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#### A Study on the Recruitment Process in the Digital Era Author: Anurag Sharma, MBA Student at Galgotia's University Abstract

The recruitment process has changed significantly with the rapidly evolving digital age. Earlier, where job ads were given in newspapers, now you can get them through various digital portals. It has significantly eradicated personnel bias from the hiring process. Now, we can see and use innovative digital forms to draw in, evaluate, and hire the best personnel. This change is more than just implementing new software; it's a fundamental reaffirmation of how technology can improve hiring procedures. The evolution of recruiting techniques in the Indian job market in the digital age is examined in this paper, focusing on the function of many digital tools such as job portals, Linked-in, and applicant tracking systems (ATS). However, the focus of this paper will be on the effectiveness of these digital tools in hiring the top candidates. Is ATS free from bias and can be trusted? This paper will further explore the questions like whether a country like India where the informal sector is huge can leverage technology in hiring candidates.

This study attempts to offer an in-depth investigation of hiring trends, opportunities, and obstacles in digital recruiting procedures by using a mixed-methods approach that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative data. The results will help policymakers, HR experts, and job seekers better grasp the wider effects of digital recruiting on India's labor market.

**Keywords**: Digital Recruitment, Indian labor market, ATS, Algorithm bias, Unorganized sector

#### I. Introduction

Traditional newspaper job ads have given way to advanced internet platforms in the digital era, drastically altering the recruitment process. Social media platforms, digital portals, and AI-powered hiring tools have made it possible for businesses to access a large talent pool. It has not only improved efficiency but also made recruitment a data-driven process. In India, a nation with a sizable workforce that includes both formal and informal occupations, digital recruiting has significantly altered the landscape. Talent acquisition and hiring practices have been totally transformed by platforms like LinkedIn, Naukri.com, and intelligent Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS). More than 60% of Indian small firms are using LinkedIn for their hiring needs, according to a McKinsey & Company survey. This demonstrates a definite move toward hiring through online resources.

#### **Literature Review**

In their study, Chauhan et al. (2022) examined how artificial intelligence (AI) and automation simplify hiring by improving decision-making, increasing efficiency, and expanding applicant sourcing strategies. They also explored the transformative impact of AI-driven recruitment, highlighting its potential to reduce manual effort, increase precision in candidate selection, and refine talent acquisition strategies. By concentrating on the real-world applications of AI and automation, the study offers valuable insights into how organizations use these tools to modernize and improve hiring practices in a job market that is becoming more digitally connected. The influence of social capital on talent acquisition tactics in the Indian startup ecosystem was examined by Mukul et al. (2021).

Social capital is all about the relationships, trust, and social norms that people and organizations use to get resources like job opportunities. In the Indian startup scene, social

capital shows how important networks—such as alumni groups, past employers, mentorships, or shared cultural backgrounds—can be for hiring.

Many startups, especially in their early days, rely on the networks of their founders and initial employees to find new talent rather than just sticking to formal application processes or tests. This can speed up hiring and help make sure new hires fit the company culture, but it can also lead to biases and make it harder for people who don't have access to those informal networks. While these connections can help build trust and reduce hiring risks, they can also create exclusivity. For example, candidates from well-known schools or urban areas might get an edge over equally qualified folks from less privileged or rural backgrounds. This focus on closed networks can limit diversity and innovation in the long run. So, social capital acts as both a helper and a barrier in hiring. It helps startups deal with a lack of information and resources, but it also raises concerns about fairness and access in India's changing job market.

Even in the era of digital hiring social capital plays an important role and it is very evident from the Linked-in network and referrals. The news of job vacancy reach faster and to some extent only to them who is the part of the network

Concerns regarding the efficiency and equity of digital hiring methods still do exist. It has been claimed that Large language models like ChatGPT have a social bias in applicant screening settings, and due to which models potentially reinforce preexisting hiring prejudices. Job postings that are unclear or badly written may unintentionally discourage qualified applicants, while the writing styles of applicants may reveal cultural quirks that affect their chances of being chosen.

Algorithmic ranking bias is a serious issue as well. AI is used by many recruiting sites to rate and assess candidates, but these methods frequently perpetuate existing disparities. Furthermore, networking and social links play a critical role in hiring since unofficial professional contacts often provide some groups an unfair advantage while limiting prospects for others.

In India, a huge chunk of the workforce is part of the informal labor market. If you take a look at the Periodic Labour Force Survey from 2021-22 that was put together by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, you'll find that approx 10.96 crore of people working in India don't have formal jobs. This means many of these workers don't have official contracts, which can leave them without benefits like health insurance or a pension, and they often face ups and downs in their earnings. Recently, we've seen a big shift with digital technology coming into play. More people are turning to online platforms for job opportunities and recruitment. This trend is changing the way people find work, making it easier for some to connect with potential employers. It's an interesting time as these digital tools might shake up the traditional job scene a bit. But it also raises questions about how these changes will affect the workers who are still in that informal setup. The promise of digital inclusion and economic upliftment through these platforms is contested.

A central debate revolves around whether digital platforms like UrbanClap (now Urban Company) truly formalize informal labor or merely reconfigure its precariousness under a tech-driven façade. UrbanClap is a digital platform that connects freelance service providers electricians, beauticians, cleaners, and technicians with urban customers.

This paper examines the implications of digital recruitment through platforms like Urban Company on India's informal sector. It intends to address important issues such as algorithmic bias and accessibility for workers in the informal sector while analyzing the function and efficacy of digital recruiting tools by looking at the development of recruitment in the Indian employment market. Using a mixed-methods approach that blends qualitative and quantitative analysis, this study will offer insightful information to help job seekers, HR professionals, and legislators navigate the world of digital recruiting.

#### **Research Question and Hypothesis**

In order to gain a deeper insight into the multi-dimensional effect of digital recruitment on India's employment system, this research aims to address a set of interconnected research questions and hypothesize logically with respect to each of them.

The initial research question investigates how digital platforms have shaped the efficiency and inclusiveness of the recruitment process in India. It queries: How has digital recruitment by means of sites such as LinkedIn, Naukri.com, and AI-based ATS changed the efficiency and accessibility of Indian hiring? The query stems from the observation that these technologies have made hiring simpler and faster. However, the accompanying hypothesis suggests that although the platforms increase efficiency and expand access, they are not necessarily going to reduce biases or enhance inclusivity for every social group. Chauhan et al.'s (2022) findings underpin this hypothesis, acknowledging that AI enhances decision-making yet may also inherit human biases due to training data nature. This means that the rationale for why this question answers this hypothesis revolves around the dual nature of operation gains versus moral concerns in AI recruitment.

The second question of research explores how social capital informs recruitment policies within the Indian startup environment. Precisely, it seeks to understand: To what extent are hiring practices within India's startup ecosystem affected by social capital and professional networks? This question is informed by the socio-economic reality where job opportunities are largely dictated by informal recruitment policies and professional relationships. The related hypothesis maintains that social capital is influential within such spaces, perhaps

constraining diversity and inclusion. Mukul et al. (2021) have illustrated how Indian startups often depend on existing networks given resource limitations, which could reduce exposure to broader, more diverse pools of talent. The reasoning here borrows from the fact that although social networks can ease trust and hasten recruitment, they can also solidify exclusionary trends.

The third research question is posited in terms of ethical and technological issues of algorithmic hiring decision-making: What are the possible biases and limitations of AI-based recruitment tools, and how do they impact hiring decisions in India? The related hypothesis suggests that although the tools can facilitate the recruitment process, they tend to amplify society's biases locked into past hiring data. Many researchers have sounded warnings regarding algorithmic bias, such as the possibility that large language models such as ChatGPT could inadvertently mirror and perpetuate social biases. This link between hypothesis and question is based on the argument that technological systems, instead of being neutral, are highly situated in social contexts and need to be assessed through a fairness and transparency lens.

Looking beyond the formal sector, the fourth question shifts focus to India's expansive informal labor force: How do online hiring sites deal with or reinforce inequality within India's informal labor force? This question is central to learning about the large-scale ramifications of digital inclusion. The hypothesis would be that these digital sites do not sufficiently alleviate these challenges since they usually prefer applicants holding formal credentials and regulated work experiences. This is especially relevant in India, where informal workers can be denied access to the internet, digital skills, or professional qualifications, all of which tend to be prerequisites for using digital platforms. The reasoning here is that unless they are specifically designed to be inclusive, digital tools have the potential to perpetuate socio-economic segregation. Lastly, the fifth research question critically analyzes the gig economy platforms' role in reconfiguring informal labor: Can digital platforms such as UrbanClap (Urban Company) successfully formalize informal labor, or do they merely reconfigure it under a new, technology-led model? The hypothesis here is that although such platforms might provide some level of formalization such as the offering of steady client connections, digital visibility, and some quality controls they don't essentially resolve the uncertainty surrounding informal work. Workers on such platforms like UrbanClap usually still lack job security, health coverage, or long-term work benefits. The reasoning behind this hypothesis is consistent with arguments that digital platforms can, in the name of innovation, solidify labor vulnerabilities by offloading conventional employer obligations onto workers while maintaining control through algorithmic management and rating systems.

Each of these research questions and hypotheses is interconnected, creating a coherent framework for studying the dynamics of digital recruitment in India. Collectively, they provide a rich understanding that moves beyond superficial efficiency measures to probe deeper structural and ethical concerns. By engaging with themes of access, equity, and precarity, this study hopes to make an intervention towards a more comprehensive analysis of how digital recruitment technologies are reshaping the Indian job market. The tensions between technological affordances and socio-economic conditions at the heart of this inquiry are key to developing important insights for job seekers, human resource experts, policymakers, and scholars seeking to understand the future of work in an increasingly digitized world.

#### **Research Objective**

The central aim of this study is to critically analyze the transformative role of digital platforms in recruitment in India, highlighting the implications for different stakeholders i.e.,

employers, employees, policymakers, and platform developers. As digital technologies increasingly act as mediators of employment opportunities, this research aims to examine not only the functional effectiveness of these tools but also their socio-economic implications. By taking a multi-dimensional analytical lens, the research aims to provide both theoretical insight and empirical footing into the relentless transformation of recruitment mechanisms in the digital era. In so doing, it provokes questions on access, inclusion, transparency, and formalization of labor, providing an overarching view of the ways in which digital systems are re-making India's employment regime.

This inquiry is not scholarly alone; it has significant managerial significance. For professionals working across human resources, operations, and strategic management, the research will offer actionable advice. From streamlining digital recruitment pipelines and minimizing operational expense, to managing algorithmic bias and maximizing inclusive hiring practices, the insights from the study can inform the crafting of strong, fair recruitment policies. In addition, in a world where corporate social responsibility (CSR) and brand identity are increasingly linked to fair labor practices, the study can help decision-makers bring their recruitment practices into alignment with ethical standards and ESG objectives. In this way, the research can inform not just how firms recruit and retain talent, but also how they navigate the complicated nexus of technology, regulation, and social equity in India today.

#### **II. Research Design and Methodology**

To comprehensively explore the effects of digital recruitment platforms on India's vast workforce, this study will employ a mixed-methods research design integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This methodology is chosen to capture both the measurable outcomes and the nuanced experiences of workers engaged through digital platforms.

The primary data collection methods will include surveys, semi-structured interviews, and platform-based data analysis. The survey will be administered to a statistically significant sample of gig workers registered on Urban Company across major metropolitan cities such as Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Kolkata, given the urban focus of such platforms.

A stratified random sampling technique will be employed to ensure representativeness across different service categories and to account for variations in gender, experience level, and income bracket. This approach allows for the disaggregation of data to assess how digital recruitment affects different segments within the informal sector.

Qualitative data will be gathered through in-depth semi-structured interviews with a purposive sample of 40-60 participants, including workers, HR managers, and economists. This will help capture the lived experiences of workers, particularly around themes such as algorithmic bias, work precarity, labor conditions, income variability, and job satisfaction. Interviews will be recorded (with consent), transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis. Quantitative survey data will be analyzed to examine the correlations between variables such as work frequency, income stability, job satisfaction, and access to benefits.

Additionally, platform data such as algorithmic job matching patterns, client feedback scores, and cancellation rates will be examined, where access is granted, to understand how digital mediation structures work opportunities. Secondary data sources will include government datasets, policy briefs, and prior academic studies on the informal sector and digital labor. This triangulation of sources will enhance the robustness of the research findings and mitigate biases inherent in any single method.

Ethical clearance will be obtained before data collection, with strict adherence to confidentiality and informed consent protocols. This research design not only allows for the generation of statistically reliable data but also gives voice to worker narratives that are often excluded from techno-optimist accounts of digital transformation. The findings will contribute to policy discourse on digital labor, particularly concerning labor rights, platform accountability, and the future of informal work in a digitalizing economy.

#### Sampling design and Plan

Given that the interview questions were open-ended, a qualitative research scale was employed. This means the focus was on descriptive, non-numerical data, with participants sharing their lived experiences, thoughts, and perspectives. The data was later analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns and themes related to the research objectives. The target population for this study consisted of HR professionals who actively use digital hiring platforms, such as Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), to manage recruitment processes. This includes individuals working in:

- Talent acquisition
- Human resources management roles
- Small, medium, and large organizations across industries.
- Job Seekers (skilled)
- Semi-skilled Job seekers
- Gig and freelance workers
- Economists and labor market analysts

• Other Stakeholder

#### **Sampling Frame & Units**

The sampling frame consisted of HR professionals who:

- 1. Use digital hiring platforms with ATS functionality.
- 2. Are involved in the active hiring process
- 3. Are willing to share insights into their hiring practices and experiences.
- 4. Operate within companies of various sizes

Participants were selected from a combination of sources, including:

- Online HR communities and forums
- Industry LinkedIn groups
- Professional associations and networks
- Referrals from colleagues or acquaintances

A total of 51 respondents from across all identified groups participated. Participants were selected using a purposive sampling method to ensure that only individuals with relevant experience or expertise were included. Invitations were sent via email, professional networks, and digital communities. Out of 100 distributed questionnaires and interview requests, 75 responded but only 51 valid responses were received. This is considered a good rate for small-scale, targeted research.

Purposive sampling was used to ensure that the HR professionals selected had firsthand experience with ATS, digital recruitment platforms, and associated biases in candidate selection. Participants were invited to participate based on recommendations from HR-focused networks and platforms or through direct outreach to individuals identified as key informants in the field. A snowball sampling technique was employed, where initial participants referred other HR professionals who met the study criteria.

#### Fieldwork

The fieldwork phase of this study was conducted over a period of four weeks. It was carried out primarily through digital channels to align with the study's theme of digital recruitment and to reach a geographically dispersed group of respondents. The choice to conduct the study online was also practical given the nature of the target groups, many of whom operate in virtual or remote professional environments.

The data collection tools—including surveys and interview invitations—were distributed through various platforms such as:

- LinkedIn, for connecting with HR professionals, recruiters, and job seekers.
- Freelancing platforms (e.g., Upwork, Fiverr, Freelancer forums), to reach gig workers.
- Professional mailing lists and email invitations for economists and industry experts.
- Social media groups and community forums, to engage general job seekers and independent contractors.

Respondents were asked to complete structured questionnaires online, while interviews were conducted via video conferencing tools such as Zoom and Google Meet.

Although the research primarily focused on respondents within urban centers, where digital recruitment practices are most common, it also included participants from semi-urban and remote areas. This approach provided insights into regional disparities in access to digital recruitment tools and helped assess the inclusivity of current digital hiring trends.

Before the full-scale rollout of surveys and interviews, a pre-testing phase was conducted to ensure the clarity, relevance, and functionality of the data collection instruments. Pre-testing was an essential part of the research design and significantly improved the overall quality of the study. The pre-test was conducted with a small, representative group of 7 individuals drawn from the same categories as the main study. This group included 2 HR professionals, 2 job seekers, 1 gig worker, 1 economist, and 1 platform recruiter. Participants were asked to complete the survey and participate in a short feedback session to reflect on their experience.

The pre-testing phase revealed several areas for improvement:

- Some questions were too broad and needed to be narrowed down for more specific responses.
- Certain terminologies (e.g., ATS, talent pipeline) were unclear to non-HR respondents, prompting the inclusion of brief explanations or simplified wording.
- The length of the survey was initially too long; it was revised to reduce cognitive load and ensure a completion time of under 30 minutes.
- In the interview format, some questions overlapped, leading to redundancy. The revised version ensured better thematic grouping and progression.
- From a functional perspective, the pre-test highlighted minor issues with mobile responsiveness of the online survey form, which was corrected to ensure accessibility for participants using smartphones or tablets.

The feedback and insights from the pre-testing phase led to meaningful refinements in the data collection process. These changes improved both the quality of the data and the overall participant experience:

- Tailored questionnaires were finalized for each stakeholder group to enhance relevance and engagement. This ensured that HR professionals were not answering questions meant for job seekers, and vice versa.
- Improved clarity in the language and examples used made the survey more accessible to respondents from diverse educational and professional backgrounds.
- The structure and sequencing of questions were adjusted to follow a more logical flow, which helped maintain respondent interest and increased completion rates.
- Based on the pre-test response time, time estimates were shared with participants in the main study to encourage completion.

#### **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Following the completion of the fieldwork and data collection phase, a systematic data preparation and processing procedure was implemented to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and usability of the responses for analysis. Given that both qualitative and quantitative data were collected through online surveys and interviews, this phase played a critical role in shaping the quality of the final results.

All survey responses collected via digital forms were automatically stored in a spreadsheet format, which minimized manual data entry errors. Interview transcripts were prepared using recorded sessions and automated transcription tools, followed by manual proofreading for accuracy.

During the editing process, the following issues were identified and addressed:

• Ambiguities in open-ended responses: Some participants gave vague answers like "depends on situation" or "varies," which required contextual interpretation. Where necessary, these responses were clarified using related answers within the same form.

- Unstructured responses: Gig workers, in particular, tended to give informal or loosely structured answers. These were edited for clarity and coded using thematic keywords to facilitate qualitative analysis.
- Multiple-choice question inconsistencies: A few respondents selected contradictory options. These responses were flagged and reviewed during the analysis phase, with some excluded based on evident misunderstanding of the question.

Given the small sample size (n = 51), descriptive and basic inferential statistical techniques were used to analyze the quantitative data. The statistical methods employed were chosen for their appropriateness in identifying patterns, summarizing trends, and comparing viewpoints across different groups. Frequencies and Percentages were used to describe categorical data. Measures of central tendency (mean, median) were used for Likert scale items to determine overall sentiment on specific questions like ease of use, trust in digital systems, or satisfaction with platform outcomes, and open-ended responses from surveys and interviews were grouped under key themes.

With a modest sample size of 51 valid responses, complex statistical tests such as regression or factor analysis were not appropriate due to limited statistical power. Since the study integrated both qualitative and quantitative data, thematic analysis was used alongside numerical summaries. This dual approach was intended to triangulate findings, ensuring that patterns observed in quantitative data were supported or contextualized by personal experiences shared in interviews and open responses.

#### **Data Finding**

#### Finding no. - 1



The chart gives a clear look at the hiring platforms used by 51 candidates. It shows that LinkedIn is the favorite, with Employee Referrals right behind it. Indeed and Naukri.com, which are popular job boards in India, are also mentioned but don't get as much action. Interestingly, Company Websites are the least popular choice. While there are other job sites out there, LinkedIn and word-of-mouth referrals seem to take the lead. This indicates that personal connections are really important when it comes to getting hired. Candidates who know people from school, previous jobs, or other networks appear to have a better chance of landing a job. This suggests that beyond skills and experience, being connected to others can really boost job prospects, a helpful takeaway for those job hunting, HRs, and decision-makers.

Finding no- 2



This study looked at the experiences of 51 job seekers navigating the job market in India as it becomes more digital. It raised important questions about fairness and how well resume screening works, especially when AI systems like Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) are involved.

One key takeaway is that only 9 out of 51 people felt happy with how companies evaluate their resumes. This means a whopping 82% of applicants were not satisfied, citing issues like a lack of transparency, unfair practices, or feeling like their skills weren't recognized properly. Interestingly, 45 respondents said they had made their resumes ATS-friendly. This typically meant using keywords, simple layouts, avoiding fancy designs, and tailoring content to specific job descriptions. While this shows an awareness of how these systems operate, it also points to a bigger issue: many still feel their hard work isn't paying off, as getting shortlisted remains elusive, even after making changes. Even those who tweaked their resumes for ATS often found themselves not selected, showing a gap between what applicants do and how the system responds. This raises concerns about whether ATS is too rigid, can't adapt to different career paths, or unintentionally overlooks unique candidates. The results also reveal extra stress for candidates, especially those from underrepresented groups or non-English-speaking backgrounds, who may lack the know-how to create resumes that fit algorithm





The data reveals that most HR managers, specifically 43 out of 51, still stick with traditional hiring methods, like going through agencies or tapping into their own personal networks. That said, UrbanClap is slowly gaining traction. In fact, 8 of those surveyed are either using the platform or are in the process of trying it out for filling support roles in their offices. This shift suggests that there's a subtle but real move towards using tech solutions, especially when it comes to filling flexible or temporary positions. It's interesting to see how things are changing little by little in the hiring landscape.

#### Finding No- 4



It looks like most of the service providers on UrbanClap are actually entrepreneurs or small business owners. They use the platform to find new customers and grow their businesses. Many of these folks have small teams and manage relationships with multiple clients, which is pretty common for them.

A good number of people using the app aren't just solo workers without any business setup. This shows that UrbanClap plays a role in promoting small business ventures, but it's important to note that they operate in a somewhat informal way. That means these workers have to handle their own risks and cover their own business expenses. It's interesting how technology can empower small businesses, but it also places the onus on the workers to navigate those challenges on their own.

#### Finding No- 05



This dataset gives us a detailed look into the experiences of 35 different workers involved in various types of gig and platform jobs. It includes a mix of people like platform workers, freelancers, economists, HR professionals, labor union reps, and moderators. They each share their insights about their work situations through selected snippets from interviews. When we look at the different roles, we notice some key themes emerging. One of the biggest problems these workers face is job insecurity. Many express their frustrations about not knowing when their next gig will come, irregular schedules, and not having steady paychecks. This unpredictability lines up with the way they earn money; workers often describe their income as being a rollercoaster, going from good paydays to dry spells, often dictated by algorithms or what clients decide they need at any given moment.

Another big issue is the lack of clarity around how work is assigned or taken away. Workers often feel lost about the reasons behind being removed from a gig and find that there aren't many ways to appeal these decisions.

The working conditions in jobs like logistics, retail, and warehouses come up a lot too. Many workers talk about the stress they face, both physically and emotionally, along with the absence of job security and chances for career growth. When it comes to job satisfaction, the responses are mixed. Some creative folks appreciate the freedom and flexibility they get from their work. Still, most of them also worry a lot about money and burning out. Those in roles like moderators or call center agents often feel emotionally drained from always having to monitor difficult content.

HR professionals are caught in a tough spot. They want to keep that flexibility for workers while also trying to provide some job stability. They're noticing that contract workers tend to leave quickly and feel disengaged. On a bigger scale, economists and labor activists are pointing to systemic issues. They see that the existing labor laws aren't really cutting it when it comes to giving gig workers the protection they need, especially in areas where the laws vary a lot from one place to another. They're calling for better regulations and more transparency when it comes to how algorithms work in assigning jobs to help protect workers' rights.

This dataset paints a vivid picture of the challenges that come with gig work, like how algorithms control job assignments, the unpredictability of pay, the shaky legal situation, and the emotional stress workers face. Despite all these challenges, the stories shared in this dataset underline a strong desire for change. Workers are clearly asking for fairness, stability, and clearer rules in the gig economy.

#### **III.** Limitations

The study found that while online hiring platforms can be useful, they have their downsides such as bias in filtering candidates and trouble connecting with semi-skilled workers. The analysis showed that these platforms tend to favor workers with better ratings or more experience, which just adds to existing inequalities. Gig workers face a consistent mix of job insecurity, confusing algorithms, and unstable income, based on surveys and personal stories.

But there were some issues with the research too. First off, the small number of participants (51) makes it hard to apply the findings widely to all gig workers in India. So while the data is good for exploring the topic, it doesn't represent everyone using these digital hiring sites. Also, because the study relied on specific methods to gather participants, it may have led to a bias. People who feel strongly or are more comfortable with technology are more likely to respond, which could skew the results and leave out those who have no strong opinions or aren't very engaged.

We tried to make sure our findings were solid by using different methods like surveys, interviews, and looking at existing data. Testing the questions beforehand helped us fix any confusing parts. Breaking down survey results by factors like gender, income, and experience allowed us to see how different groups varied. To make our data reliable, we used the same survey tools and interview guides for everyone. We sent out surveys online and followed a similar format for interviews to keep things consistent. We also double-checked the transcripts for accuracy, which helped boost the trustworthiness of our qualitative analysis.

That said, we did face some issues with reliability. The open-ended answers varied a lot in quality and detail, especially from gig workers, whose replies were sometimes limited by

language barriers or more casual responses. This inconsistency made it hard to code the themes clearly.

This study brings out some important takeaways for doing solid research. First off, pre-testing is a must. It helps you spot and fix design issues, especially when you're working with different groups. Using mixed methods can give you a well-rounded view, but you need to blend the qualitative and quantitative parts carefully to make sense of it all.

It's super important to use clear language, especially when you're dealing with a variety of participants, like in multilingual or cross-sector work. Don't forget to think about digital skills when you pick your participants and design your tools, especially if your study is focused on tech. Lastly, be upfront about ethics like privacy and consent right from the start. This builds trust and makes sure everyone feels safe.

#### **IV.Conclusion**

This study takes a look at the digital hiring scene in India, focusing on gig workers, job seekers, and HR folks using tech-heavy platforms. It combines different research methods to spot trends and share real experiences that highlight the complexities of digital hiring. The main takeaways show how much companies are relying on algorithms, the new biases cropping up in how candidates are screened, and the ongoing issues with digital access and worker protections.

While platforms like Job Portals, Linkedin, Urban Company, ATS systems, and freelancing sites have changed the way we hire, they bring up concerns about transparency, fairness, and job security, especially for gig and semi-skilled workers. The data shows that while these platforms open up new opportunities, they also keep some of the old problems alive, like job insecurity, lack of benefits, and unequal access based on digital skills or past ratings.

Even though there are some limitations in the sample size and scope, this research is important for the conversations around digital work, especially considering India's large informal workforce. The findings highlight the need for better policies and platform practices that focus on ethical algorithm use, transparency in hiring decisions, and better protections for digital workers.

#### **Future Suggestions**

Broaden the Sample: Future studies should aim to include a larger and more diverse group of people, especially from rural or overlooked communities. This will help make the results more widely applicable.

Long-Term Studies: It would be useful to track changes over time. This way, we can better understand how online hiring platforms affect workers' career paths, job stability, and satisfaction over the years.

Accountability for Platforms: It's important for lawmakers and researchers to think about regulations that hold online platforms responsible, especially when it comes to clear algorithms, fair job distribution, and addressing worker complaints.

Improving Digital Skills: With the digital gap, there's a need for programs that boost digital skills among semi-skilled and informal workers. This will help them engage more in online job markets.

User-Friendly Recruitment Tools: Designers of job platforms and HR tech should focus on the needs of all users, especially those from marginalized backgrounds who might struggle with language, education, or tech issues. Team Up with Public Services: Policymakers could look into partnerships between private job platforms and government employment services to improve access and ensure protections for digital workers.

More Study on Algorithm Bias: There's a greater need for research into algorithm bias in applicant tracking systems and hiring platforms. Bringing together data scientists, sociologists, and labor experts can offer fresh insights into these issues.

#### Appendix-1

#### Interview Questions for HR Using Digital Hiring Platforms

1. Can you walk me through your typical job posting process and reviewing applicants on the platform?

(Purpose: Understand how the platform is used in practice.)

2. What role does the Applicant Tracking System (ATS) or algorithm play in shortlisting candidates?

(Purpose: Explore automation and filtering logic.)

3. Have you noticed any patterns or concerns around how the ATS ranks or filters applicants?

(*Purpose: To probe for bias—e.g., educational background, gaps in resume, formatting issues.*)

4. Do you feel the platform gives an advantage or disadvantage to candidates with certain profiles (e.g., elite schools, specific locations, formatting)?

(Purpose: Targeting systemic or implicit bias.)

5. How often do you rely on referrals or internal recommendations when hiring through the platform?

(Purpose: To explore the impact of informal networks.)

6. In your experience, do candidates with strong professional networks or LinkedIn presence receive more visibility or traction?

(Purpose: To unpack digital social capital and potential inequities.)

7. Have you encountered issues where qualified candidates were missed or screened out too early by the system?

(Purpose: Validates concerns around automated exclusion.)

# 8. How much do you trust the platform's recommendations or candidate matching algorithms? Why or why not?

(Purpose: Trust in AI-driven hiring tools.)

# 9. Do you take any steps to mitigate potential biases in the hiring process when using digital platforms?

(Purpose: Look for bias-awareness and best practices.)

# 10. What improvements would you like to see in the platform to support fairer and more inclusive hiring?

(Purpose: Invite constructive feedback and user insight.)

#### Appendix - 2

#### Questionnaire for Job Seekers Using Digital Job Portals

- 1. Can you explain what you know about how ATS works in terms of filtering CVs?
- 2. Do you believe that ATS plays a significant role in determining whether you get shortlisted for a job? Why or why not?
- 3. Do you ever customize your CV to make sure it passes through ATS filters?
- 4. Do you use any specific keywords, formatting, or other strategies to make your CV ATS-friendly? Can you share some examples?
- 5. Have you ever used any online tools or services to check if your CV is ATS-compatible before submitting it?
- 6. If yes, which tools or services have you used, and how effective have they been?
- 7. Do you feel that using these tools increases your chances of getting shortlisted?
- 8. Do you think that networking and referrals provide an advantage over ATS, and if so, in what ways?
- 9. Have you had success in your job search using either of these methods more than the other? Why?
- 10. How often do you rely on your personal network or referrals to apply for jobs compared to submitting an ATS-optimized CV?
- 11. How satisfied are you with the job search experience on digital job portals that use ATS to filter applicants?
- 12. Do you feel that ATS makes the hiring process more transparent or more challenging for applicants?

- 13. Have you ever felt that your CV was unfairly filtered out by an ATS, even though you believe you were a qualified candidate?
- 14. What features would you like to see in digital job portals to make the hiring process more equitable and inclusive for all job seekers?

#### Appendix- 3

#### Questionnaire for HR Professionals on Hiring of Supporting Staff

#### 1. What is the size of your company?

- 80–100 employees
- 101-200 employees
- 201–500 employees
- More than 500 employees

#### 2. What type of company do you represent?

- Corporate (e.g., office buildings, tech firms)
- Manufacturing
- Educational Institution
- Healthcare
- Retail
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_

# 3. How do you typically hire supporting staff (e.g., watchmen, cleaning staff, pantry staff)?

- Through work agencies (outsourcing)
- Using digital job platforms (e.g., job boards, apps)
- By posting ads on digital platforms (e.g., LinkedIn, Indeed, Facebook)
- In-house recruitment (advertise internally, word of mouth)
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_

# 4. If you use work agencies, how do you choose an agency for hiring supporting staff?

- Based on reputation and experience
- Based on pricing and contract terms
- Recommendations from colleagues or industry peers
- By reviewing agency reviews or ratings
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_

# 5. If you use digital platforms, which platforms do you typically use to hire supporting staff?

- Indeed
- LinkedIn
- Facebook Groups
- Local job boards or classified ads websites
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

#### 6. What is your typical process for recruiting supporting staff (e.g., interview steps,

#### assessments, background checks)?

- Initial screening through applications (CVs/resumes)
- Interview in-person or virtually
- Skills or aptitude test
- Background check (criminal record, employment verification)
- Reference check (previous employers, agencies)
- On-the-job trial period
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_

# 7. Do you require a minimum level of experience or qualifications for the supporting staff roles (e.g., cleaning, watchmen, pantry staff)?

- Yes, specific experience or qualifications required
- No, experience or qualifications are not required
- Yes, but only for certain roles (e.g., pantry person with food handling experience)
- Not sure

#### 8. Do you provide any training to the hired supporting staff after they are selected?

- Yes, mandatory training programs for all staff
- Yes, but only for specific roles (e.g., security, pantry person)
- No, we expect staff to be trained by the agency or platform
- No, training is not provided

#### 9. How satisfied are you with the use of work agencies for hiring supporting staff?

- Very dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied

- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

#### 10. How satisfied are you with the use of digital platforms for hiring supporting staff?

- Very dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

#### 11. What challenges do you face when hiring supporting staff through work agencies

#### or digital platforms?

- Difficulty in finding qualified candidates
- High turnover rate
- Inconsistent quality of candidates

- Long hiring process
- Lack of flexibility in terms of contracts
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_

### 12. How do you handle the payment and contract terms with agencies or digital platforms when hiring supporting staff?

- Fixed contract (set duration and terms)
- Hourly pay based on hours worked
- Monthly retainer or payment plan
- Pay-per-task (for specific services like cleaning)
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

13. How would you rate the overall effectiveness of your current hiring methods for supporting staff (e.g., work agencies, digital platforms, internal advertising)?

- Very ineffective
- Ineffective

- Neutral
- Effective
- Very effective

14. Do you believe that using digital platforms or work agencies to hire supporting staff leads to a more efficient and timely hiring process compared to traditional methods?

- Yes, much more efficient
- Yes, slightly more efficient
- No difference
- No, less efficient
- No, much less efficient

# 15. Have you noticed any differences in the quality of candidates hired through digital platforms versus those hired through work agencies?

- Digital platforms provide better candidates
- Work agencies provide better candidates

- Both sources provide equal quality of candidates
- I have not noticed a difference

16. What improvements would you suggest for digital platforms or work agencies to make the hiring process for supporting staff easier or more efficient?

- Improved candidate screening and vetting process
- Better contract flexibility
- More tailored platforms for supporting staff roles
- Better communication and support from agencies/platforms
- Lower fees or more competitive pricing
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_

17. Would you recommend using work agencies or digital platforms for hiring supporting staff to other HR professionals in similar-sized companies?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, with some reservations
- No, I would not recommend it

• I have no opinion

#### Database- 01 (Urban Company Employee)

Prov ider ID	Age	Gen der	Servic e Type	Business Model	Listed As Business Owner	Years on Platform	Comments
UC0 01	32	Male	Electri cian	Own small team	Yes	3	Runs a small firm with 3 electricians
UC0 02	29	Femal e	Beauti cian	Freelanc e (individu al)	No	2	Works independently
UC0 03	40	Male	Plum ber	Small plumbing business	Yes	4	Owns a plumbing company
UC0 04	27	Male	AC Repair	Independ ent technicia n	No	1	Individual technician
UC0 05	35	Femal e	Home Cleani ng	Family-ru n cleaning unit	Yes	3	Employs 4 people from her locality
UC0 06	38	Male	Carpe nter	Owns small carpentry firm	Yes	5	Hires assistants for large projects
UC0 07	30	Male	Applia nce Repair	Individual professio nal	No	2	Works alone
UC0 08	42	Femal e	Beauti cian	Small salon business	Yes	4	Uses UrbanClap for extra clients
UC0 09	36	Male	Pest Contr ol	Small enterpris e	Yes	3	Handles corporate clients too
UC0 10	33	Male	Electri cian	Freelanc er	No	1	Hopes to grow business through app
UC0 11	41	Male	Plum bing Servic es	Registere d local firm	Yes	5	Employs 5 workers

UC0 12	28	Femal e	Beauti cian	Independ ent	No	1	Just started, works solo
UC0 13	45	Male	Deep Cleani ng	Runs cleaning agency	Yes	5	Serves offices and apartments
UC0 14	34	Femal e	Salon at Home	Owns home-ba sed salon	Yes	3	Listed to boost client reach
UC0 15	31	Male	Applia nce Repair	Individual	No	2	Covers only one area
UC0 16	39	Male	Home Cleani ng	Cleaning service company	Yes	4	Employs 7 part-time workers
UC0 17	30	Male	Electri cian	Solo worker	No	1	New to the platform
UC0 18	43	Male	Plum ber	Small team business	Yes	5	Works with assistants
UC0 19	37	Femal e	Salon Servic es	Family-ru n salon	Yes	2	UrbanClap helped expand customer base
UC0 20	29	Male	Pest Contr ol	Business with 2 employe es	Yes	3	Does B2B and residential jobs
UC0 21	35	Male	Carpe nter	Registere d firm	Yes	4	Full-time business
UC0 22	26	Femal e	Beauti cian	Independ ent professio nal	No	1	Just started out
UC0 23	38	Male	Electri cian	Small contract business	Yes	4	Works in shifts with staff
UC0 24	33	Male	AC Techn ician	Solo	No	1	Operates alone
UC0 25	40	Femal e	Home Cleani ng	Group business	Yes	5	Has grown through UrbanClap
UC0 26	32	Male	Applia nce	Independ ent	No	2	Seeks permanent clients via the app

			Repair				
UC0 27	37	Male	Plum ber	Mini business setup	Yes	4	Owns a workshop
UC0 28	34	Femal e	Beauti cian	Small team	Yes	3	Employs junior beauticians
UC0 29	41	Male	Pest Contr ol	Team-ba sed service	Yes	4	Expanding service in nearby cities
UC0 30	28	Male	Electri cian	Individual	No	1	Early career stage
UC0 31	39	Male	AC Repair	Business setup	Yes	5	Listed for lead generation
UC0 32	36	Femal e	Salon at Home	Self-empl oyed	No	2	Uses UrbanClap for weekend bookings
UC0 33	27	Male	Carpe nter	Own team	Yes	3	Trains new workers under him
UC0 34	35	Male	Plum ber	Local plumbing biz	Yes	4	Relies on platform for residential work
UC0 35	44	Male	Cleani ng Servic es	Medium enterpris e	Yes	5	Grew business with UrbanClap
UC0 36	31	Femal e	Beauti cian	Solo worker	No	1	New to beauty profession
UC0 37	30	Male	Electri cian	Works under a team leader	No	2	Subcontractor
UC0 38	38	Femal e	Home Cleani ng	Group-ba sed service	Yes	4	Covers multiple apartment blocks
UC0 39	42	Male	Pest Contr ol	Small agency	Yes	5	Focuses on commercial work
UC0 40	29	Male	Applia nce Repair	Solo	No	1	Plans to register his own firm soon

Respondent ID	Hiring Source	UrbanClap Used Recently	Comments
HR001	Agency	No	Long-standing partnership with a staffing firm
HR002	Individual Reference	No	Referred by existing employees
HR003	Agency	No	Works with vendor on yearly contract
HR004	UrbanClap	Yes	Recently hired a cleaner via app
HR005	Individual Reference	No	Prefers local recommendations
HR006	UrbanClap	Yes	Trialing UrbanClap for deep cleaning services
HR007	Agency	No	Standard agency contract
HR008	Agency	No	Trusted third-party vendor
HR009	Individual Reference	No	Cleaner hired through colleague
HR010	UrbanClap	Yes	Started using UrbanClap for part-time support
HR011	Agency	No	Has long-term service agreement
HR012	Agency	No	Reliable agency partnership
HR013	Individual Reference	No	Local hire through informal network
HR014	UrbanClap	Yes	Found efficient service through app
HR015	Agency	No	Traditional model works well
HR016	Agency	No	Renewed annual contract with vendor
HR017	Individual Reference	No	Family recommendation
HR018	Agency	No	Works with multiple vendors
HR019	UrbanClap	Yes	Trying it out for temporary work
HR020	Individual Reference	No	Local word-of-mouth
HR021	Agency	No	Contract cleaner
HR022	UrbanClap	Yes	Testing for small cleaning jobs

HR023	Agency	No	Office assistant hired via vendor
HR024	Agency	No	Long-term vendor relationship
HR025	Individual Reference	No	Known to a senior employee
HR026	Agency	No	Prefers outsourcing to avoid HR hassle
HR027	UrbanClap	Yes	Easier for flexible cleaning tasks
HR028	Agency	No	Professional background checks offered
HR029	Individual Reference	No	Cleaner lives near the office
HR030	Agency	No	Renewed yearly contract
HR031	UrbanClap	Yes	Hired a full-time maid via app
HR032	Individual Reference	No	Cleaner came through friend's suggestion
HR033	Agency	No	Using agency for all support roles
HR034	Agency	No	Local manpower agency
HR035	UrbanClap	Yes	Impressed by background verification process
HR036	Individual Reference	No	Cleaner is a relative of a staff member
HR037	Agency	No	Using same vendor for 3 years
HR038	Agency	No	Bulk hiring through agency
HR039	Individual Reference	No	Casual hiring
HR040	UrbanClap	Yes	Recently switched from agency
HR041	Agency	No	Trusted local agency
HR042	Agency	No	Professional service guaranteed
HR043	Individual Reference	No	Cleaner was working nearby
HR044	UrbanClap	Yes	On-demand cleaning via app
HR045	Agency	No	Outsourced HR process
HR046	Individual Reference	No	Personal connection
HR047	Agency	No	Cleaner hired for multiple office branches
HR048	UrbanClap	Yes	Trying UrbanClap for flexibility
HR049	Agency	No	Agency handles replacement if needed

HR050	Individual Reference	No	Office assistant referred by peer
HR051	UrbanClap	Yes	New method to manage short-term support staff

#### Database- 03 ATS bias and satisfaction

Respo ndent ID	Applied Jobs (Last 6 Months)	Shortlis ted	Used ATS-Friendly Resume	ATS Affects Shortlisting	Satisfaction with Shortlisting	Comments
1	42	No	Yes	Yes	2	Optimized my resume but got no interviews.
2	18	Yes	No	No	4	Got referred; never used ATS-based resume.
3	37	No	Yes	Yes	1	ATS filters out even relevant applications.
4	27	Yes	Yes	Yes	5	Resume worked once I tailored keywords.
5	30	No	Yes	Yes	1	Resume services didn't help me get shortlisted.
6	54	No	Yes	Yes	2	Applying feels like shooting in the dark.
7	23	Yes	Yes	Yes	4	ATS resume helped in getting tech role.
8	16	Yes	No	No	3	Hired through alumni network.
9	39	No	Yes	Yes	2	Not sure if anyone ever saw my resume.
10	49	No	Yes	Yes	1	Resume with high keyword density still rejected.
11	12	Yes	Yes	Yes	5	ATS format improved visibility.
12	33	No	Yes	Yes	1	Rejection after rejection, despite changes.
13	20	Yes	No	No	4	Company reached out through LinkedIn.
14	45	No	Yes	Yes	2	Resume got parsed incorrectly by ATS.
15	27	Yes	Yes	Yes	4	Worked for one company, others ignored.
16	51	No	Yes	Yes	1	I feel demotivated and lost.
17	34	No	Yes	Yes	2	Heard that internal hiring is prioritized.
18	22	Yes	Yes	Yes	4	ATS and networking both worked.
19	65	No	Yes	Yes	1	Shortlisting process feels biased.
20	14	Yes	No	No	3	Didn't use ATS methods, got lucky.
21	40	No	Yes	Yes	1	Spent ₹2000 on a resume

						and got no replies.
22	25	Yes	Yes	Yes	5	ATS resume helped secure HR interview.
23	19	Yes	No	No	3	Referral helped.
24	60	No	Yes	Yes	1	Feels like a black hole.
25	38	No	Yes	Yes	2	Switched resume templates, still no luck.
26	17	Yes	Yes	Yes	4	ATS resume and portfolio helped.
27	52	No	Yes	Yes	1	Repeated rejection is exhausting.
28	24	Yes	No	No	3	Got job through career fair.
29	43	No	Yes	Yes	1	ATS rejected PDFs but didn't flag error.
30	48	No	Yes	Yes	1	No feedback, no response.
31	29	Yes	Yes	Yes	5	ATS resume with custom cover letter worked.
32	21	Yes	No	No	3	Internal referral helped.
33	36	No	Yes	Yes	2	Keep modifying resume—no change.
34	58	No	Yes	Yes	1	Hiring feels random without networking.
35	26	Yes	Yes	Yes	4	ATS resume got me shortlisted twice.
36	13	Yes	No	No	4	Hired via college placement.
37	41	No	Yes	Yes	1	No way to verify resume was read.
38	30	Yes	Yes	Yes	5	ATS+referral got me a remote job.
39	22	Yes	No	No	3	Hiring via bootcamp partner.
40	46	No	Yes	Yes	1	Resume tailored to JD, still nothing.
41	50	No	Yes	Yes	2	Added skills but no effect.
42	39	No	Yes	Yes	1	No calls despite premium LinkedIn.
43	15	Yes	Yes	Yes	5	Keywords + simple format helped.
44	31	Yes	No	No	3	Internship turned into offer.
45	44	No	Yes	Yes	1	Tired of rejection emails.
46	12	Yes	Yes	Yes	4	Worked in EdTech hiring.
47	35	No	Yes	Yes	2	Still revising my resume every week.
48	47	No	Yes	Yes	1	Auto-generated resume didn't help.
49	20	Yes	Yes	Yes	4	Applied via referral + ATS

						resume.
50	18	Yes	No	No	4	Applied through HR contact.
51	55	No	Yes	Yes	1	Lost faith in online hiring platforms.

Parti cipa nt ID	Role	Organi zation Type	Key Themes Identified	Selected Transcript Excerpt
P00 1	Gig Worke r	Food Delivery Platfor m	Work Precarity, Income Variability, Algorithmic Bias	Sometimes I don't know why I'm getting fewer orders. It feels like the app punishes you, but it never explains.
P00 2	HR Manag er	Tech Startup	Labor Conditions, Job Satisfaction	We try to offer flexibility, but that often comes at the cost of stability for our freelancers.
P00 3	Econo mist	Resear ch Institute	Work Precarity, Policy Gaps	There's a clear mismatch between the labor laws and the realities of gig work.
P00 4	Labor Advoc ate	Nonprof it	Algorithmic Bias, Worker Rights	We've documented cases where the platform's ratings system disproportionately affects marginalized workers.
P00 5	Ride-S hare Driver	Transp ort Platfor m	Income Variability, Job Satisfaction, Work Precarity	One week I make rs 20000, the next it's barely rs 1300. You can't plan your life like this.
P00 6	Wareh ouse Gig Worke r	E-com merce Platfor m	Labor Conditions, Work Precarity	The shifts change constantly. Some weeks I don't get scheduled at all, and there's no explanation.
P00 7	HR Manag er	Logistic s Firm	Job Satisfaction, Labor Conditions	We face a lot of turnover because many contract workers feel they have no long-term prospects here.
P00 8	Digital Freela ncer	Freelan ce Marketp lace	Income Variability, Algorithmic Bias	Your visibility depends on the platform's algorithm. One bad review can tank your opportunities.
P00 9	Econo mist	Govern ment Think Tank	Policy Gaps, Work Precarity	Current labor classifications don't adequately capture the conditions under which platform workers operate.

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	P01 0	Gig Worke r	Task-Ba sed App	Job Satisfaction, Algorithmic Bias	If the customer rates you low, your task opportunities vanish. There's no appeals process—it's all opaque.
	P011	Conte nt Moder ator	Social Media Platfor m	Work Precarity, Mental Health	Reviewing disturbing content all day affects your mental state. There's very little support.
	P01 2	Freela nce Design er	Creativ e Marketp lace	Income Variability, Job Satisfaction	Some months I get lots of clients, other times it's completely dry. It's very unpredictable.
	P01 3	HR Specia list	Digital Marketi ng Agency	Labor Conditions, Remote Work Challenges	Remote workers often feel disconnected, and there's a lack of consistent engagement.
	P01 4	Gig Worke r	Crowdw ork Platfor m	Algorithmic Bias, Income Variability	You never know how jobs are assigned. It feels like the same people get the good ones.
•	P01 5	Econo mist	Internati onal NGO	Policy Gaps, Worker Protection	Most digital platforms operate across borders, but labor protections remain local.
	P01 6	Advoc ate	Labor Rights NGO	Worker Rights, Algorithmic Transparency	We push for platforms to share how decisions are made—workers deserve that clarity.
	P01 7	Wareh ouse Picker	E-com merce Platfor m	Work Precarity, Job Satisfaction	You're treated like a number. It's hard to feel any pride in the work.
	P01 8	Gig Tutor	Online Educati on Platfor m	Labor Conditions, Job Satisfaction	There's pressure to get high ratings even if the student is unresponsive or unfair.
	P01 9	HR Manag er	Online Retailer	Job Satisfaction, Work Precarity	We want to offer security, but the gig model is baked into how our business operates.
	P02 0	Softwa re Develo per	Freelan ce Platfor m	Algorithmic Bias, Income Variability	Sometimes my profile gets hidden for no reason. Then my income just dries up.
Î	P02	Ride-S	Transp	Work Precarity,	Getting deactivated without explanation is

1	hare Driver	ort Platfor m	Algorithmic Bias	terrifying. There's no recourse.
		Creativ	Job Satisfaction	
P02 2	Digital Artist	Marketp lace	Income Variability	Doing what I love is great, but financially it's like a rollercoaster.
P02 3	Call Center Agent	Remote Custom er Support	Labor Conditions, Work Precarity	We're expected to be 'on' constantly, with minimal breaks and constant surveillance.
P02 4	Freela nce Writer	Content Platfor m	Job Satisfaction, Income Variability	You can write ten articles and get paid late or not at all. It's exhausting.
P02 5	Econo mist	Universi ty Resear ch Depart ment	Policy Gaps, Labor Economics	Traditional metrics don't capture the instability of digital gig work.
P02 6	HR Officer	Large Tech Firm	Labor Conditions, Worker Retention	Keeping good gig workers is hard. The lack of benefits and stability turns them away.
P02 7	Gig Worke r	Errand- Based App	Work Precarity, Algorithmic Bias	A single customer complaint can block you from getting jobs for days.
P02 8	Labor Advoc ate	Grassro ots Organiz ation	Worker Rights, Job Satisfaction	We fight to make platform work sustainable, with real protections and recognition.
P02 9	Deliver y Driver	Courier App	Income Variability, Work Precarity	You can work 12 hours and barely make minimum wage, depending on demand.
P03 0	Freela nce Transl ator	Langua ge Service s Platfor m	Job Satisfaction, Algorithmic Bias	The quality scores are so opaque. I once got penalized for a client's typo.
P03 1	Econo mist	Freelan ce	Policy Gaps, Algorithmic	Without regulation, platforms make decisions that deeply affect livelihoods.

		Econo my Resear ch Lab	Fairness	
P03 2	Wareh ouse Robot Operat or	Tech Retailer	Labor Conditions, Job Satisfaction	I just monitor machines. It's mind-numbing, and there's no career path.
P03 3	Online Moder ator	E-learni ng Platfor m	Mental Health, Work Precarity	Handling conflict in virtual classrooms is draining. There's little support.
P03 4	HR Consul tant	Startup Incubat or	Labor Conditions, Policy Gaps	We're not sure how to legally structure gig work that's fair *and* scalable.
P03 5	Voice Actor	Freelan ce Gig Platfor m	Income Variability, Job Satisfaction	It's feast or famine. Some weeks are amazing, some have zero jobs.

Name	Hiring Platform	Referred/Connected	Connection Type
Aarav Mehta	LinkedIn	Yes	College Friend of Employee
Priya Sharma	Naukri.com	No	-
Rohan Gupta	Employee Referral	Yes	Direct Referral
Sneha Iyer	Indeed	Yes	Former Colleague
Amit Taneja	LinkedIn	Yes	Same Industry Network
Divya Nair	Employee Referral	Yes	Direct Referral
Rajat Bansal	Company Website	No	-
Neha Kapoor	LinkedIn	Yes	College Alumni
Siddharth Rao	Indeed	No	-
Tanvi Joshi	Naukri.com	Yes	Previous Company Employee
Vikram Sethi	Employee Referral	Yes	Friend of Employee
Kavya Pillai	LinkedIn	Yes	Former Colleague
Ankit Jain	Company Website	No	-
Pooja Rani	Naukri.com	Yes	Employee's Cousin
Samar Verma	Employee Referral	Yes	Direct Referral
Meera Singh	Indeed	No	-
Manav Arora	LinkedIn	Yes	College Project Partner
Isha Kaul	Employee Referral	Yes	Neighbor of Employee
Krishna LinkedIn		Yes	Former Colleague

Yadav			
Fatima Sheikh	Company Website	No	-
Gautam Rao	Employee Referral	Yes	Friend of Employee
Ritika Dey	LinkedIn	Yes	Attended Same Bootcamp
Harsh Vardhan	Naukri.com	Yes	Previous Company Employee
Shalini Thakur	Indeed	Yes	Same University Network
Zaid Khan	LinkedIn	Yes	Direct Referral
Snehal Patil	Company Website	No	-
Kunal Verma	Employee Referral	Yes	Direct Referral
Nidhi Menon	Naukri.com	No	-
Tushar Sharma	LinkedIn	Yes	Friend of Employee
Avni Das	Indeed	No	-
Vivek Malhotra	Employee Referral	Yes	Former Colleague
Preeti Jain	LinkedIn	Yes	College Friend
Aditya Mishra	Naukri.com	Yes	Same Previous Company
Swati Yadav	LinkedIn	Yes	Family Friend
Raghav Joshi	Indeed	No	-
Jasleen Kaur	LinkedIn	Yes	College Alumni
Anirudh Singh	Employee Referral	Yes	Direct Referral
Meghna Sinha	Company Website	No	-
Nikhil Reddy	LinkedIn	Yes	Former Colleague
Tanya Indeed		No	-

Bansal			
Yash Chauhan	LinkedIn	Yes	Mutual Network
Ritu Sharma	Employee Referral	Yes	Cousin
Arjun Sen	Naukri.com	No	-
Simran Khatri	Indeed	Yes	College Friend
Varun Desai	LinkedIn	Yes	Previous Company Employee
Mira Pathak	Company Website	No	-
Rishi Jain	Employee Referral	Yes	Direct Referral
Tanisha Roy	Naukri.com	Yes	University Network
Rahul Khanna	LinkedIn	Yes	Friend of Employee
Pallavi Joshi	Employee Referral	Yes	Direct Referral
Kabir Malhotra	Company Website	No	-

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