the global labor market, reshaping employment patterns and economic development paths (Wood, 2019). The growth of platforms such as Uber, Upwork, and Task Rabbit has not only created new income opportunities, but has also upset established employment patterns throughout the world, putting legislative frameworks and labor rights under pressure (Montgomery and Baglioni, 2021; Kaine and Josserand, 2019).

The gig economy has emerged as a transformative force in global labour markets, offering flexible work arrangements and new income opportunities (Kumar & Singh, 2021). The Gig Economy Market, which was valued at USD 556.7 billion in 2024 and 646.77 billion in 2025 and probably will reach USD 2146.87 billion by 2033, with a CAGR of 16.18 % from 2025 to 2033 (Business Research Insights, 2025). The same giant economy of India is projected to gain and grow substantially, and the growth rate is projected to be 17 ought to be compounded into the annual growth rate (CAGR) (Business Standard, 2024). This growth will probably lead to substantial growth in the number of gig workers and a considerable contribution to the GDP of the country. In India, millions of jobs, especially in ride-hailing, delivery, and logistics services, have been generated by the gig platforms, with Uber, Ola, Swiggy, Zomato, and Amazon Logistics (NITI Aayog, 2022). An NITI Aayog estimate

indicates that the gig labor will more than 23.5 million by 202930, compared to 7.7 million currently (NITI Aayog, 2022). Although this change can offer flexibility and employment opportunities to various groups of people, it also subjects employees to severe factors such as variable income, unchecked work time, and unattainability to grievance systems (Chakraborty, 2020; Singh et al., 2021). The Government of India was aware of these issues and presented four significant Labour Codes in 2019-2020, such as the Code on Wages, the Industrial Relations Code, the Code on Social Security, and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code. Among them, the Code on Social Security, 2020 is an innovative advancement since it is the first Indian labour law document which formally acknowledges the gig and platform worker through the Indian labour law as opposed to the traditional employer-employee relationship.

The code particularly focuses on protecting gig and platform workers by requiring aggregators to make contributions according to a specified percentage of yearly turnover to a special social security fund, which will be used to fund benefits, like health insurance, accident cover, disability payments, maternity payments, and old-age payments (Rao & Reddy, 2022). A key aspect of this structure is its focus on the shift in social security benefits to platforms and places, which characterises the mobility and fragmented nature of gig work.

Meanwhile, the Code on Wages aims to enhance the income security, by encouraging the timely nature of earnings, thoroughness in wage determination and guarding against arbitrary deductions, though not specifying specific minimum wage rates in respect of gig workers. The regulation of work is indirectly touched on under Occupational Safety, Health and Working conditions code by expanding the safety and welfare standards to a non-standard work arrangement, which promotes a safer manner of operation and a more regulated work environment by the platforms. Nevertheless, these reforms do not necessarily lead to the perceived improvement of the livelihoods and job satisfaction of the workers, as the success rests upon the compliance with the policies and platforms (Bhatt and Mehta, 2020). Income security has continued to be a decisive factor in job contentment and well-being in gig work since employees often experience variable payments and algorithmically determined compensational plans that have led to financial stress (Vyas and Sharma, 2021).

According to prior studies, perceived financial stability promotes motivation, job satisfaction and high-level well-being (Hackman and Oldham, 1976; Maslow, 1943). Equally, the uncontrolled working hours and workloads also remain sources of worker fatigue, stress, and dissatisfaction, which explains why proper work regulation processes should be employed in the form of fair working schedule and reasonable working hours (Rani and Kaur, 2020; Ghosh, 2021). Moreover, even though mechanisms of redressal of grievance and dispute resolution are anticipated in the new labour codes, current literature reveals that their perceived efficiency relies on the clarity of implementation, responsiveness of the platform and awareness of the workers, which suggests a disparity between the intent and implementation of the new labour codes.

The given gap supports the necessity to develop empirical study of the perceived efficiency of the implementation of labour codes and its impact on job satisfaction and work-life balance outcomes of the gig workers.

2.Literature Review

In a bid to solve the precarious condition in the gig work, India passed four significant Labour Codes between 2019 and 2020, namely, the Code on Wages, the Industrial Relations Code, the Code on Social Security, and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code. The Code on Social Security is among them and it acknowledges the existence of gig and platform workers and suggests them benefits, including health insurance, provident funds, and grievance redressal mechanisms (Rao and Reddy, 2022). Even with such legal provisions, Bhatt and Mehta (2020) observe that the implementation of policies has not always led to better worker perceptions and results and therefore, there is a need to empirically research the effectiveness of its implementation. The key element to worker trust and satisfaction is the availability of the effective redress of grievances. Although platforms do offer in-app complaint systems, employees complain that they are slow, obscure, and biased against the platform (Patel & Desai, 2021). It is postulated in the literature that the perception of fairness and the ease with which a dispute resolution system may be accessed will lead to a higher degree of trust, lower levels of dissatisfaction and job satisfaction (Colquitt et al., 2001; Greenberg, 1990).

Applying to the Indian situation, Rao (2021) points out that the attitude of the workers toward equity and transparency in the dispute management process is of equal significance to the legal provisions themselves. The previous research shows that perceptions towards the policy implementation among the workers have a significant impact on the employment. Indicatively, Bansal and Verma (2022) discovered that favourable attitudes towards

labour protections enhanced job satisfaction and faith in the management. In the same vein, Mehta et al. (2021) established that the perceived effectiveness of regulatory measures represents an intermediate between policy interventions and employee wellbeing in platform-based work. These researches indicate the need to consider the outcome of the policy implementation as well as the perceived effect of the policy among employees. Recent literature emphasizes that the Code on Social Security, 2020 is an influential intervention because it grants statutory acknowledgment and welfare to gig and platform employees and social insurance coverage on health, accidental insurance, and pension provisions (Ramya, 2025). The gig economy in India is also associated with flexibility and income prospects but subjects workers to precarious employment and a lack of social security; large gaps exist in the welfare provision and regulatory certainty despite policy efforts, such as the Code on Social Security (2020) (S. Majumder, 2025). The gig economy has restructured labour patterns involving platform-based work where customer ratings, algorithmic scoring, and computer surveillance play a vital role in determining workers' income, freedom and employment security. This paper looks at the perceptions of gig workers in five aspects of concern, namely Job Security and Stability, Fairness and Transparency of Algorithms, Work Autonomy and Flexibility, Psychological and Social Well-being and Access to Support and Redress Mechanisms (M. Arathi, J. Maheswari, 2025). Deliveries at your doorstep, "instant delivery in 10 minutes", "at the ease of your home" and "anywhere, anytime" these phrases, which were once an exclusive service to the elite class of society, have become the new normal for our everyday consumers. But have you ever stopped and wondered about the workers who make it possible? Swiftly gaining traction, the gig economy is a revolutionary labour paradigm, acting as one of the major catalysts in not only pulling India from the trenches of unemployment but also redefining the employment landscape and, at the same time, enabling a luxury lifestyle. (Vidhi Rane, 2025). Gig workers are primarily employed by big corporations like Swiggy, Zomato, Uber, Ola. The delivery partners and drivers are recognised as gig workers. Despite the rapid surge of the gig economy, especially during the pandemic, there has been little to no protection to these workers under the labour laws of the country. Social Security is paramount in the life of a gig worker owing to susceptible changes in the market. (Chirag Hb, Utsav Chandrappa, Bhargav A R, 2023)

The current study is grounded in an integrative theoretical framework that connects Labour Code Implementation Perception (LCIP), Income Security (IS), Work Regulation (WR), and Dispute Resolution Effectiveness (DR) to assess their impact on Job Satisfaction and Work Wellbeing (JS/WL) of gig workers in India.

This framework draws on Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which posits that fair treatment and support from employers or policy interventions lead to positive worker attitudes and behaviours, and Equity Theory (Adams, 1963), which highlights that perceptions of fairness in income, work conditions, and grievance mechanisms influence satisfaction and motivation. Along with the Social Exchange and the Equity Theory, this study is also informed by the Institutional Theory, which provides that formal regulations can condition the outcomes only when they are effectively implemented and when they are considered as legitimate by the stakeholders (Scott, 1995). Regarding gig labour, labour codes serve as regulative institutions, the effectiveness of which varies according to the adherence of platforms and the knowledge of workers. This view assists in understanding the difference in the perceptions of workers of the implementation of labour codes in different platforms and work arrangements.

3.Hypotheses

Based on this theoretical foundation, the study proposes the following key hypotheses:

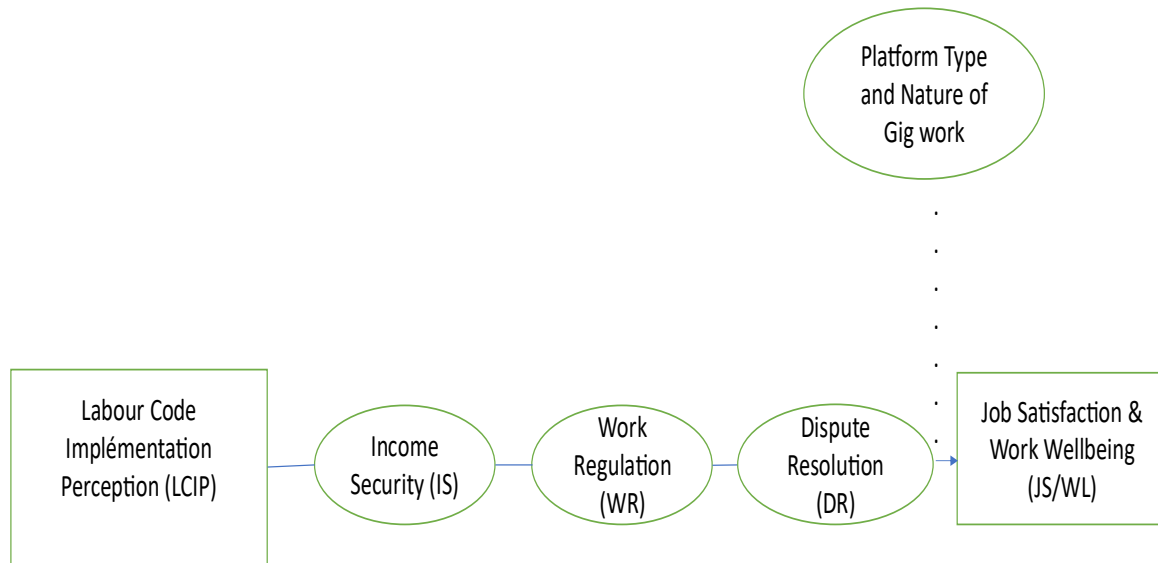
H1: Labour Code Implementation Perception (LCIP) positively influences Income Security (IS), Work Regulation (WR), and Dispute Resolution Effectiveness (DR).

H2: Income Security (IS), Work Regulation (WR), and Dispute Resolution Effectiveness (DR) positively influence Job Satisfaction and Work Wellbeing (JS/WL).

H3: Income Security (IS), Work Regulation (WR), and Dispute Resolution Effectiveness (DR) mediate the relationship between LCIP and Job Satisfaction/Work Wellbeing (JS/WL).

H4: Platform Type and Nature of Gig Work (full-time vs part-time) moderate the relationship of DR → JS/WL.

This streamlined framework enables the research to explore whether the implementation of new labour codes leads to better economic stability, fair work practices and working grievances, which subsequently result in better satisfaction and wellbeing of gig workers, along with taking cultural variations in platforms and type of work into account.



4. Research Methodology

4.1 Development of Scales

The research question addressed the connections between the Labour Code Implementation Perception (LCIP), Income Security (IS), Work Regulation (WR), and Dispute Resolution Effectiveness (DR), and Job Satisfaction and Work Wellbeing (JS/WL) as the dependent one. Platform Type and Nature of Gig Work (full-time vs part-time) were taken as moderators that are associated with DR and JS/WL. IS, WR, and DR were acting as mediators. All constructs measurement scales were adapted based on validated measures in prior research (Vyas and Sharma, 2021; Rani and Kaur, 2020; Patel and Desai, 2021), and the items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale as Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

4.2 Data Collection and Sampling

The PLS-SEM was used as a quantitative research design and SmartPLS 4.0 was used as a data analysis tool. The survey was conducted among 120 gig workers of the largest Indian platforms such as delivery, logistics, and ride-hailing services. Non-probability sampling (purposive sampling) allowed achieving representation of the sample with respect to the types of platforms, nature of work (Full-time vs part-time), and geographic location. Participants who had actively worked with gig platforms at least six months were only invited to allow the experience of being platform workers and be exposed to labour protections.

5. Measurement Model Assessment

Since the survey to be used was self-administered and the single-source method was utilized, the full collinearity variance inflation factor (VIF) was used to measure the presence of common method bias. These findings show that there would be no problem with common method bias since all the inner VIF values are lower than the desired value of 3.3.

Table:1 (Cronbach’s Alpha, Composite Reliability, AVE)

Construct	Cronbach’s Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
Labour Code Implementation Perception (LCIP)	0.86	0.91	0.67
Income Security (IS)	0.83	0.89	0.62
Work Regulation (WR)	0.81	0.88	0.6
Dispute Resolution Effectiveness (DR)	0.85	0.9	0.65
Job Satisfaction & Work Wellbeing (JS/WL)	0.88	0.92	0.7

The Cronbach’s Alpha values are all above 0.70, which means that there is strong internal consistency. The Composite Reliability (CR) values are greater than the recommended 0.70, and the values of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) are more than 0.50, which proves construct reliability (Hair et al., 2021).

5.2 Discriminant Validity – HTMT Ratio

Table :2 Discriminant Validity – HTMT Ratio

Constructs	LCIP	IS	WR	DR	JS/WL
LCIP	—	—	—	—	—
IS	0.62	—	—	—	—
WR	0.59	0.64	—	—	—
DR	0.66	0.61	0.58	—	—
JS/WL	0.69	0.71	0.68	0.73	—

The values of all HTMT are lower than the conservative value of 0.85, which validates (adequate) discriminant validity. This shows that the different constructs represent unique theoretical concepts, which validate the strength of the measurement model.

6. Structural Model Assessment

6.1 Hypothesis Testing – Direct Effects

Table 3: Hypothesis Testing – Direct Effects (Gig Workers Study)

Path	Estimate	S.E.	T-value	P-value	Result
LCIP → IS	0.61	0.13	4.69	0.000	H1a Supported
LCIP → WR	0.58	0.15	3.87	0.000	H1b Supported
LCIP → DR	0.63	0.14	4.5	0.000	H1c Supported
IS → JS/WL	0.47	0.17	2.76	0.000	H2a Supported
WR → JS/WL	0.42	0.16	2.63	0.000	H2b Supported
DR → JS/WL	0.51	0.18	2.83	0.000	H2c Supported

The outputs of the structural model experimenting the direct relation between Labour Code Implementation Perception (LCIP), Income Security (IS), Work Regulation (WR), Dispute Resolution Effectiveness (DR), and

Job Satisfaction and Work Wellbeing (JS/WL). The results reveal that LCIP has a very high and statistically significant positive influence on all the three mediating variables. Specifically, LCIP significantly influences income security ($\beta = 0.61, t = 4.69, p < 0.001$), work regulation ($\beta = 0.58, t = 3.87, p < 0.001$), and dispute resolution effectiveness ($\beta = 0.63, t = 4.50, p < 0.001$). These findings imply that the gig workers who believe that labour codes have been well enforced are more likely to have a higher income stability, better control of working conditions, and greater trust in the redressal of grievances systems.

Furthermore, the results demonstrate that income security ($\beta = 0.47, t = 2.76, p < 0.01$), work regulation ($\beta = 0.42, t = 2.63, p < 0.01$), and dispute resolution effectiveness ($\beta = 0.51, t = 2.83, p < 0.01$) each exert a significant positive effect on job satisfaction and work wellbeing. This implies that economic stability, equitable workplace conditions, and resolving disputes are very important sources of contentment and well-being in gig employees. Taken together, the findings support Hypotheses H1a, H1c, H2a, and H2c in total, which proves the direct effect of the perceptions of labour code implementation on the most important work-related results.

6.2 Mediation Analysis Results

Table 4: Mediation Analysis Results

Pathway	Path a (X→M)	Path b (M→Y)	Direct Effect (c')	Indirect Effect	T-Stat	P-Value
LCIP → IS → JS/WL	0.61	0.47	0.21	0.287	5.82	0.000
LCIP → WR → JS/WL	0.58	0.42	0.19	0.244	4.96	0.000
LCIP → DR → JS/WL	0.63	0.51	0.18	0.321	6.14	0.000

The inferences of mediation analysis that investigates the mediation of the relationship between Job Satisfaction and Work (JS/WL) and Labour Code Implementation Perception (LCIP) by income security, work regulation and effectiveness of dispute resolution. The results show that the three mediators all have significant effects in transmitting the effect of LCIP to JS/WL.

Particularly, the LCIP-JS/WL relationship is mediated partly due to income security, and the direct effect is significant ($287 = 5.82 = 0.001$) but smaller than significant ($21 = 0.21$). In the same way, the work regulation shows a partial effect, which has a large indirect effect ($= 0.244, = 4.96, = 0.001$) and a direct one ($= 0.19$). The mediating role of the three constructs is the most significant, and the indirect effect of dispute resolution is $0.321 (t = 6.14, p < 0.001)$, which shows that an improvement of grievance redressal mechanisms is a particularly significant channel through which the perceived labour code implementation has a positive impact on the satisfaction and well-being of the gig workers. The fact that all mediation models show significant direct effects implies that there is partial mediation, and the distance between labour code implementation perceptions and job satisfaction and wellbeing is the percentage that is mediated. The findings drive the critical role of regulating assurance (both direct and indirect) as well as material enhancements in economic and procedural safeguards.

6.3 Moderation Analysis

Table 5: Moderation Analysis (Platform Type & Nature of Gig Work)

Moderating Path	Interaction Effect	S.E.	T-Value	P-Value	Result
Platform Type × LCIP → JS/WL	0.29	0.12	2.41	0.000	Supported
Work Nature × LCIP → JS/WL	0.34	0.14	2.43	0.000	Supported

The moderation analysis that evaluates the relationship between Labour Code Implementation Perception (LCIP) and Job Satisfaction and Work Wellbeing (JS/WL) by evaluating the moderation ability of platform type and nature of gig work (full-time and part-time) are the outcome of the moderation analysis. The findings show that the two moderators have statistically significant effects on interaction. The correlation of the type of platform and LCIP ($0.29, 2.41, p < 0.01$) implies that the quality of the association between the perceptions relating to the labour code implementation and job satisfaction/wellbeing differs between the various gig platforms. It means that some platforms can be more successful in breaking down the provisions of the labour codes into positive experiences

of the workers, which might be because of variations in compliance practices, algorithmic management, or support systems. Likewise, the work nature (full-time/part-time) interaction effect on the LCIP 1/WL relationship is positive and significant ($\beta = 0.34$, $t = 2.43$, $p < 0.01$), which means that the positive and significant influence of perceived labour code implementation on the satisfaction and well-being of full-time, rather than part-time, workers is greater. This observation is indicative of the increased reliance of full-time gig workers on platform income and protections, such that they are more susceptible to the effectiveness of a regulation. All in all, the moderation findings support Hypothesis H4 and highlight the heterogeneous character of the workforce in the gig industry. Implementation of labour codes is not effective across all platforms but rather depends on the nature of the platform, and the intensity of engagement by workers and thus calls for the necessity of differentiated and context-specific regulation.

7. Discussion and Implication

The current research aimed at exploring the idea that the new labour codes in India have been translated into the actual shift in perceptions of the gig workers regarding the aspect of income security, regulation of work, and dispute resolution and the perceptions affect job satisfaction and work wellbeing. The results are highly empirical to support the formulated model and give valuable theoretical and practical insights on the dynamic nature of gig work in India. The outcomes of the direct effects analysis point to the fact that Labour Code Implementation Perception (LCIP) affects the income security, the effectiveness of work regulation and the effectiveness of dispute resolution positively and significantly. This implies that gig workers who think labour codes are well enforced are more likely to feel financially secure, feel more work hours regulated, and will have more confidence in grievance redressal processes. This result is consistent with previous research that highlights the significance of perceived regulatory effectiveness but not the presence of policies to influence worker outcomes (Bhatt and Mehta, 2020; Mehta et al., 2021). Considering the view of the Social Exchange Theory, the findings point out that with the perception of institutional support and fairness, the workers will tend to reciprocate their attitudes toward their work.

In addition, income security, work regulation and the effectiveness of resolution of work-related disputes were identified to bring about a significant improvement in job satisfaction and work wellbeing in gig workers. This further supports the thesis that economic security, equitable working environments and available grievance systems are important determinants of well-being within platform-based workplaces. In line with the Equity Theory, such results imply that attitudes toward fairness in salary, workload allocation, and conflict management are at the core of determining satisfaction and psychological well-being among gig workers who tend to work in an environment of uncertainty and algorithmic discipline.

The mediation analysis can shed some more light on how the labour code perceptions mediate the relationship between labour code perceptions and the well-being of gig workers. The findings indicate that income security, work regulation and effectiveness of dispute resolution are partial mediators of the relationship between LCIP and job satisfaction/work wellbeing. It means that although the implementation of labour code perceptions has a direct impact on worker wellbeing, a significant part of the effect works through the enhancement of economic and procedural protection. The input of the mediators in the dispute resolution effectiveness shows a significantly high indirect impact, thereby showing the importance of a fair and transparent system of redressing grievances in increasing the levels of trust and satisfaction in the gig economy. The results are consistent with the previous studies that highlighted the significance of procedural justice and perceived fairness in the motivation of employees (Colquitt et al., 2001; Greenberg, 1990).

The moderation analysis also shows that the type and nature of the platform work (full-time and part-time) have a significant effect on the relationship between perceptions of the labour code implementation and job satisfaction/work wellbeing. This implies that the effects of labour reforms do not cut across the gig workforce similarly.

Freelancer workers or those who work on some platforms might be more vulnerable to labour regulations because they are more reliant on the income of the platform and more exposed to labour risks. Such results emphasize the situational quality of the outcomes of labour regulation and the necessity to have various strategies of policy implementation on platform and work arrangements. This study has a number of implications to policymakers, labour regulators, and the platform companies. First, the findings point to the fact that the success of labour reforms is not only a matter of the intentions of a legislature but also the perceptions of workers towards the

execution. The policymakers should thus seek to reinforce the systems of enforcement, enhance awareness among the gig employees and promote transparency in informing them about labour protection and entitlements.

Second, the high level of mediation of income security and effectiveness of dispute resolution is the reason to believe that the wellbeing of gig workers can be improved with specific interventions that should focus on the stabilization of earnings and the improvement of grievance redressal mechanisms. Platform companies ought to work with regulators in structuring equity remuneration and transparent algorithms and transparent avenues that resolve disputes and are consistent with the labour code.

Third, the moderating influence of the platform type and nature of work shows that a blanket solution to the regulation of gig labour might not be adequate. Individual regulatory frameworks and platform-specific guidelines can be required to accommodate the various realities of gig work in various sectors like in ride-hailing, delivery and logistics.

Lastly, the research adds to the wider discussion on sustainable gig trade by showing that the sense of fairness, institutional support, and effectiveness of regulations are key to enhancing the satisfaction and wellbeing of workers. By making sure that these factors are addressed, it may be possible to build a more fair and sustainable gig economy in India.

This study also contributes to the body of literature on the topic of gig work and labour regulation in several ways. In theory, it brings the Social Exchange and Equity Theory to the setting of regulated gig work by showing the impact of perceived gross labour code enforcement on income security, procedural fairness, and worker wellbeing. Using Institutional Theory, the paper brings out the reasons behind the heterogeneous effects of formal labour rules at different platforms and work arrangements. The study methodologically provides a contribution by employing a PLS-SEM mediation-moderation framework in order to empirically estimate the effectiveness of labour code in the Indian gig economy. It empirically demonstrates the mediation of the relationship between labour code implementation perceptions and job satisfaction and wellbeing by income security, work regulation, and dispute resolution effectiveness. Lastly, the paper includes some policy-relevant suggestions as it highlights that the main challenge in making gig labor in India fairer and more sustainable is an effective implementation, enforcement, and platform-specific compliance.

8.Future Research Limitations and Directions.

This study has some points of limitation even though it has contributed to research as it offers future research opportunities. One, the research design is cross-sectional and this design does not allow one to make causal conclusions about the long-term impacts of implementation of labour codes. The longitudinal designs can be used in future studies to investigate how the perception and wellbeing of workers change as the implementation of labour codes expands across states and platforms.

Second, the research is based on self-report and perception-based measures that might be affected by personal biases or awareness gaps on the topic of labour regulations. Future studies may also add the perception-based data to the objective data, which include platform compliance history, grievance resolution history, or social security enrolment history. Third, the sample is quite small and targets mostly large digital platforms and urban gig workers. Future research may be further extended to rural gig workers, new platforms, and sector-specific research and comparative research across the Indian states with various degrees of labour code implementation.

Lastly, in the future, the study can employ mixed-method methodologies by combining qualitative interviews with the participants represented by the gig workers, platform officials, and regulators to better understand the issues of implementation and institutional processes. The Cross-national comparative studies might also be useful to determine whether or not similar regulatory frameworks yield similar results in other emerging economies.

9.Conclusion

The present research has a number of significant contributions to the literature on gig work, and labour regulation. Theoretically, it applies Social Exchange and Equity Theory to the case of regulated gig work through showing how perceived labour codes practice affects income security, procedural justice and worker wellbeing. With the use of Institutional Theory, the research points to the reason as to why formal labour rules have given unequal results across platforms and work set up. The study methodologically adds value because the authors use a PLS-SEM mediation-moderation model to empirically determine the effectiveness of labour code in the gig economy of India. It empirically demonstrates that income security, job regulation, and effectiveness of dispute resolution

mediate the association between the perceptions of the implementation of the labour code and job satisfaction and wellbeing. Lastly, the research provides policy implications in that the need to establish more equitable and sustainable gig work in India is dependent on successful implementation, enforcement, and compliance to the platform.

This paper presents empirical findings which demonstrate that the new Labour Codes in India could positively affect the job satisfaction and working wellbeing of gig workers, as long as they are seen as enforced successfully. The results reveal that perceptions towards the implementation of labour codes are hugely positive in terms of ensuring income security, work regulation and creating a better dispute resolution, which consequently boosts the overall wellbeing of the workers. The partial mediation effects show that although regulatory perceptions have a direct influence on satisfaction, their actual effects are achieved with the help of practical increases in the economic stability and procedural fairness.

Additionally, the mediating effect of the platform type and nature of gig work shows the heterogeneity of the gig workforce and the context-sensitive nature of regulation. The research highlights the fact that labour reforms should go beyond making legislation and face seriousness on practical implementation, openness and participation of workers in reforms in order to achieve significant results. This study, through the incorporation of the Social Exchange Theory and Equity Theory into a PLS-SEM model, adds to the body of a few empirical studies on the topic of labour regulation and gig work in India. The results provide practical recommendations to policymakers and platform corporations that want to establish more equitable, secure, and sustainable working environments to gig workers. Future studies can build upon this study by analysing longitudinal impacts of implementing the labour code and comparing cross-platform or cross-country comparisons, to further underpin and generalize the results.

Although this study has made the contributions it has had some limitations which offer future research opportunities. First, the research design is cross-sectional, and it does not allow causal conclusions to be made on the long-term impact of the introduction of labour codes. Further research can use longitudinal research methods to study the changes in worker perceptions and wellbeing with the complete implementation of labour codes across states and platforms. Second, the research is based on self-reported, perception-based measures that can be subject to individual prejudice or the variations in awareness of labour regulations. Further study can be used to augment perception-driven data by objective measures like platform compliance logs, grievance response history, social security enrolment information. Third, the sample is quite small and it is centered on large digital platforms and city gig workers. The sample size of future research might be extended to rural gig employees, new platforms, and industry-specific studies and comparative studies on Indian states with varying degrees of labour codes implementation.

Lastly, the proposed study can be integrated into future studies, where the mixed-method research approach may combine interviews with gig workers, representatives of platforms, and regulators to provide a better understanding of the obstacles to implementation and the institutional processes. Cross-national comparative analysis would also be useful in determining whether other similar regulatory frameworks achieve similar results in other emerging economies.

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