



Career or Gig, How New Work Preferences are Dismantling Traditional Employment?

Dickson Mdhlalose^{1*}

Received 31/08/2025

Accepted : 01/11/2025

Published : 31/12/2025

<https://doi.org/10.52919/arebus.v6i2.90>

ABSTRACT

Introduction: The swift growth of the digital era, which radically disrupted the old work environment, led to the rise of the gig economy and a change in viewpoint in the tandem between employers and employees. This study aims to investigate the impact of gig economy inclinations on traditional employment patterns and to develop a framework. **Research Method:** The conceptual framework was developed based on a review of the literature. **Results and Discussion:** Traditional employment patterns are being impacted by the gig economy, which is mediated by workforce dynamics and economic ramifications and controlled by legislative responses and demographic variables. **Conclusion:** By providing flexible but unstable employment options, the gig economy undermines traditional employment and calls for specific regulations to protect worker security and facilitate labour market reforms. Future studies should use empirical evaluations of the efficacy of policies in various demographic and geographic situations, as well as longitudinal studies to monitor the transitions of gig workers.

Keywords: Demographic Factors; Economy; Gig Economy; Policy; Traditional Employment.

JEL Codes: J21, L14, M12.

How to cite this article

Mdhlalose, D. (2025). Career or gig: How new work preferences are dismantling traditional employment? *Advanced Research in Economics and Business Strategy Journal*, 6(2), 23-38. <https://doi.org/10.52919/arebus.v6i2.90>

¹ Doctor of Business Administration (DBA), Department of Information and Communication Technology, National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa, Johannesburg, South Africa, dsskosana@gmail.com

This work is an open access article, licensed under a [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

1. INTRODUCTION

There has been a transition in how individuals engage in employment and produce income because of the gig economy's substantial impact on how individuals work and acquire money (Kori, 2024). The rapid growth of the digital era, which fundamentally altered the traditional work environment, gave rise to the gig economy, a change in perspective in the interaction between employers and employees (Debgupta & Bhattacharyya, 2024). A noteworthy phenomenon, the gig economy has grown quickly due to the simplicity and speed of technological improvements, especially during the coronavirus disease-19 (COVID-19) pandemic (Pratomo et al., 2024). Technology advancements have made it easier to create new types of work, pushing the limits of the conventional job relationship (Chigori, 2024; 2023; Smit & Stopforth, 2023). Though the experiences of gig workers are complicated, this technological advancement gives consumers and businesses access to inexpensive, on-demand labour (Bajwa et al., 2018). In the early years of the twenty-first century, remote platform work, also called online freelancing or online gig work, began to develop as an emerging trend and progressively became a defining characteristic of the digital economy (Kavese et al., 2022). The rise of the gig economy is altering traditional employment patterns in developing nations, which raises questions about income stability, job security, and employment opportunities. What long-term impacts will this shift have on employment and local economic expansion?

The gig economy flourishes because of remote work, and technological advancements such as virtual meetings and co-working spaces make hiring freelancers a norm in the human resources industry (Ahmad, 2021). Traditional job patterns have undergone a significant transformation due to the gig economy, especially in developing nations. A flexible substitute for traditional employment, the gig economy is defined by freelance work and short-term contracts made possible by digital networks (International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2024; M4Jam, 2021; Putzel-Kavanaugh & Benton, 2024). The gig economy offers people looking for work a convenient way to make money in many developing nations where traditional labour markets may be limited (United States Agency for International Development [USAID], 2020; Van Slageren et al., 2022). Numerous causes, such as economic necessity, technological developments, and shifting employee desires for flexibility and autonomy over traditional nine-to-five jobs, are contributing to this change (Reisinger & Fetterer, 2021; International Coaching Federation, 2023). Consequently, gig work is becoming a feasible source of income for many people, which has a big impact on the labour market's structure. The gig economy has frequently used the rhetoric of freedom of choice to argue for its employment customs; in fact, this on-demand employment model is frequently portrayed as granting people more autonomy across their careers by eliminating restrictions on their ability to decide when, where, and how they market their labour (Hickson, 2024).

Learning about the complex effects of new gig economy trends on traditional employment trends, especially in economies that are developing, is still lacking despite a wealth of research on labour market dynamics and unemployment. Prior research (Duc et al., 2023; Ren & Zhu, 2024; Vu & Nguyen, 2024) has mostly focused on formal employment sectors and macroeconomic considerations, often ignoring the experiences of gig workers and the impact of precarious work conditions on the overall stability of the labour market. Little is known about

how demographic characteristics like age, gender, and educational attainment interact with gig job trends to produce differences in unemployment rates among localities. Policy and the economy face difficulties because of the gig economy (Michael, 2023). Research on how the gig economy affects labour market systems is necessary, given the ongoing problem of unemployment in both developed and developing nations. This study aims to investigate the impact of gig economy inclinations on traditional employment patterns and to develop a framework. To address the wider implications for labour market resiliency and economic growth, this study also looks for policies and interventions that may assist people in making the switch from gig to traditional work.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

Using an exploratory research design, the conceptual framework for this study was methodically developed through a thorough and critical synthesis of the body of existing literature to identify and assess emerging themes and existing concepts within the gig economy research field (Saunders et al., 2019). Three main thematic clusters emerged from a thorough review of recent academic literature: the significant economic implications (such as income variability and labour market transformation described by Matsangou, 2024, and Sankararaman et al., 2024), the impact on workforce dynamics (such as flexibility, skill diversification, and changing employer-employee relationships as highlighted by Countouris et al., 2023, and Reisinger & Fetterer, 2021), and the crucial role of policy responses (such as regulatory frameworks and portable benefits systems proposed by O'Sullivan & Homsy, 2023). After that, these related topics were arranged into a logical model that views workforce dynamics as a mediating mechanism and economic and policy factors as moderating variables. This created an integrative framework that explains both the direct effects of the gig economy and the circumstances in which its influence on conventional employment patterns is exacerbated or lessened.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Gig Employment as an Alternative to Traditional Jobs

A review of employment norms across industries may result from the demand for traditional businesses to adjust to the gig economy by providing more flexible work schedules or competitive compensation (Fatima, 2024). The traditional paradigm is shifting more toward the gig economy in the age of globalization and rapidly expanding technology. Freelance, often known as the gig economy, is a trend that is unavoidable in the global work landscape (Salmah et al., 2024). The skilled labour force and employment prospects of modern times are not restricted by the employees' or business organisations' geographical proximity (Anwar & Graham, 2020). It is easier for organisations to lease out employment, and digitalization gives individuals more mobility and the ability to work virtually as either freelancers or employees (International Labour Organisation, 2022). The gig economy has drastically changed labour markets by bringing about new opportunities and difficulties, as well as a shift in conventional employment paradigms. This analysis emphasized the widespread trend in the direction of openness to change, instant labour made possible by digital platforms, and how it affects work-life balance, legal safeguards, and job security (Wheatley, 2024).

By their very nature, remote workers are vanishing from view, both literally and figuratively, at the same time as remote work is stepping out of the depths and towards the light. The power dynamics that underpin managerial practices based on the idea of employees' visibility and availability in the work environment are also coming under considerable scrutiny. The extreme justification for hiring employees in traditional employment agreements is being called into question because of the breakdown of the traditional idea of managerial supervision. Many employers do not believe that remote work procedures guarantee an adequate level of subordination to support the quid pro quo among worker protection and labour resource command that is fundamental to the idea of an employment agreement (Countouris et al., 2023). Most modern professions have some unconventional aspects, and people with higher levels of education are prone to holding versatile positions. This disparity relates to, yet is not completely clarified by, variations in the rates of hourly compared to salaried labour, and it mostly arises from job characteristics as opposed to worker choices (Mas & Pallais, 2020).

3.2 Risks of Economic Instability for Employees That Engage in Gig Employment

The impact of the gig economy goes beyond specific work agreements to influence overall economic stability. Gig labour can improve economic resilience amid unpredictability by diversifying sources of income and lowering dependency on conventional employment models (Sankararaman et al., 2024). This expansion is fuelled by the growing need for flexible work schedules that let people make money when and how they want (ParkUniversity, 2024). Gig labour causes the risk to move from investors to employees, and employees are typically not compensated for carrying on this extra risk, preferably in the gig economy's less skilled sector. From a normative perspective, the adverse effects of the risk transfer are hazardous, particularly those that occur despite the absence of the risk. The least fortunate employees suffer as they are exposed to instability regarding their earnings and leisure time, which hinders their capacity to prepare for the future and, as a result, their autonomy and notion of value. Furthermore, it indirectly damages the community through actions that frequently violate basic standards of justice (Bieber & Moggia, 2020).

The total population of the labour force is anticipated to increase over time because of the gig economy's predicted surge in employment opportunities. Macroeconomically speaking, as the number of sources of production in this instance, human capital increases, the growth in the labour force is anticipated to boost the economy's potential output overall (Pande, 2024). The gig economy's impact on social safeguards, employment security, and inequality in income continues to raise concerns (Sankararaman et al., 2024). Many gig workers experience financial instability since they frequently may not have access to health insurance, retirement plans, and other benefits that come with full-time employment. Gig workers may find it challenging to make financial plans due to the "feast or famine" situation caused by revenue volatility. Because people who only use gig work could have greater difficulties than those who have steady, traditional jobs, this circumstance can worsen economic inequality (Matsangou, 2024). Digital technologies will likely drive economic expansion, but it is unclear how they might affect jobs (Walwei, 2016).

By giving possibilities to people who might encounter obstacles to traditional work, such as caretakers, students, or people with impairments, the gig economy can increase involvement

in the job market. The result of this inclusivity may be a more varied workforce. By enabling people to make money off their assets and abilities, the gig economy encourages entrepreneurship. Greater creativity and the establishment of novel business models may result from this, boosting the local economy (ParkUniversity, 2024). Since gig work increases consumer spending, it can boost local economies. Because gig workers frequently spend their money locally, local companies and services may benefit. Even though some gig workers might make more money than regular employees, many of them deal with unstable incomes and no benefits, which might worsen economic inequality. A divided labour market in which high-skilled gig workers prosper while low-skilled workers suffer could result from this discrepancy (Matsangou, 2024).

3.3 Interactions between Demographic Factors and the Gig Economy

Comprehending the demographics of gig workers is crucial to knowing and appreciating the unique characteristics present in this ever-changing and dynamic industry (Peterson, 2023). The "gig economy," which makes up as much as 12% of the world's job market, is especially promising for women and young people in poor nations. The need for gig workers is now dominated by wealthy nations (World Bank Group, 2023), but emerging nations are seeing a far higher pace of growth, according to the publication (Datta et al., 2023). For instance, job posts on the biggest digital platform increased by 130% in Sub-Saharan Africa, compared to only 14% in North America. Nearly 60% of businesses polled in developing nations said they were increasingly outsourcing gig labour. Just over 50% of affluent nations made the same statement. Young people are drawn to gig labour because it allows them to acquire novel abilities, make money, balance employment, school, or pursue alternative careers. Six out of ten gig workers reside in smaller cities distant from the major population places, and women are more likely than men to participate in the digital gig sector compared to the overall labour market.

Although low-skilled gig employment provides many with a financial safety net, it is uncertain whether it improves the socioeconomic status of economically disadvantaged young people. For most low-income young adults, the unskilled gig economy offered few opportunities to develop useful skills or make contacts that might aid in the development of a career path. For most low-income young people, the absence of employee perks, loneliness, hidden expenses, and little influence over working circumstances were significant disadvantages. Although the tech platforms made gig labour easily accessible, low-income young people found the work environment to be difficult due to unclear regulations governing cooperation (Almeida & O'Reilly, 2020).

Vučeković et al. (2023) claim that satisfaction of expectations in terms of finances and expertise. Ultimately, job satisfaction did not seem to be significantly impacted by gender. The satisfaction of economic and work demands, which are correlated with long professional experience, was higher among older freelancers. Freelancers with higher levels of education are typically less happy with the satisfaction of their professional and personal standards. Policymakers, business owners, and aspiring entrepreneurs may find it easier to plan for this type of employment in the future if they have a greater awareness of the way the area's demographics, technological systems, and jobs have impacted the welfare of independent contractors. Velocity Global (2024) states that gig labour is common worldwide, and the United

States has one of the largest markets and clientele for it. It is anticipated that the worldwide freelance market will continue to expand at a 15% annualized growth rate. Clients in the United States account for 44% of the gig economy's total revenue.

3.4 Policies and Interventions to Support Transitions Between Gig and Traditional Employment

Regarding digital platform workers, there is still much to learn. Some elements are obvious, even though more thorough data is needed to create suitable policy measures to guarantee gig workers' entry to basic worker security measures. Caro et al. (2021) emphasise that there are risks associated with not regularizing the gig economy, even though the gig economy has advantages in terms of flexibility. On a personal level, the gig economy transfers the uncertainty traditionally surrounding business ownership to employees least equipped to handle it. Macroeconomically, the low wages and the sites' lack of transparency regarding who is doing this kind of work make it challenging to collect social security taxes, which could harm the welfare system at the cost of the businesses that profit from it.

Gig workers frequently receive poor pay, sometimes beneath the legal minimum wage; they frequently experience financial instability; and they often complain of wasting money due to technical issues with digital platforms (Zipperer et al., 2022). To safeguard themselves, gig workers must have enforceable contracts, and national and international lawmakers must give priority to innovative ways to provide jobs for the world's swiftly expanding population (Palhad et al., 2023). A thorough policy framework is necessary as the gig economy develops quickly for legislators to handle its many facets and realize its full potential. The gig economy presents several issues that necessitate a thorough regulatory response, yet simultaneously holds up enormous promise for innovation, job versatility, and customer service. Supply-side, demand-side, and enabling policies make up the suggested policy framework adopted in this study (see Figure 1) (O'Sullivan & Homsy, 2023).

The popularity of non-traditional employment will only increase, but policy adjustments might impede or speed up the development. Non-traditional labour also offers an alternate safety net during bad economic times (Oyer, 2020). Workers must be able to negotiate the changing labour landscape with more security and opportunity, which requires effective regulations and interventions to facilitate the gig economy and regular employment transitions. An integrated strategy that promotes a balanced coexistence of gig and traditional employment models can be formed by encouraging cooperation between gig platforms, traditional businesses, and legislators. World Bank Group (2020) emphasises that contemporarily, it is not feasible to offer practical policy recommendations. To determine characteristics and turning points, that is, exactly what laws and policies are "insufficient" and what is "excessive," more empirical research is required.

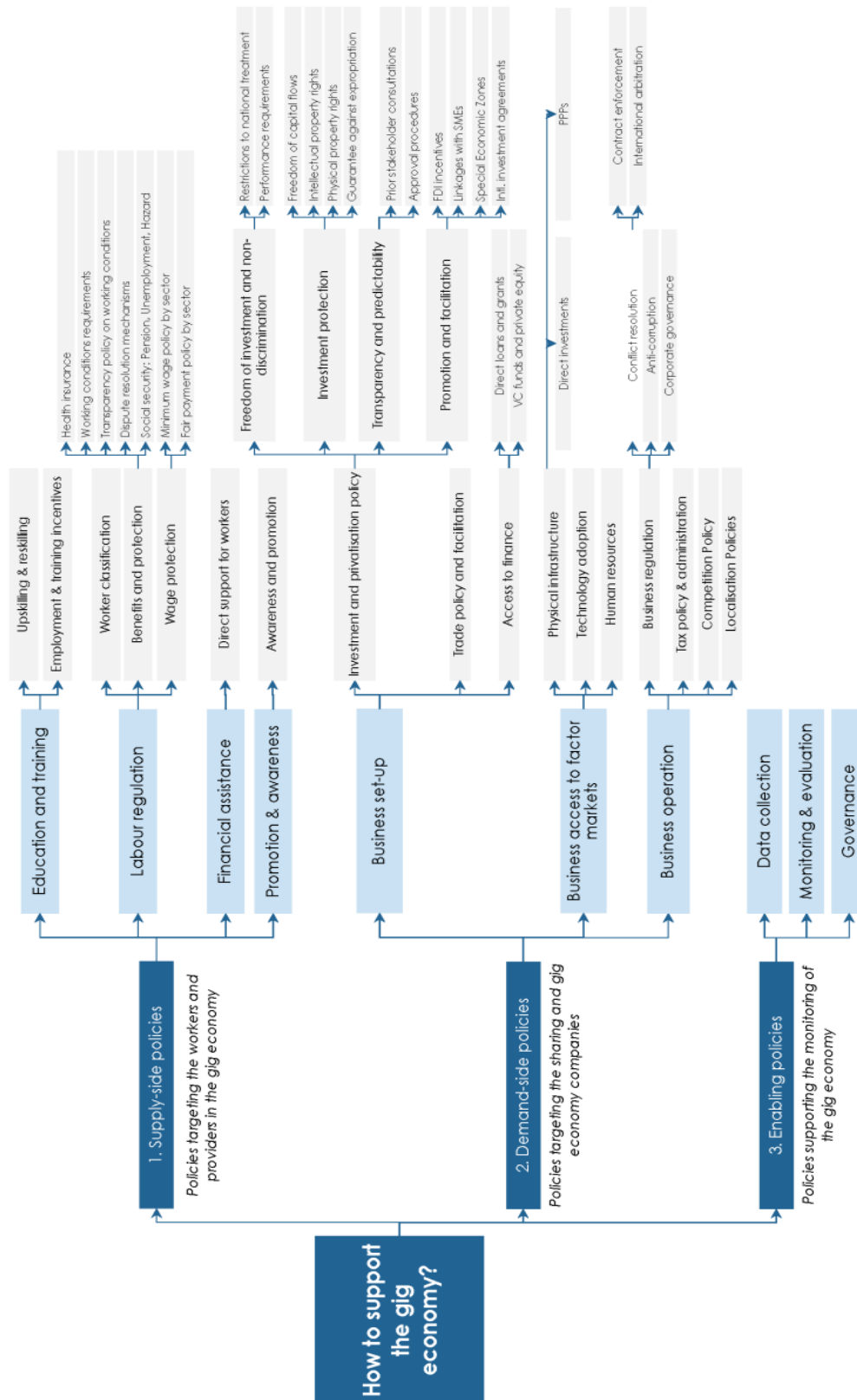


Figure 1. The Gig Economy Policy Framework (O’Sullivan & Homsy, 2023)

4. Proposed Model

Proposed Model: Impact of Emerging Gig Economy Inclinations on Traditional Employment Patterns.

Framework Overview

A combination of three main dimensions: workforce dynamics, economic implications, and policy responses, the proposed model seeks to examine the relationship between the gig economy and traditional employment patterns, highlighting how new gig economy trends impact labour markets, worker experiences, and regulatory frameworks, see figure 2.

Justification for the Proposed Model Components

The three main dimensions of the proposed model: Workforce Dynamics, Economic Implications, and Policy Responses are defended because taken together, they offer a comprehensive framework for analysing the gig economy's complex effects. This framework captures the macro-level effects on the economy, the micro-level encounters of single workers, and the essential regulatory interventions required to effectively manage this shift. This fills in the gaps in the manuscript's comprehension of economic uncertainty, demographic dynamics, and efficient policy design.

Key Components

- Workforce Dynamics
 - Flexibility and Autonomy: Employees in the gig economy have more freedom to decide when and how much they work, which can boost job satisfaction and cause instability.
 - Skill Diversification: Gig workers can gain various skills that will improve their employability, but they may also face difficulties in more traditional industries that require specific knowledge.
 - Shift in Employer-Employee Relationships: With businesses depending more on independent contractors rather than full-time employees, the gig economy is changing the traditional employer-employee interaction.
- Economic Implications
 - Labor Market Transformation: A more divided labour market may result from the gig economy's ability to both eliminate full-time jobs and generate new ones.
 - Income Variability: The erratic wages that gig workers frequently receive might affect their buying power and financial security and hinder economic growth.
 - Impact on Traditional Sectors: As more people turn to gig work, traditional businesses may see a labour shortage and heightened competition for competent workers.
- Policy Responses
 - Regulatory Frameworks: To ensure worker protections and equitable remuneration, governments may need to modify labour laws to reflect the difficulties presented by gig work.
 - Support Systems: Programmes like training courses, financial literacy materials, and portable benefits can help gig workers switch to regular jobs or improve the sustainability of their gig business.

- Economic Strategies: Using the flexibility of gig agreements and fostering stability, policymakers might support hybrid employment models that blend regular and gig work.

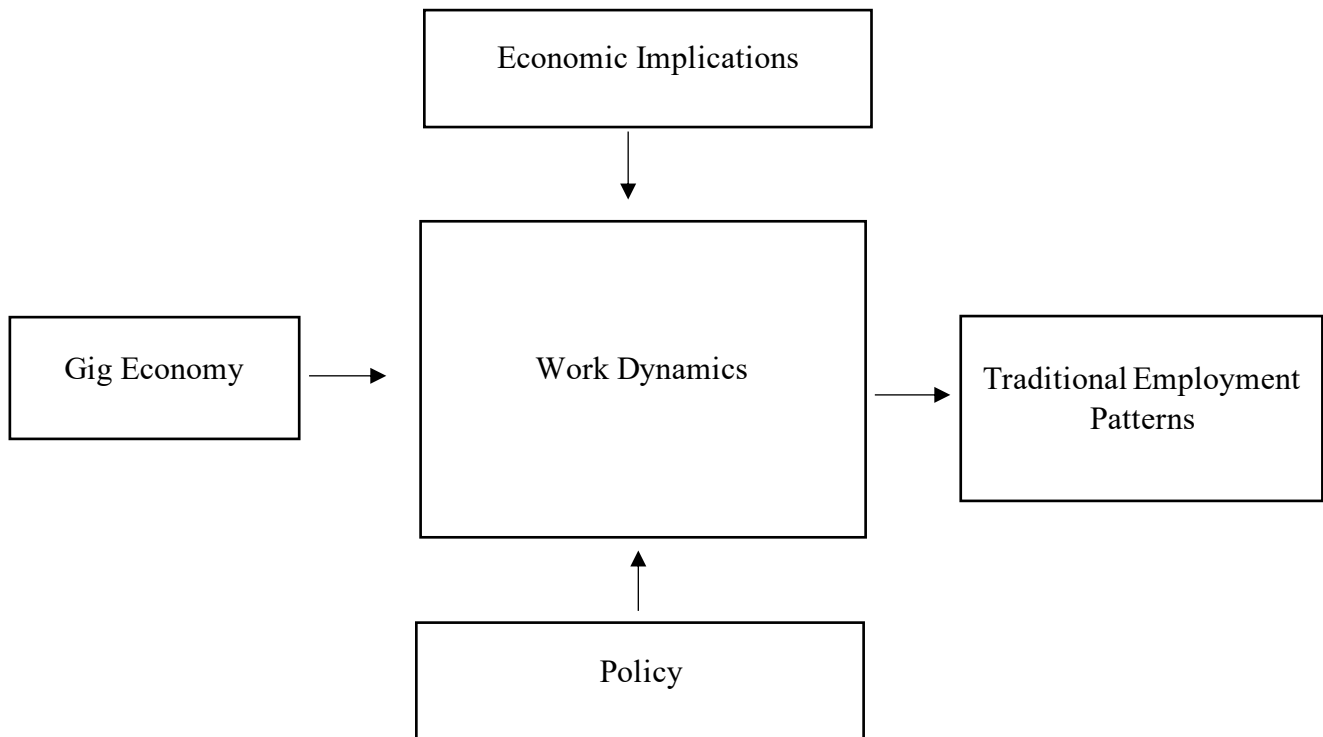


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

This framework appears to show that work dynamics are a mediator, while economic implications and policy are moderators, and the gig economy is independent.

Hypotheses for the Model:

H1: The gig economy's widespread presence significantly contributes to the shift in traditional employment patterns toward more flexible and unconventional work arrangements.

H2: The relationship between the gig economy and traditional employment patterns is mediated by workforce dynamics, which include flexibility, autonomy, skill diversification, and altered employer-employee interactions.

H3: The association between the gig economy and traditional work patterns is moderated by economic implications, particularly labour market transformation and income unpredictability, making the relationship greater in high-precarity economic environments.

H4: The relationship between the gig economy and traditional employment patterns is moderated by policy responses (such as support networks and regulatory frameworks). This means that robust, encouraging policies bolster the positive effects (like innovation) while reducing the negative ones (like instability).

H5: Rather than displacing established patterns entirely, the interaction impact between gig economy tendencies and pro-gig economy governmental measures will be substantial, resulting in more sustainable hybrid employment structures.

Model Application

Given the model's adaptability, scholars and decision-makers may evaluate the precise effects of gig economy trends in various geographical areas or sectors. Stakeholders can more effectively navigate the changing labour landscape and promote an open and long-term future of work by looking at how the components interact and identifying potential strategies to mitigate adverse impacts while taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the gig economy.

Assessing, Gathering, and Examining Information for a Gig Economy Structure

Establishing precise measures for every variable is an essential first step in operationalizing the suggested model. Either objective or subjective metrics can be used to measure the independent variable of the gig economy. Objectively, this includes the proportion of the workforce working on a platform or under a short-term contract; this information is frequently obtained from platform-provided statistics or national labour surveys, such as the Contingent Worker Supplement in the United States (International Labour Organisation, 2021). Utilizing psychometric measures that gauge opinions regarding autonomy and flexible work schedules, surveys can personally quantify "gig inclination" (Reisinger & Fetterer, 2021). Macroeconomic indicators like the fall in full-time, permanent employment rates, the rise of hybrid models of employment in traditional organizations, and industry-level studies of job security and retention can be used to measure the dependent variable, Traditional Employment Patterns (Walwei, 2016; Mas & Pallais, 2020).

The mediating variable, workforce dynamics, necessitates a multifaceted measurement strategy. Validated measures that measure employees' control over their schedules and responsibilities can be used to evaluate flexibility and autonomy. One way to quantify skill diversification is to monitor the range of jobs or projects that an employee works on over time, possibly using longitudinal skill inventories or digital trace data. Although it tends to be qualitative, the change in relationships between employers and employees can be measured using indicators like as the proportion of contractors to full-time staff in businesses and sentiment evaluations of employment contracts (Countouris et al., 2023). Massive longitudinal panel surveys that follow the same gig and traditional workers throughout time and ask them about their working experiences, skill development, and career paths might be the optimal way to gather data for this concept. All macro and micro-level data are required for the moderating variable of Economic Implications. National accounts macroeconomic data can be used to analyze sectoral movements and calculate the overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contribution of gig employment. To determine the Gini coefficient, also known as the coefficient of variation of a worker's monthly salary, income variability should be evaluated at the micro level using thorough income diaries or access to anonymized banking transaction data (Matsangou, 2024). Organizational statistics on wage rivalry, hiring challenges, and profitability available from national statistical agencies or chambers of commerce can be used to analyze their effect on traditional sectors.

By developing a composite index, the second moderating variable, Policy Responses, may be measured. According to the existence and effectiveness of particular policies, such as the implementation of portable benefits plans, the reclassification of gig workers as employees, the development of fair pay algorithms, and the accessibility of government-sponsored training

initiatives specifically designed for gig workers, this index would assign scores to regions or nations (O'Sullivan & Homsy, 2023; Tran & Sokas, 2017). To code and assess various jurisdictions, data collection here includes the methodical examination of statutory information systems, policy papers, and reports from governments. A mixed-methods strategy is essential for gathering data. A stratified sample of gig workers, regular employees, and HR managers from various industries would be given structured surveys to complete, collecting quantitative data. Partnerships with platforms or sampling through social media advertising targeted at gig-related groups are effective tactics for overcoming the challenge of accessing a distributed gig workforce (Zipperer et al., 2022). In-depth interviews and focus groups would provide qualitative data, which is crucial for depth, to comprehend the subtleties of demographic disparities, the lived experiences of economic instability, and the perceived efficacy of current policies (Almeida & O'Reilly, 2020).

The investigation would test the proposed model using sophisticated statistical techniques. The longitudinal survey data would be subjected to a series of staged regressions (for example, using the PROCESS macro) or Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to demonstrate causation and test the mediation hypothesis (H2). This would ascertain whether workforce characteristics convey the gig economy's impact on traditional employment (H2a, H2b). The moderating effects would be tested using Multi-Group SEM or Moderated Regression Analysis (H3, H4). To determine whether there are notable differences in the strength of the association, the model is going to run independently for groups with strong versus weak policy contexts or high versus low-income variability. Thematic analysis would be used to examine the qualitative data to find emerging themes on policy needs, motivational factors, and economic precarity. In addition to improving the statistical results, these discoveries would assist in improving the quantitative measurements and reveal surprising connections, guaranteeing that the model is based on the actual experiences of the workforce. A thorough understanding of how, why, and under what circumstances the gig economy changes traditional work would be possible through the integration of findings. A creative fusion of large data (such as transaction data), conventional surveys, and qualitative insights is needed to experimentally validate this approach. Despite its methodological complexity, this strategy is required to give the "comprehensive data" required by the manuscript's conclusion and to go beyond theoretical discussion. Designing the focused, efficient policies required to navigate the future of work fairly requires this evidence.

5. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the impact of gig economy inclinations on traditional employment patterns and to develop a framework. By highlighting the effects of the gig economy on traditional employment, the findings in this paper significantly add to the body of knowledge and policy discussion surrounding gig workers, focusing on risks of economic instability for employees that engage in gig employment, interactions between demographic factors and the gig economy, and policies and interventions to support transitions between gig and traditional employment. The gig economy's growth is a fundamental and complex dynamic that is upending existing employment patterns. According to the suggested conceptual model, this impact is not direct; instead, it is mediated by changed workforce dynamics, including greater flexibility and different employer-employee relationships. It is also significantly

influenced by significant economic ramifications, such as income volatility and the differing degrees of policy responses. The gig economy presents a complex dichotomy for the modern workforce because, although it provides much-needed autonomy and is a viable option for several, it also brings with it serious drawbacks, such as economic precariousness, a lack of social protections, and the potential to worsen labour market inequality. The limitations of this study include the fact that review papers rely significantly on the studies they examine for quality and dependability, and that they do not offer original experimental data or conclusions, which may restrict their ability to offer fresh perspectives or advances in the field. The review's conclusions could be jeopardized if the research included has methodological errors.

For many people, gig employment offers flexibility and a variety of options, making it a strong substitute for regular jobs. However, there are drawbacks such as inconsistent income and no benefits. Policymakers must address these issues as the gig economy grows to guarantee that gig workers may prosper in this changing labour market. The gig economy has a wide range of long-term effects on jobs and regional economic growth, and it has the potential to drastically alter labour relations and economic systems. To guarantee that gig workers have access to basic worker security measures, thorough data is needed to create suitable policy measures. The gig economy's long-term effects on employment and local economic growth are complicated and call for a thorough evaluation of several variables, such as various kinds of jobs, revenue generation, income disparity, and regulatory requirements. Subsequent studies can concentrate on examining how the gig economy affects local economies, considering how it affects traditional firms, consumer spending, and job generation. Determine the gaps and potential areas for improvement in the current policies and actions aimed at assisting gig workers with their transition to regular employment. Perform longitudinal research to monitor the career paths of gig workers over time, looking at the factors that influence these transitions and the changes between gig and traditional employment.

FUNDING STATEMENT

This study was not supported by any grants from funding bodies in the public, private, or not-for-profit sectors.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

D.S. Mdhlalose (Conceptualization; Formal analysis; Visualisation; Supervision); D.S. Mdhlalose (Methodology; Data curation; Writing - original draft; Resources)

AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIALS

The data supporting this study's findings are available on request from the corresponding author

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad, N. (2021). Gig Workers: The New Employment Form in the New Economy. *Ulum Islamiyyah*, 33(4), 131-145. <https://doi.org/10.33102/uij.vol33nos4.419>
- Almeida, C. A., & O'Reilly, F. (2020). The Risks and Benefits of the Gig Economy for Low-Income Young Adults. *Jobs for the Future*. https://jfforg-prod-new.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/Gig_Economy_Report.pdf
- Anwar, M. A., & Graham, M. (2020). Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Freedom, Flexibility, Precarity and Vulnerability in the Gig Economy in Africa. *Competition and Change*, 25(2), 237-258. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1024529420914473>
- Bajwa, U., Gastaldo, D., Di Ruggiero, E., & Knorr, L. (2018). The health of workers in the global gig economy. *Globalization and Health*, 14(1), 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-018-0444-8>
- Bieber, F., & Moggia, J. (2020). Risk Shifts in the Gig Economy: The Normative Case for an Insurance Scheme against the Effects of Precarious Work. *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 29(3), 281-304. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jopp.12233>
- Caro, L. P., O'Higgins, N., & Berg, J. (2021). Young people and the gig economy. 38-52. <https://www.ilo.org/publications/young-people-and-gig-economy-luis-pinedo-caro-niall-ohiggins-and-janine>
- Chigori, D. T. (2024). Worker well-being in the digital economy: Lens through bibliometrics analysis. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22(0), a2773. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v22i0.2773>
- Countouris, N., De Stefano, V., Piasna, A., & Rainone, S. ed. (2023). The future of remote work. European Trade Union Institute (ETUI). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/374805838_The_future_of_remote_work
- Datta, N., Rong, C., Singh, S., Stinshoff, C., Iacob, N., Nigatu, N, S., Nxumalo, M., & Klimaviciute, L. (2023). Working Without Borders: The Promise and Peril of Online Gig Work. © Washington, DC: World Bank. <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/40066>
- Debgupta, I., & Bhattacharyya, S. (2024). Talent Acquisition and Retention in the Gig Economy: Exploring Innovative HRM Practices for the Modern Workforce. *Journal of Research in Business and Management*, 12(1), 84-90. www.questjournals.org
- Duc, D. T. V., Dat, T. T., Linh, D. H., & Phong, B. X. (2023). Measuring the digital economy in Vietnam. *Telecommunications Policy*, 48(3), 102683. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.telpol.2023.102683>
- Fatima, A. (2024). Examining the impact of the gig economy on employment and poverty reduction in India. *International Journal for Legal Research and Analysis*, 2(7), 1-16. <http://www.ijlra.com/>
- Hickson, J. (2024). Freedom, domination and the gig economy. *New Political Economy*, 29(2), 321-336. <https://doi:10.1080/13563467.2023.2254712>

- International Coaching Federation. (2023). Navigating the gig economy: Opportunities and challenges for coaches. The Future of Coaching. <https://thoughtleadership.org>
- International Labour Organisation. (2021). World Employment and Social Outlook 2021: The role of digital labour platforms in transforming the world of work. www.ilo.org/
- International Labour Organisation. (2022). Digitalization and Employment: A Review. www.ilo.org/publns/978-92-2-037252-4
- International Labour Organisation. (2024). Expansion of the Gig and Platform Economy in India: Opportunities for Employer and Business Member Organizations. <https://www.ilo.org/sites/>
- Kavese, K., Mbali, A., & Anyikwa, I. (2022). The gig economy, digital labour platforms, and independent employment in the Eastern Cape. Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative Council. ISBN 978-1-77593-119-5
- Kori, A. (2024). Gig Workers - Issues and Challenges. International journal of innovative research in technology, 10(12), 1010-1017. <https://ijirt.org/>
- M4Jam. (2021). The Gig Economy: The Future of the South African Gig Economy -2021 and Beyond. A M4Jam Whitepaper. <http://ti.appstage.co.za/App/Uploads/File/0/0/154975/White%20Paper%20-%20Future%20of%20The%20Gig%20Economy.pdf>
- Mas, A., & Pallais, A. (2020). Alternative work arrangements. Annual Review of Economics, 12(1), 631-658. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-economics-022020-032512>
- Matsangou, E. (2024). The gig economy and its long-term effects. World Finance: The Voice of The Market. <https://www.worldfinance.com/strategy/the-long-term-effects-of-the-gig-economy>
- Michael, J. A. (2023). Economics of the Gig Economy: Limitations of Data and Policy, 54 U. PAC. L. REV. 45 <https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/uoplawreview/vol54/iss1/10>
- O'Sullivan, A., & Homsy, F. (2023). The Gig Economy: A new challenge for policy makers. Whiteshield Public Policy and AI Economics. <https://whiteshield.ai/insights/the-gig-economy-a-new-challenge-for-policy-makers/>
- Oyer, P. (2020). The gig economy. IZA World of Labor. <https://doi.org/10.15185/izawol.471>
- Palhad, S., Onwubu, S., Singh, R., Thakur, R., Thakur, S., & Mkhize, G. (2023). The Benefits and Challenges of the Gig Economy: Perspective of Gig Workers and Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) in South Africa. African Journal of Inter/Multidisciplinary Studies, 5(1), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.51415/ajims.v5i1.1051>

- Pande, N. (2024). What are the economic implications of the rise of the gig economy on employment stability and benefits? *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, 26(10), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.9790/487x-2610070113>
- ParkUniversity. (2024). The Gig Economy: Shaping the Future of Work and Business. <https://www.park.edu/blog/the-gig-economy-shaping-the-future-of-work-and-business/>
- Pederson, L. L., Vingilis, E., Wickens, C. M., Koval, J., & Mann, R. E. (2020). Use of secondary data analyses in research: Pros and Cons. *J Addict Med Ther Sci*, 6(1), 058-060. <https://dx.doi.org/10.17352/2455-3484.000039>
- Peterson, C. (2023). Unveiling the Faces of the Gig Economy: Demographics of Gig Workers. *Association for Entrepreneurship*. <https://afeusa.org/articles/unveiling-the-faces-of-the-gig-economy-demographics-of-gig-workers/>
- Pratomo, D. S., Saputra, P. M. A., Asrofi, D. A. N., Natalia, C., & Zenritami, S. L. (2024). Gig Workers in the Digital Era in Indonesia: development, vulnerability and welfare. In *Advances in economics, business and management research/Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research* (pp. 47–60). https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-525-6_6
- Putzel-Kavanaugh, C., & Benton, M. (2024). Bridging the Gap between the Gig Economy and Migration Policy. *Migration Policy Institute*. www.migrationpolicy.org
- Reisinger, H., & Fetterer, D. (2021). Forget Flexibility. Your Employees Want Autonomy. *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2021/10/forget-flexibility-your-employees-want-autonomy>
- Ren, W., & Zhu, X. (2024). The age-based digital divides in China: Trends and socioeconomic differentials (2010–2020). *Telecommunications Policy*, 48(3), 102716–102716. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.telpol.2024.102716>
- Salmah, E., Astuti, E., & Harsono, I. (2024). Employee Engagement in the Gig Economy. *Management Studies and Business Journal (PRODUCTIVITY)*, 1(1), 116-122. <https://doi.org/10.62207/1e5dd842>
- Sankararaman, G., Rengaraju, N., Rengarajan, V., Vembu, N. R., & Indhumathi, D. (2024). Gig Economy's Impact on Workforce Dynamics and Economic Resilience. *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(6), 1627-1634. <https://doi.org/10.53555/kuey.v30i6.5561>
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research Methods for Business Students*. 8th ed. United Kingdom: Pearson.
- Smit, D. M., & Stopforth, G. (2023). An overview of categories of vulnerability among on-demand workers in the gig economy (Part 2). *Law, Democracy & Development*, 27, 149-182. <https://doi.org/10.17159/2077-4907/2023/1dd.v27.6>

- Tran, M., & Sokas, R. K. (2017). The gig economy and contingent work. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 59(4), e63–e66. <https://doi.org/10.1097/jom.0000000000000977>
- United States Agency for International Development. (2020). Gig work on digital platforms: Case Study 3: SweepSouth – Platform-Based Domestic Work. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00WHJ9.pdf
- Van Slageren, J., Herrmann, A. M., & Frenken, K. (2022). Is the online gig economy beyond national reach? A European analysis. *Socio-Economic Review*, 21(3), 1795-1821. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ser/mwac038>
- Velocity Global. (2024). 44 Eye-Opening Gig Economy Statistics For 2024. <https://velocityglobal.com/resources/blog/gig-economy-statistics/>
- Vu, A. N., & Nguyen, D. L. (2024). The gig economy: The precariat in a climate precarious world. *World Development Perspectives*, 34, 100596. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wdp.2024.100596>
- Vučeković, M., Avlijaš, G., Marković, M. R., Radulović, D., Dragojević, A., & Marković, D. (2023). The relationship between working in the “gig” economy and perceived subjective well-being in Western Balkan countries. *Front. Psychol.* 14:1180532. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1180532>
- Walwei, U. (2016). Digitalization and structural labour market problems: The case of Germany. ILO Research Paper No. 17. ISSN 2306-0875
- Wheatley, M. C. (2024). Redefining Work: The Gig Economy’s Impact on Work and Life. *Premier Journal of Business and Management*, 1:100005, 1-5. <https://doi.org/10.70389/PJBM.100005>
- World Bank Group. (2020). Adapting jobs policies and programs in the face of accelerated technological change. *Job Notes Issue No. 8*. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/537461588585311125/pdf/Adapting-Jobs-Policies-and-Programs-in-the-Face-of-Accelerated-Technological-Change.pdf>
- Zipperer, B., McNicholas, C., Poydock, P., Schneider, D., & Harknett, K. (2022). National survey of gig workers paints a picture of poor working conditions, low pay. Economic Policy Institute. <https://www.epi.org/publication/gig-worker-survey/>