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REGULATING PLATFORM WORK AND TRUST OUTCOMES AMONG URBAN GIG WORKERS IN INDIA

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Regulating Platform Work and Trust Outcomes among Urban Gig Workers in India

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Abstract

The fast growth of digital labour platforms has altered the nature of employment relations, and however, the introduction of new algorithmic governance mechanisms that determine the experience of gig workers. In this study, issues of algorithmic control, rating pressure, uncertainty in income, intensive monitoring, and gaps in governance are studied in relation to trust perception and consequently on job satisfaction and work wellbeing among gig workers. Based on a quantitative design and survey data of 310 platform workers in Bangalore, India, the study conducts the test on the proposed relationships using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results show that the platform governance mechanisms do have a great impact on trust perception, and monitoring intensity and algorithmic control have a significant effect. The perception of trust is a strong predictor of job satisfaction and work well-being, which proves its mediating impact in platform-based working conditions. The findings also point out that clear algorithms, equitable governance systems, and stability in income are crucial in achieving trust and enhancing performances among workers. The research paper adds value to the body of research on the gig economy because it shows that platform governance based on trust is a key factor in sustainable and fair digital labour.

Keywords: Gig economy; algorithmic governance; trust perception; job satisfaction; work wellbeing.

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Introduction

The digital labour markets have created and intensified features of modern global labour relations, as employment now primarily takes the form of the gig economy, which is a leading trend in today's labour markets. Ride-hailing, food delivery, online freelancing, logistics, care services, and creative industries have become platform-mediated work and are motivated by digital infrastructures and algorithmic coordination (Graham *et al.*, 2017; Bobro, 2024). Instead of being a secondary type of employment, the gig economy is a structural transformation in the organization, access, and regulation of labour in world-production systems (Arora, 2025; Manu & Jose, 2025). Platforms serve as the mediators of the labour market, which redesigns and governs the work process by using digital platforms, changing the employment relations, and externalizing the conventional roles of the employer (Baber, 2023; Helwing *et al.*, 2023).

The initial accounts of gig work depicted it as being flexible and empowering, focusing on autonomy, entrepreneurship, and work-life balance. But recent research is increasingly attempting to take precarity, income insecurity, and lack of social protection into consideration in an effort to undermine this optimistic framing (Au-Yeung *et al.*, 2025; Ayentimi *et al.*, 2025). That is based on empirical research suggesting that gig workers tend to be exposed to unpredictable incomes, benefits, and market risks, which were previously transferred to employers (Kuroda and Onishi, 2025; Omar and Jamil, 2025). These afflict migrant workers, younger workers, and individuals with relatively low access to formal jobs in a more disproportional manner, stressing the existing inequalities in the labour market (Andersen and Spanger, 2024; Lata *et al.*, 2022). As a result, the gig economy is being viewed no longer only as a flexible employment system but as a restructuring of labour regulation that has strong social and economic effects.

The central phenomenon of this shift is the emergence of algorithmic management, according to which computational systems are used to assign jobs, track performance, and discipline with the bare minimum human supervision. The systems include rating, automated matching, dynamic pricing, and performance metrics used by platforms to organize large, geographically distributed workforces (Chen & Chen, 2025; Hickson, 2023). Though these systems are commonly claimed to be neutral and efficient, studies have shown that they incorporate organizational priorities and unequal power dynamics, as well as influence the behaviour of workers as they restrict transparency and accountability (Lata *et al.*, 2022; Martindale and Lehdonvirta, 2023). It can stabilize and centralize income, intensify work, and control access to subsequent work, which can be considered the effective tool to control employees with the help of data-driven processes instead of the hierarchical authority (Chen and Chen, 2025; Hickson, 2023). This change creates serious concerns of equity, autonomy, and power distribution within digitally mediated labour systems.

The international nature of digital platforms also makes labour governance more problematic. Gig platforms facilitate cross-border labour markets that do not involve the physical movement of workers, so they can be involved in transnational economic activities in their local settings (Anwar *et al.*, 2023; Van Slageren *et al.*, 2023). Although this growth opens up new sources of income, especially in developing countries, it increases competition and wage pressure (Graham *et al.*, 2017; Ayentimi *et al.*, 2025). Furthermore, labour laws are mostly national, which introduces regulatory loopholes when activities of platforms explore cross-jurisdictional boundaries (Muldoon and Sun, 2024; Van Slageren *et al.*, 2023). This is a particularly vulnerable situation for migrant and transnational workers who have to negotiate between different regimes of immigration policy and labour law and platform regulations (Andersen & Spanger, 2024; Orth, 2025).

A combination of algorithmic control and regulatory fragmentation creates other types of labour regulation that do not share the basic characteristics of traditional employment models. Platforms have a high degree of control over pricing, assignment of tasks, performance measurement, and categorizing workers as independent contractors, and, as a result, do not have the legal consequences of a typical employment relationship (Baber, 2023; Hickson, 2023). This kind of arrangement puts the line between autonomy and control in a gray area, which, in turn, introduces the so-called flexibility-precarity paradox, in which workers assume a sense of nominal autonomy, but economic insecurity increases (Au-Yeung *et al.*, 2025; Kuroda and Onishi, 2025). This governance of gig work is therefore based on an amalgamation of algorithmic regulation, ambiguity in the contractual terms, and fragmented regulation regimes.

Although literature on the gig economy has been increasing, the field of study remains divided into various disciplines such as sociology, labour law, geography, management, and development studies (Omar & Jamil, 2025). Algorithms The current body of work tends to focus on either algorithmic management, regulation, migration, or inequality in isolation, preventing a complete picture about the interaction between these dimensions in platform-mediated labour systems (Diz & Casas-Cortes, 2024; Martindale and Lehdonvirta, 2023). Integrative frameworks that can tie together micro-level worker experiences with macro-level governance structures are required to explain better how algorithmic control is remaking labour relations and social protection regimes.

The paper will fill this gap by discussing the concept of algorithmic control as a kind of labour governance within the gig economy. It relies on the interdisciplinary literature to examine how platforms organize and discipline labour through the use of algorithmic systems, how regulatory fragmentation organizes worker outcomes, and the interaction between migration and inequality and employment through platforms. The paper will introduce a novel paradigm of conceiving gig work as a system of dynamic and hybrid labour by generalizing the knowledge gained through the global situations and thus breaking the dichotomy of an employee and an independent worker (Van Slageren *et al.*, 2023; Muldoon and Sun, 2024).

Learning about algorithmic governance in the gig economy is imperative to policymakers, organizations, and researchers who aim at developing just and sustainable labour regimes. With platforms becoming more and more prevalent and defining the future of work, it is necessary to study the interaction between technology, regulation, and worker agency as a means of addressing new inequalities and achieving fair labour standards in digitally mediated economies (Ayentimi *et al.*, 2025; Orth, 2025).

Literature review

The digital economy has quickly increased the gig economy, which has made more people interested in how digital platforms use algorithms to manage workers and how this affects their work experiences and results. The body of sociological, labour, and management research notes that the platform-based work is associated with controlling data, rating, unstable income, and unregulated gaps, which together determine the level of job satisfaction and work well-being (Graham *et al.*, 2017; Omar and Jamil, 2025). The review is the synthesis of the literature concerning the key variables of the algorithmic control, the rating pressure, the uncertainty of income, the intensity of monitoring, the gaps in governance, the perception of trust, satisfaction at work, and the well-being in the workplace. Platform labour governance is characterized by algorithmic control.

Online platforms use automated mechanisms to distribute roles, price, assess performance, and provide discipline, thus eliminating managerial hierarchies of the past and substituting them with data-driven decisions (Baber, 2023; Chen and Chen, 2025). The visibility of algorithm functions is often limited to the workers, and it results in asymmetrical power relations and less autonomy among workers (Hickson, 2023). Research indicates that the algorithmic systems impact the everyday work availability, the task assignment, and the earnings due to the dynamic pricing and demand prediction (Helwing *et al.*, 2023; Martindale and Lehdonvirta, 2023). Studies also show that algorithmic governance may lead to a sense of control and dependence among the workers. Automated decision-making frameworks determine the intensity of work, acceptance rates, and platform ranking, where workers have little opportunity to make bargains (Lata *et al.*, 2022). Although platforms make it seem that algorithmic management is efficient and non-discriminative, empirical evidence indicates that such systems incorporate organizational interests that favor efficiency over employee well-being (Chen & Chen, 2025; Hickson, 2023).

Thus, algorithmic control is also becoming a key to understanding labour regulation within the gig economy. The other essential platform governance mechanism, which is a reputational control, is customer rating systems. Ratings combine with the access to further work, the visibility of the platform, and the income potential, which is why they are very important determinants of job

security (Au-Yeung *et al.*, 2025; Nagre *et al.*, 2025). Employees also often change behaviour to sustain high scores, taking part in emotional labour, compliance, and risk avoidance to defend platform position (Diz & Casas-Cortes, 2024). The literature points at the fact that the rating systems introduce permanent stress and anxiety, where even slightly negative feedback may decrease the assigned tasks or cause deactivation (Lata *et al.*, 2022). This fosters the environment of ongoing assessment, wherein employees embed platform anticipations and rein in their behaviours (Hickson, 2023). Rating pressure is therefore a governance mechanism that is very subtle and very powerful, which influences worker behaviour and strengthens the control of the platform. The uncertainty of income is commonly reported as one of the structural characteristics of gig work. Platform revenue is unpredictable and unstable because of the fluctuation of demand, algorithmic pricing, and performance measures (Kuroda and Onishi, 2025; Ayentimi *et al.*, 2025).

Employees find it hard to predict the daily or monthly income, which makes it more complex to plan the finances and be economically vulnerable (Omar & Jamil, 2025). Some studies have shown that the incentive design and mechanism of surge pricing rotate the market risks of platforms to workers, increasing the volatility of income (Helwing *et al.*, 2023). Although some employees are trying to reduce the uncertainty by working on different platforms, this approach may lead to more workload and less time to rest (Martindale and Lehdonvirta, 2023). Marginalized groups, such as migrants and employees in third-world countries, are more disproportionately impacted by income instability, which strengthens current inequalities in global labour markets (Andersen & Spanger, 2024; Anwar *et al.*, 2023). The platform governance also involves digital monitoring, which will allow following the location of workers, their speed, acceptance rates, and performance indicators in real-time. Platforms store granular data to maximize service provision and apply behavioural norms (Helwing *et al.*, 2023; Chen and Chen, 2025). Constant surveillance puts additional stress on employees to ensure high productivity rates and meet the platform-themed performance standards (Lata *et al.*, 2022). It has been found that digital surveillance may have a harmful influence on the comfort and autonomy of workers, as well as cause stress and low job satisfaction (Diz & Casas-Cortes, 2024). Monitoring is so widespread that it tends to blur the line between supervising and surveillance, forming a workplace that is full of visibility and ratings (Hickson, 2023). These changes in the scale of monitoring are an indication of larger trends towards digital economy labour control through data. One of the updates in the body of research involving the gig economy has been the existence of governance gaps.

Platform firms tend to designate workers as independent contractors, which allows them to get out of their employer obligations, including social protection, minimum wages, and dispute resolution procedures (Muldoon and Sun, 2024; Van Slageren *et al.*, 2023). Such ambiguity in legal aspects poses some problems to the labour regulation, especially in the cross-border platforms. Platform-mediated

work is often not covered by the existing national labour laws, which means that gig workers lack protection and bargaining power (Au-Yeung *et al.*, 2025). Migrant employees are particularly exposed to this fragmented system of governance, having to deal with multiple legal regimes and platform regulations (Andersen & Spanger, 2024; Orth, 2025). Governance gaps, therefore, are an important angle of algorithmic labour control in that platforms are regulated in grey areas, which enable them to control without holding themselves accountable. Platform system trust mediates the performance of worker reactions towards algorithmic governance. Workers will become more accepting of platform decisions and will remain interested when they feel that the algorithm is just and unbiased (Chen & Chen, 2025).

On the other hand, the perceived instances of being opaque and unfair lead to a loss of trust and amplified resistance or disengagement (Martindale and Lehdonvirta, 2023). Studies have reported that transparency, equitable dispute management, and algorithm design made human might be the solution to achieving greater trust and enhancing worker-platform relations (Chen and Chen, 2025). Nevertheless, the trust is weak in situations when employees do not have a clue about the decision-making procedures or when they think that the system is biased (Lata *et al.*, 2022). The perception of trust is thus necessary to understand how algorithmic control leads to the outcomes of worker satisfaction and well-being. Flexibility, autonomy, and insecurity are the three factors that interact in a complex manner to create job satisfaction in the gig economy. Although other employees appreciate the flexibility of schedules and the ability to work independently, these advantages are not consistently balanced with the aspects of income insecurity, pressure in the rating, and lack of career advancement (Arora, 2025; Nagre *et al.*, 2025). There is empirical evidence that algorithmic control and monitoring intensity are associated with the negative influence on job satisfaction in terms of perceived autonomy and stress (Hickson, 2023).

The level of satisfaction of the workers also differs between the sectors and the population groups. To illustrate, migrant and low-income employees tend to report a lesser level of satisfaction, which is based on the needs of the economy and the lack of other options (Andersen & Spanger, 2024). On the other hand, higher levels of satisfaction can be found among workers who work as giggers on a voluntary basis or as supplementary income (Ayentimi *et al.*, 2025). These data imply that the satisfaction with platform work depends on the conditions of the structure and personal circumstances. An important issue in the gig economy studies has become work well-being. Research reports on the elevated stress and anxiety, as well as work-life imbalance, linked to algorithmic control, constant surveillance, and uncertainty around the income (Omar and Jamil, 2025).

The stressfulness of being always available and achieving high ratings is one of the causes of emotional drain and the lack of mental well-being (Diz & Casas-Cortes, 2024). Online monitoring and monitoring performance also contribute to the increased psychological pressure by establishing the feeling of all-time

assessment (Lata *et al.*, 2022). Employees can increase working hours or take up unattractive assignments to preserve platform status, which results in burnout and reduced quality of life (Kuroda and Onishi, 2025). These results indicate the necessity to explore the concept of well-being as one of the core aspects of labour regulation in the gig economy. The literature shows that the experiences of workers in the gig economy are determined by algorithmic control, rating systems, uncertainty of income, intensity of monitoring, and gaps in governance. These relationships are mediated by trust perception, and workers perceive and react to platform governance mechanisms based on trust perception. Finally, these relationships have an impact on job satisfaction and work well-being, which can display the human cost of data-driven labour control.

Although there is an increasing number of scholars, the existing literature is still divided in terms of fields, and it prevents comprehensive insights into platform governance. Further research must take on a multidisciplinary perspective to observe the interaction between algorithmic management and regulatory systems and worker agency in a wide range of different socio-economic settings (Anwar *et al.*, 2023; Muldoon and Sun, 2024). This kind of integration is critical towards formulating fair labour policies and creating new platform systems that would accommodate both the efficiency and well-being of workers. The gig economy has revolutionized labour markets by changing the way work is allocated, monitored, and rewarded by causing work to be algorithmically managed and governed by platforms. Nonetheless, there are still substantial gaps in the literature on the effects of these digital control mechanisms on the trust of workers, job satisfaction, and general well-being. The literature on the algorithmic domination of the gig economy focuses mostly on the isolated mechanisms of algorithmic control, task assignment, ratings, surveillance, and pricing, which leads to a disjointed view of the overall effect of these controls on the experiences of workers. The integrated development of empirical models explaining the joint approach of algorithmic governance to trust, job satisfaction, and work well-being is deficient, which restricts its complete theoretical development.

Despite the fact that rating systems have been identified as potent platform governance instruments, there is very little research on their psychological impacts, such as stress, emotional labour, or self-control behaviour. The consequences of rating pressure on mental health, perceived job security, and worker decision-making are not effectively studied in the long-term perspective. The uncertainty of income is clearly recognized as a singular characteristic of gig work, but relatively little research has directly related algorithmic pricing, fluctuation of demand, and incentives to earned variability. Further empirical research with a focus on anticipating unpredictable income and its effects on financial planning, job commitment, and overall well-being is necessary, particularly in the situation where social protection is scarce.

Platform work governance gaps such as ineffective labour protection, legal loopholes, and inefficient mechanisms of resolving disputes are usually discussed

at a macro-policy level. Nevertheless, their direct influence on the worker satisfaction, confidence in the platforms, and their psychological welfare is not fully investigated, which is why micro-level studies are needed. It has been reported that trust in platform algorithms is a key factor in employee acceptance of automated decision-making, although there has been a lack of research to determine the mediating role of algorithmic control and employee outcomes. Further studies are needed to understand the extent to which perceived fairness, transparency, and accountability determine trust establishment and have an impact on job satisfaction and work well-being in platform-mediated employment.

Methodology

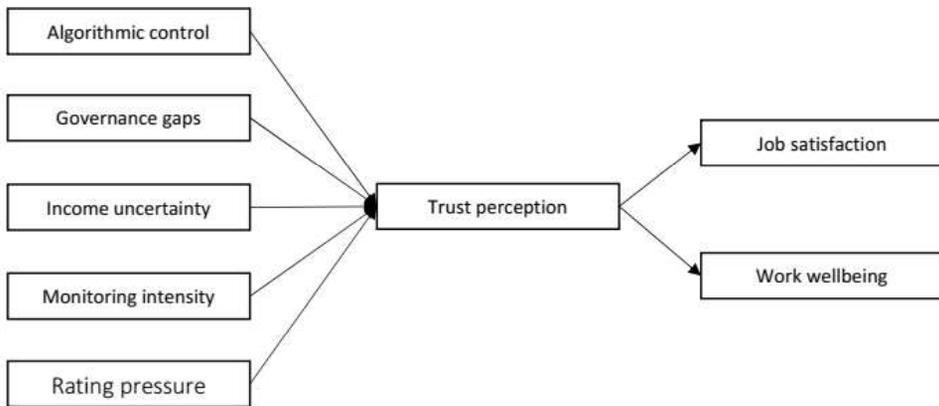
This paper uses a quantitative, descriptive research design in order to investigate the impacts of the conditions of algorithmic control and governance in the gig economy on worker trust, job satisfaction, and work well-being. The study targets the platform-based gig workers and examines the association between independent variables (algorithmic control, rating pressure, income uncertainty, and monitoring intensity), the mediator variable (governance gaps), and dependent variables (job satisfaction and work well-being). The research was undertaken during one month, that is, between the 15th of the month of September, 2025, and the 15th of the month of October, 2025, to record the real-time experience of the workers in platform-mediated employment. The study was conducted in Bangalore (Bengaluru) in India, a big centre of platform-based gig work. The high population of gig workers combined with the heterogeneous population of the city makes it an appropriate setting to study the algorithmic labour governance. Mobile applications are essential to platform drivers and workers in the assignment of tasks, direction, pricing, and performance.

Despite the flexibility of platform work in terms of schedule, it is not uncommon that workers have to work long and irregular hours in order to stabilize their income. The income instability is caused by such factors as financial strains, such as operational expenses and unstable demand. Additionally, gig workers often do not have access to social security and formal labour protection, which reflects the lack of governance to influence the perception of trust and worker welfare. The research questions were as follows: (1) to what extent do the algorithmic control mechanisms impact job satisfaction and work well-being; (2) to what extent do the governance gaps impact the worker trust and perceived fairness; and (3) is the perception of trust a mediating factor between platform governance and worker

outcomes? To this end, the questions were to view the immediate impacts of governance structures on employee performance, determine the consequences of regulatory loopholes on trust, and determine the mediating effects of trust perception. A structured questionnaire based on the items modified to the setting of the gig economy was used to gather data.

All the responses were rated using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The snowball sampling method was used because the gig workers are scattered. Of all the 400 questionnaires that had been distributed, 310 valid responses were received, and this is sufficient to be used in PLS-SEM analysis. The three types of platforms in the study are ride-hailing services, food delivery services, and online freelancing services. These platforms can be characterized as various kinds of algorithmic management, income systems, and worker agency, which allows studying platform governance in a comprehensive way. The analysis of data was done in SmartPLS 3 to perform Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling comprising measurement and structural model evaluation. The approach offers a solid framework for analyzing the influence of algorithmic governance on the trust, job satisfaction, and well-being in the gig economy.

Conceptual framework and hypotheses



- H1: Algorithmic control positively influences gig workers’ trust perception.
- H2: Governance gaps negatively affect gig workers’ trust perception.
- H3: Income uncertainty reduces gig workers’ trust in platforms.
- H4: Monitoring intensity significantly influences gig workers’ trust perception.
- H5: Rating pressure negatively impacts gig workers’ trust perception.
- H6: Trust perception positively influences gig workers’ job satisfaction.
- H7: Trust perception positively influences gig workers’ work wellbeing.

Results

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

	Demographic Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age Group	18–25 years	128	41.3
	26–35 years	132	42.6
	36 years and above	50	16.1
Platform Type	Ride-hailing services	124	40
	Food delivery services	108	34.8
	Online freelancing services	78	25.2
Work Experience	Less than 1 year	92	29.7
	1–3 years	146	47.1
	More than 3 years	72	23.2
		310	100%

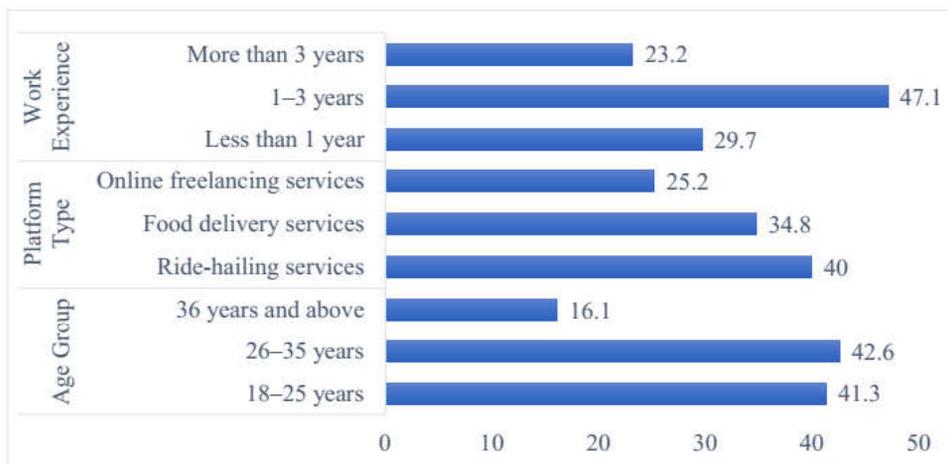


Figure 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table and Figure 1 indicate that the gig workforce is mainly young, with most respondents aged 26–35 years (42.6%) and 18–25 years (41.3%), prominence strong youth participation. Ride-hailing services signify the largest segment (40%), followed by food delivery (34.8%), reflecting platform-based mobility demand. Nearly half of the respondents have 1–3 years of experience (47.1%), suggesting a semi-stable workforce with growing reliance on gig employment for income and living sustainability.

Table 2. Measurement Model Assessment

Items	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
AC1	0.929	0.966	0.974	0.881
AC2	0.944			
AC3	0.944			
AC4	0.943			
AC5	0.931			
GG1	0.925	0.960	0.969	0.862
GG2	0.936			
GG3	0.910			
GG4	0.940			
GG5	0.932			
IU1	0.912	0.953	0.964	0.841
IU2	0.914			
IU3	0.918			
IU4	0.914			
IU5	0.926			
JS1	0.962	0.957	0.972	0.921
JS2	0.966			
JS3	0.951			
MI1	0.935	0.957	0.967	0.855
MI2	0.931			
MI3	0.904			
MI4	0.933			
MI5	0.919			
RP1	0.933	0.957	0.967	0.853
RP2	0.921			
RP3	0.917			
RP4	0.924			
RP5	0.921			
TP1	0.968	0.968	0.979	0.940
TP2	0.971			
TP3	0.969			

WW1	0.974	0.965	0.977	0.935
WW2	0.964			
WW3	0.962			

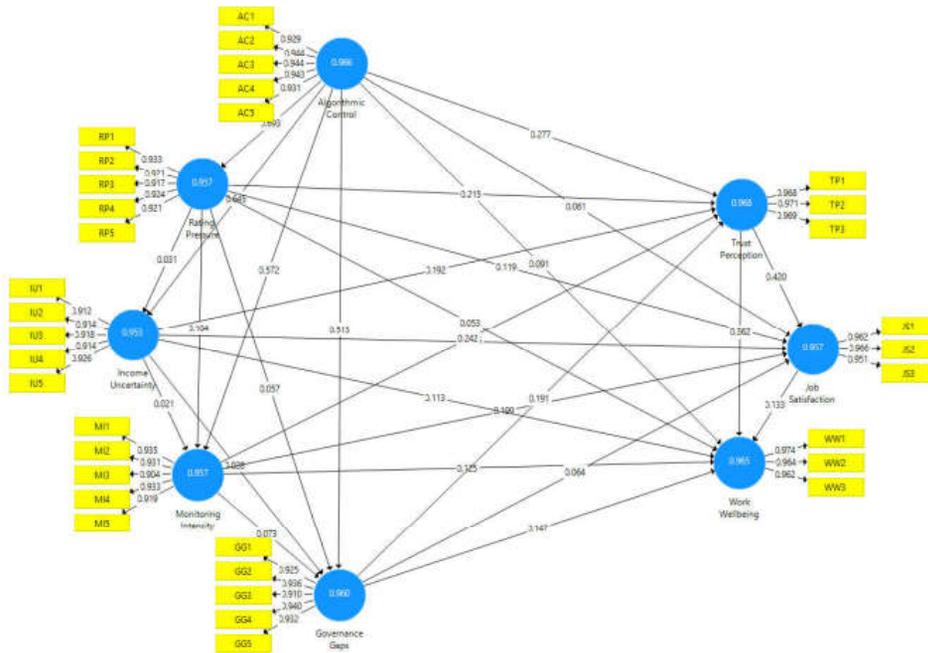


Figure 2. Measurement Model

Table 2 and Figure 2 show how well the measurement model works. All of the indicator loadings are higher than the recommended level of 0.70, which shows that the indicators are very reliable. The values for Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability range from 0.953 to 0.979, which shows that the data is very consistent. The AVE values, which range from 0.841 to 0.940, are higher than the minimum requirement of 0.50, which shows that the results are valid. These findings validate the adequacy of the measurement model by reliably and precisely assessing the constructs.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity Assessment (Fornell–Larcker Criterion)

	AC	GG	IC	JS	MI	RP	TP	WW
Algorithmic Control (AC)	0.938							
Governance Gaps (GG)	0.619	0.929						
Income Uncertainty (IU)	0.667	0.430	0.917					
Job Satisfaction (JS)	0.779	0.597	0.672	0.960				
Monitoring Intensity (MI)	0.658	0.453	0.452	0.705	0.924			
Rating Pressure (RP)	0.693	0.463	0.478	0.674	0.510	0.923		
Trust Perception (TP)	0.831	0.654	0.671	0.855	0.707	0.710	0.969	
Work Wellbeing (WW)	0.781	0.649	0.651	0.801	0.679	0.649	0.849	0.967

Table 3 shows the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which is applied to determine discriminant validity. All the square roots of the AVE of each construct Algorithmic Control (0.938), Governance Gaps (0.929), Income Uncertainty (0.917), Job Satisfaction (0.960), Monitoring Intensity (0.924), Rating Pressure (0.923), Trust Perception (0.969), and Work Wellbeing (0.967)—are higher than the inter-construct correlations. An example is trusting perception, which is strongly correlated with job satisfaction (0.855) and work wellbeing (0.849), but the values are less than its square root of AVE (0.969). Such findings affirm that there is a proper level of discriminant validity, that is, each construct is empirically distinct and reflects different dimensions of the experiences of gig workers.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity Assessment (HTMT)

	AC	GG	IC	JS	MI	RP	TP	WW
Algorithmic Control (AC)	-							
Governance Gaps (GG)	0.642							
Income Uncertainty (IU)	0.694	0.449						
Job Satisfaction (JS)	0.711	0.622	0.703					
Monitoring Intensity (MI)	0.684	0.472	0.473	0.735				
Rating Pressure (RP)	0.720	0.483	0.500	0.704	0.533			
Trust Perception (TP)	0.759	0.678	0.698	0.688	0.734	0.738		
Work Wellbeing (WW)	0.708	0.674	0.678	0.633	0.706	0.675	0.679	-

Table 4 presents the HTMT ratios used to assess discriminant validity. The values of all HTMT are less than the conservative level of 0.90, which means that there is satisfactory discriminant validity between the constructs. The largest HTMT between Trust Perception and Job Satisfaction (0.711) is followed by Trust Perception and Work Wellbeing (0.708), which is theoretically logical given the mediating effect of trust. All other relationships, including the algorithmic control with governance gaps (0.642) and income uncertainty (0.694), are significantly below the threshold. This set of results supports the fact that the constructs are empirically differentiated and that they have discriminant validity.

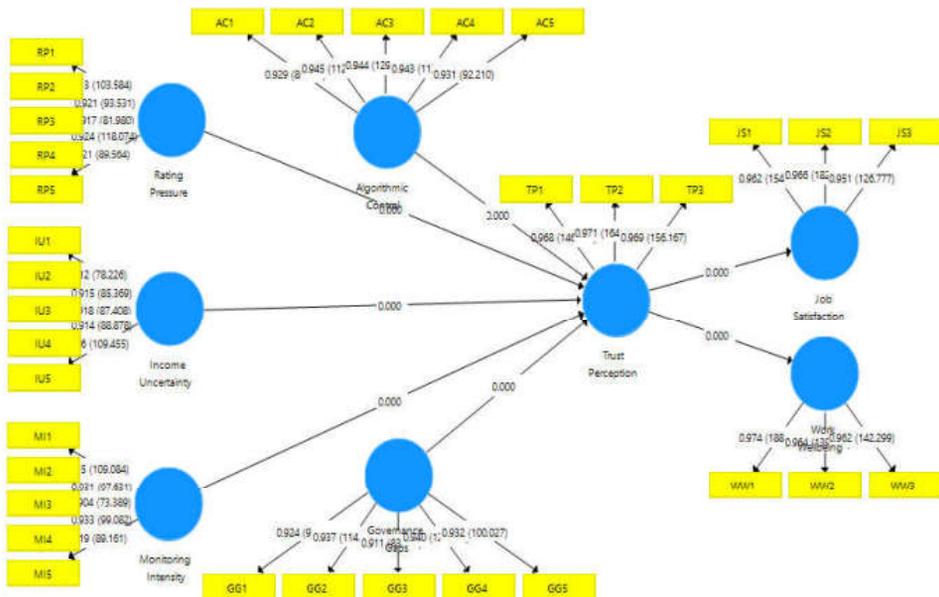


Figure 3. Structural Model Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing Results

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path	β (Mean)	SD	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	Algorithmic Control → Trust Perception	0.276	0.052	5.278	0.000	Supported
H2	Governance Gaps → Trust Perception	0.192	0.035	5.481	0.000	Supported
H3	Income Uncertainty → Trust Perception	0.192	0.035	5.470	0.000	Supported
H4	Monitoring Intensity → Trust Perception	0.243	0.035	6.977	0.000	Supported
H5	Rating Pressure → Trust Perception	0.213	0.032	6.640	0.000	Supported
H6	Trust Perception → Job Satisfaction	0.855	0.020	43.358	0.000	Supported
H7	Trust Perception → Work Wellbeing	0.849	0.019	44.543	0.000	Supported

Table 5 presents the bootstrapping results for the structural model. Algorithmic control significantly influences trust perception ($\beta = 0.276$, $t = 5.278$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that platform automation affects worker trust. Governance gaps ($\beta = 0.192$, $t = 5.481$, $p < 0.001$) and income uncertainty ($\beta = 0.192$, $t = 5.470$, $p < 0.001$) also significantly predict trust perception, highlighting institutional and financial instability concerns. Monitoring intensity ($\beta = 0.243$, $t = 6.977$, $p < 0.001$) and rating pressure ($\beta = 0.213$, $t = 6.640$, $p < 0.001$) further strengthen this relationship. Trust perception strongly predicts job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.855$, $t = 43.358$, $p < 0.001$) and work wellbeing ($\beta = 0.849$, $t = 44.543$, $p < 0.001$), confirming its critical mediating role in gig worker outcomes.

Discussions

The results of the structural model suggest that the suggested relationships between the platform governance factors, trust perception, and the outcomes of gig workers have high empirical support. All the hypothesized paths were significant, meaning that the theoretical model was strong. The impact of algorithmic control on trust perception ($\beta = 0.276$, $p < 0.001$) was significant, which indicates that the perceptions of workers regarding automated decision-making systems are significantly relevant to their trust towards the functioning of the platforms. Likewise, the gaps in governance ($\beta = 0.192$, $p < 0.001$) and income uncertainty

($\beta = 0.192$, $p < 0.001$) were observed to have significant impacts on trust, and thus, the balance of power and financial stability can be a key factor in promoting trust in workers. Intensity monitoring was also a powerful predictor of the perception of trust ($\beta 0.243$, $p < 0.001$), which shows that widespread digital surveillance and performance monitoring are influential factors in worker perceptions of platform fairness.

The rating pressure was also a significant predictor of trust ($\beta^2 = 0.213$, $p < 0.001$) it reflected the psychological and economic consequences of customer ratings on employees who perceived themselves to be secure in their jobs and on the reliability of the platforms. In the first place, the perception of trust had a very strong positive impact on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.855$, $p < 0.001$) and work wellbeing ($\beta = 0.849$, $p < 0.001$), which underpins its mediating nature. These results indicate that trust is an essential process by which platform governance practices can condition worker experiences and well-being in general. The strength of these effects suggests that the level of trust can be increased by transparent algorithms, equal authority systems, and predictable income systems to obtain a significant positive effect on the satisfaction and mental health of gig workers. On the whole, the findings highlight how important trust is in the gig economy and show that the configuration of platforms and the operation of governance practices are not just a means of operation but key determinants of worker well-being and productive platform interaction.

Conclusion

This research has investigated how the mechanisms of platform governance influence the perception of trust and future job satisfaction and work well-being in gig workers. The results indicate that nominal control, governance voids, uncertainty of income, the intensity of monitoring, and rating aim have major impacts on trust in platform systems by workers. These findings help support the emerging academic interest in the fact that digitally mediated labour spaces alter relationships of power, often to the disadvantage of workers when no transparent governance and regulatory safeguards are in place (Lata *et al.*, 2022; Muldoon and Sun, 2024). Specifically, the algorithmic decision-making system and variable income patterns are among the factors that increase uncertainty; the system of monitoring and rating, on the one hand, increases the pressure of performances that form the perception of workers about fairness and safety. The perception of trust came out as the most potent predictor of job satisfaction and work well-being, which made it a key focus as a mediating process in platform-based employment. This conclusion falls in line with the evidence that the humanized algorithms, open communication, and equitable platform policies can reinforce the affective trust and improve the worker performance and their psychological welfare (Chen and

Chen, 2025; Au-Yeung *et al.*, 2025). Workers should feel supported and perceive platforms as fair to get better work attitudes and outcomes in mental health.

The paper adds to the general body of work on the gig economy by highlighting that platform governance is not just an issue of technical or even operational issues but a key factor that affects worker well-being and platform ecosystem sustainability. With the growth of gig work in transnational and digitally connected labour markets, policymakers and platform providers should focus on the clarity of regulations, social protections, and algorithmic transparency to create equitable labour conditions (Andersen & Spanger, 2024; Anwar *et al.*, 2023). In general, the results highlight the fact that trust-based governance is needed to foster sustainable, inclusive, and resilient gig workplaces. According to the results, a number of practical and policy-based recommendations are provided to enhance trust, job satisfaction, and work wellbeing in gig workers. First, platform companies must increase the level of transparency in algorithms by providing a clear explanation of how the tasks are allocated and rated and how payments are made. Open systems have the ability to minimize ambiguity and assist employees in arriving at a wise judgment regarding their work schedule and salary forecasts.

Second, platforms must present just governance systems, such as available systems to redress grievances and decisive dispute resolution processes. The perceptions of instability can be enhanced by providing workers with an official avenue of airing their concerns. Third, financial insecurity and worker confidence can be improved by stabilizing income with minimum earning guarantees, predictable incentive schemes, and transparency in surge pricing. Fourth, the balance of monitoring practices has to be such that the performance evaluation is achieved without exerting too much pressure of surveillance. Platforms are able to implement some supportive surveillance methods that emphasize feedback and skill building as opposed to punitive control. Fifth, rating systems would need to be reshaped to reduce bias with the inclusion of several performance indicators and workers to answer unjust reviews. Lastly, policymakers ought to think about extending labour protections, social security, and occupational safety to gig workers. The partnership between platforms and regulators will help create a fairer ecosystem. These actions will be able to build up trust, improve worker well-being, and foster sustainable growth in the gig economy.

Managerial implications

The results have a major bearing on platform managers who want to increase the trust, satisfaction, and well-being of workers in the gig economy. One, managers need to focus more on the idea of algorithmic transparency, as they need to clarify the process of defining tasks, ratings, and compensation. Open systems have the potential to minimize uncertainty and enhance the sense of fairness by the workers. Second, the governance structure of the platform must have easy access to support services, maintenance of timely dispute resolution systems, and policy standards

to build trust and organizational credibility. Managers also ought to deal with the instability of income by coming up with calculable incentive plans, minimum pay levels, and transparent surge pricing guidelines. These may enhance the economic stability and alleviate stress in gig workers. Also, the revision of monitoring should be redesigned as something that helps the worker to improve performance and offer valuable feedback instead of being some kind of punishment to the worker to enhance their engagement and motivation. Perceived fairness can be further improved by revising rating systems to reduce bias and other ways of including multi-source feedback. Lastly, retention and platform loyalty can be enhanced by investing in worker welfare programs, including mental health programs, the ability to work on a flexible schedule, and safety programs. Platform organizations would be able to create a more sustainable, productive, and resilient gig workforce by implementing trust-based management practices.

Future research scope

Although this research offers a very informative explanation of the importance of platform governance and trust in defining job satisfaction and well-being among gig workers, there are still a number of gaps where further research may be conducted. To begin with, future research might use longitudinal designs to test the effects of trust and worker outcomes through time, especially when the platforms change algorithms, policies, and compensation models. These strategies would provide more information on causal links and long-term adjustments for workers. Second, a comparative analysis of various platform sectors, like ride-hailing, food delivery, and online freelancing, would help identify sector-specific governance issues and the experiences of the workers. Inter-country comparisons would also be useful in determining the impact of regulatory conditions and cultural settings on the trust and well-being of the gig economy.

Third, it is possible to include more mediators/moderators (perceived fairness, job autonomy, digital literacy, and social support) in future research to create a more comprehensive model of the well-being of gig workers. Alternative qualitative methods, such as interviews and ethnography, may also enhance the knowledge of the workers' experiences and coping mechanisms. Lastly, it is possible to combine objective performance and income data with survey results, which can contribute to the improvement of measurement accuracy and more comprehensive consideration of platform work dynamics.

Limitations of the Study

This research has several limitations even though it offers important information on platform governance, trust perception, and outcomes of gig workers. To start with, cross-sectional research design does not allow one to develop any causal relationship between the variables. It would be interesting to conduct longitudinal

studies to gain deeper insights into the change in trust and well-being over time against platform policy changes. Second, the research is based on self-reported survey data, which can be prone to common method bias and social desirability effects, and hence the findings can affect the perceptions of trust, satisfaction, and well-being of respondents. Thirdly, the sample is geographically clustered in an urban Indian setting, and this factor might restrict the applicability of the results to other rural regions or countries with different regulatory environments and labour market characteristics. Fourth, the study focuses primarily on selected governance factors and trust perception, while other relevant variables such as job autonomy, digital literacy, social support, and platform dependency were not examined. Including these factors could provide a more comprehensive understanding of gig worker experiences. Finally, the study examines major platform sectors collectively, potentially overlooking sector-specific differences in working conditions. Future research could adopt sector-based analyses to capture nuanced variations across gig work domains.

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