

A Study of Factors Influencing Gen Z Graduates' Choice of Careers in Gig Economy

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ABSTRACT:

The gig economy is quickly changing the global job market. It offers flexible, independent, project-based work that is especially appealing to Generation Z graduates. This study looks into the factors that affect Gen Z graduates' career choices in the gig economy. It focuses on skill development, preferences for flexibility, the impact of digital platforms, and career sustainability.

A descriptive research design was used. Primary data came from 31 respondents through structured questionnaires. This was supported by secondary sources like journals, industry reports, and academic articles. The findings show that most of the sample consists of young, educated women aged 21 to 24 years. They are engaged in freelance digital services, creative roles, and web or software development.

High market demand, chances for creative expression, and the culture of independent work were key motivators. Most respondents view themselves as skilled but in need of further improvement, showing the potential for ongoing learning. Flexibility in choosing projects and working hours, along with global exposure through digital platforms, strongly affects their gig career choices.

The study presents useful insights for managers. It suggests creating flexible work structures, launching skill development programs, strategically integrating

gig workers, and using digital platforms to engage talent. By highlighting the motivations, challenges, and preferences of Gen Z in the gig economy, this research offers valuable insights for organizations, educators, and policymakers to create strategies that foster a sustainable, motivated, and skilled gig workforce.

1. INTRODUCTION

The global job market is changing significantly with the rapid growth of the gig economy. This work model features short-term contracts, freelance work, and platform-based jobs. Unlike traditional employment, which focuses on fixed hours, long-term job security, and clear career paths, the gig economy thrives on flexibility, independence, and project-based tasks. In this system, individuals take on "gigs" based on their skills and availability instead of committing to permanent positions. This new employment structure has gained popularity worldwide, especially among younger generations who want more control over their professional and personal lives.

Essentially, the gig economy resembles entrepreneurship by giving people the freedom of self-employment without the risks and challenges of starting a full-scale business. It allows professionals to set their schedules, choose clients, and diversify income across fields like digital marketing, content creation, ride-

hailing, design, and technology services. This freedom has changed traditional views on work and career growth. In India, freelance and gig hiring increased by 38% during FY2025, according to a report from The Economic Times in 2025, demonstrating its swift acceptance. Globally, there are about 435 million gig workers, making up nearly 4-12% of the total workforce; this number continues to grow as digital platforms promote remote and flexible work options.

In this changing work environment, Generation Z (Gen Z)—those born between 1997 and 2012—has become a major force in the modern job market. As digital natives, Gen Z has grown up with constant access to technology, social media, and instant connectivity, which has influenced their work values and career expectations. Unlike earlier generations that valued job security and steady career growth, Gen Z prioritizes flexibility, innovation, work-life balance, and continuous learning. They seek roles that encourage self-expression, remote work, and varied experiences instead of sticking to one fixed position.

Recent studies back these generational preferences. A 2024 survey by India Today found that 83% of Gen Z individuals in India are actively learning new skills to boost their employability, especially in areas like artificial intelligence, data science, digital marketing, and design—skills that meet the demands of the gig economy. Moreover, the RPG Group Research Report (2024) revealed that 64% of Indian Gen Z professionals prefer employers that offer flexible work opportunities, with many willing to accept lower salaries for better mental well-being, independence, and inclusive work settings. This shift indicates a significant change in how success is viewed, moving away from titles and salary levels to focus on overall well-being and autonomy.

However, the gig economy also brings notable challenges, particularly for Gen Z graduates entering the workforce. Income instability is a major worry since earnings vary based on project availability and market demand. Additionally, gig workers often miss out on typical job benefits like health insurance, retirement funds, paid leave, and job security. A 2024 survey by Business Standard across 40 Indian cities found that over 77% of gig workers earn less than ₹2.5 lakh annually, highlighting the financial uncertainty tied to gig work. Furthermore, the lack of structured career advancement and ongoing societal doubts about non-

traditional careers make long-term sustainability more difficult.

The COVID-19 pandemic sped up the growth of the gig economy. With widespread layoffs and remote work becoming standard, freelance platforms like Upwork, Fiverr, Swiggy, Urban Company, and Uber saw increased participation. For many Gen Z graduates entering the job market during or after the pandemic, gig work proved to be a practical choice, offering income, opportunities to build portfolios, and global exposure.

In India, the gig economy has vast economic potential. According to a 2023 report by NITI Aayog, India had about 7.7 million gig workers, a number expected to rise to 23.5 million by 2030, contributing nearly 1.25% to the national GDP. However, for this growth to be sustainable, key issues like income instability, lack of formal skill certification, and insufficient labor protections need to be addressed.

Given this context, the current research aims to explore the main factors affecting Gen Z graduates' career choices within the gig economy. These factors include skill development, preferences for flexibility, autonomy, long-term career sustainability, and the challenges faced while navigating this changing job landscape. Understanding these factors is crucial for policymakers, educators, and organizations to create inclusive systems that support fair pay, skill development, and social security. Ultimately, the gig economy represents a fundamental change in work, providing Gen Z with independence and innovation while requiring careful planning to ensure a balanced and sustainable employment future.

2. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Over the past few years, the gig economy has become an important part of the global labor market. It offers flexibility, independence, and various work opportunities, which are especially attractive to Generation Z graduates. For many young professionals, gig work feels like a viable alternative to traditional jobs. It resembles self-employment or entrepreneurship, as it lets people work on their own terms, select projects that interest them, and use digital platforms for professional growth. However, the growing popularity of the gig economy brings several challenges that affect Gen Z graduates' career choices.

Generation Z faces several uncertainties in choosing gig work. These include unstable income, lack of benefits, limited job security, and unclear career paths. Motivational, economic, social, and psychological factors greatly influence their willingness to engage in and maintain jobs within the gig economy. While the flexibility and independence draw in Gen Z professionals, worries about financial stability, social acceptance, relevant skills, and long-term career growth often cause hesitation.

Success in the gig economy relies heavily on ongoing skill development, careful career planning, and the ability to respond to changing market needs. Many Gen Z graduates do not have enough guidance, structured support, or clear knowledge of the skills needed to succeed in this changing work landscape. As the gig economy continues to grow, it's essential to understand what influences Gen Z graduates' career choices.

This study aims to explore how motivational, economic, social, psychological, skill-related, strategic, and sustainability factors impact Gen Z graduates' career choices in the gig economy. It emphasizes the need for informed decision-making and supportive systems to ensure sustainable career success.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Barhate and Dirani (2022) conducted a detailed review of the career aspirations of Generation Z. Their study showed that Gen Z strongly prefers meaningful work, technology-friendly environments, flexible workplaces, and entrepreneurial chances. Unlike previous generations, Gen Z maintains a practical outlook where economic security coexists with intrinsic motivations like personal growth, social contribution, and shared values. The authors stressed that flexibility and access to online learning platforms significantly influence Gen Z's career goals, making gig work especially appealing. Their findings lay a foundation for understanding Gen Z's mindset, which closely matches the traits of gig-based jobs.

Meijerink and Keegan (2025) studied how gig work is changing professional careers in the broader job market. Their research highlighted that gig work offers independence, a chance to develop various skills, and exposure to different experiences. However, it also disrupts traditional career paths, leading to "patchwork careers" filled with frequent job changes and

fragmented employment histories. While these careers promote adaptability and learning, they also raise concerns about job security, career continuity, and long-term stability. This study highlights the complex effects of gig work on career development, making it vital in Gen Z's career choices.

Purohit, Jayswal, and Muduli (2021) conducted a literature review on what influences graduate career choices. They identified salary, career advancement, company reputation, and work-life balance as key factors. The study also pointed out the impact of personal values, societal expectations, and employer branding on shaping career preferences. Although the research focused on traditional jobs, its findings apply to the gig economy, as Gen Z graduates consider similar aspects—like earning potential, platform reputation, and lifestyle flexibility—when looking at gig careers.

Athar, Azmi, and Reza (2025) looked into student preferences for gig work versus typical 9-to-5 jobs through a qualitative study. Their findings showed that flexibility, creativity, independence, and autonomy drew students toward gig careers, while others preferred traditional employment for its structured career paths, income stability, and job security. The study also pointed out changing career priorities among younger generations, who increasingly value freedom and self-direction over long-term commitment to organizations. This research supports the idea that gig work fits well with Gen Z's changing career values.

Perdana, Syahrul, Sudono, Kurnia, and Susanto (2025) examined career choices among young graduates, comparing entrepreneurship and freelancing. Their findings showed that an entrepreneurial mindset is emerging among graduates involved in gig platforms. Many respondents viewed gig work as more than just a temporary income source; they saw it as a pathway to self-employment, innovation, and starting their own businesses. This view positions gig work as a mixed career option, combining aspects of employment and entrepreneurship, which strongly appeals to Gen Z graduates seeking independence while minimizing business risk.

Munoz, Sawyer, and Dunn (2022) critically looked at the growth of online freelancing and digital labor platforms, raising questions about whether these platforms promote inclusion or continue marginalization. While digital platforms broaden access to global job markets and create opportunities for diverse talent, the authors argued that they also place

workers in precarious conditions with irregular income, algorithmic control, and a lack of employment benefits. Their study highlights the conflicting nature of gig platforms, providing opportunities while also presenting vulnerabilities that greatly impact the long-term career stability of young workers.

Roy and Shrivastava (2020) examined the future of the gig economy in India and worldwide, noting both opportunities and threats. They underscored job creation, flexibility, and business opportunities as major benefits, especially in developing countries like India. However, they also pointed out issues like worker exploitation, insufficient institutional support, regulatory gaps, and income uncertainty. Their research emphasizes the need for policy frameworks and labor regulations to ensure the sustainable growth of the gig economy, particularly for young entrants like Gen Z graduates.

Reid, Ashford, Caza, and Granger (2025) focused on the career development and identity formation of gig workers. Their study found that gig professionals depend on self-directed learning, resilience, networking, and personal branding to stay employable. Without support from organizations, individuals must take charge of their professional growth. While this autonomy encourages adaptability, it also raises psychological stress and uncertainty, especially for early-career workers in gig-based roles.

Banik and Padalkar (2021) examined the growth of the gig economy fueled by digital platforms and technology. Their study indicated that gig work encourages entrepreneurship, flexible employment, and innovation, but it also brings challenges like unstable income, job insecurity, and worker exploitation. The authors highlighted the need for skill development programs and regulatory efforts to protect gig workers and improve career sustainability.

Lehdonvirta (2018) investigated flexibility in the gig economy across three online platforms. The study found that while gig workers experience some autonomy and time flexibility, this freedom is often limited by platform algorithms, client demands, and performance ratings. As a result, real control over work schedules and conditions is restricted. This research challenges the idealized view of flexibility in gig work and provides a clearer understanding of the constraints faced by gig workers.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study various career options in the gig economy for Gen Z graduates.

This goal seeks to identify and look into the different career opportunities available to Generation Z graduates within the gig economy. It includes roles such as freelancing, platform-based services, remote digital jobs, content creation, consulting, and tech-driven assignments. This goal aims to understand the scope, nature, and growth potential of these career options. It also explores how these opportunities differ from traditional jobs in terms of flexibility and independence.

2. To determine Gen Z graduates' awareness and preparedness for participation in the gig economy.

This goal focuses on evaluating how aware Gen Z graduates are about gig economy platforms, work processes, and job conditions. It looks at their readiness in terms of digital skills, technical knowledge, adaptability, and self-management abilities. This goal also examines their access to training, upskilling opportunities, and professional advice. Understanding their readiness helps spot gaps between career goals and actual preparation for gig work.

3. To examine various factors influencing Gen Z graduates towards careers in the gig economy.

This goal aims to analyze the motivational, economic, social, psychological, and strategic factors that influence Gen Z graduates' interest in gig-based careers. It considers aspects such as flexibility, income expectations, work-life balance, independence, peer influence, and access to technology. This goal also looks at how personal values and career goals affect their decision-making. This analysis helps explain why Gen Z is increasingly choosing gig careers over traditional jobs.

4. To assess career sustainability of Gen Z in the gig economy.

This goal seeks to evaluate the long-term sustainability of gig careers for Gen Z graduates. It examines factors such as income stability, career growth, job security, work-life balance, and future employability. This goal also considers challenges like the absence of social security, benefits, and regulatory support. Assessing sustainability provides insights into whether gig work can be a viable long-term career option.

5. Research Hypotheses

➤ **Null Hypothesis (H₀): Gen Z graduates do not consider Gig work as a path toward starting their own business in the future.**

The null hypothesis states that Generation Z graduates do not see gig work as a way to start their own business in the future. It assumes that Gen Z views gig jobs mainly as temporary work or a way to earn extra income, rather than a foundation for building a business. According to this hypothesis, gig work does not meaningfully help Gen Z graduates gain entrepreneurial skills, business experience, or long-term goals for self-employment.

➤ **Alternative Hypothesis (H₁): Gen Z graduates consider Gig work as a path towards starting their own business in the future.**

The alternative hypothesis suggests that Generation Z graduates view gig work as a pathway to starting their own business in the future. It indicates that gig work helps Gen Z develop entrepreneurial skills, gain industry experience, build professional connections, and achieve financial independence. This hypothesis assumes that gig jobs promote innovation, independence, and a business mindset, which can support future entrepreneurial plans.

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design

The research design for this study is descriptive. This design is suitable since the study aims to describe and analyze the factors that affect the career choices of Generation Z graduates in the gig economy. It primarily focuses on three main factors: skill acquisition, strategic career choices, and career sustainability. These elements help us understand how they shape Gen Z graduates' readiness, preferences, and long-term engagement in gig-based work. Descriptive research captures existing conditions, perceptions, attitudes, and trends without changing any variables. It provides a clear picture of the current career patterns and decision-making behaviors of Gen Z graduates, allowing for a meaningful interpretation of the relationships between the factors studied.

6.2 Sources of Data

Primary Data: We collected primary data through a structured questionnaire given to Generation Z graduates. These individuals are either currently working in gig-based jobs or are interested in entering the gig economy. The questionnaire gathers first-hand information about respondents' awareness,

preparedness, skill development, strategic motivations, and views on the sustainability of gig careers.

Secondary Data: We obtained secondary data from reliable sources like research journals, academic articles, government publications, industry reports, survey findings, and trustworthy online resources. This data provides a theoretical background and supports the interpretation of primary findings.

6.3 Sample Design

- **Sample Universe:** The sample universe includes all individuals from Generation Z, typically born between 1997 and 2012.
- **Sample Population:** The sample population consists of Generation Z graduates living in urban and semi-urban areas of Amravati District. These locations were chosen due to their higher exposure to digital platforms, gig opportunities, and freelance work.
- **Sample Unit:** The sample unit includes Generation Z individuals who are either currently working in gig-based jobs or aspiring to do so, especially in areas like creative services, digital services, and consulting.
- **Sample Size:** The selected sample size is 31 respondents. This number is adequate for a descriptive study and allows for meaningful analysis within the available time and resources.

6.4 Data Collection Tools

The main tool for data collection in this study is a structured questionnaire. This questionnaire is designed to gather detailed information about Generation Z graduates' views on gig economy careers. It focuses on skill development, strategic decision-making, flexibility, income stability, and long-term sustainability. The questionnaire includes both closed-ended questions for quantitative measurement and easy comparison of responses, as well as open-ended questions that offer qualitative insights into respondents' personal opinions and experiences. Using a questionnaire ensures consistency in data collection, minimizes bias, and allows for efficient compilation of responses from many participants.

6.5 Statistical Tools Used

We analyze the collected data using descriptive statistical tools to summarize and interpret the responses effectively. Techniques like percentages, mean, median, and mode help present data clearly and understandably. Microsoft Excel is used for data coding, tabulation, and creating graphs. These tools help identify trends,

patterns, and relationships among factors related to skill development, strategic preferences, and the sustainability of gig careers. The use of descriptive statistics allows for meaningful conclusions that align with the study's objectives.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

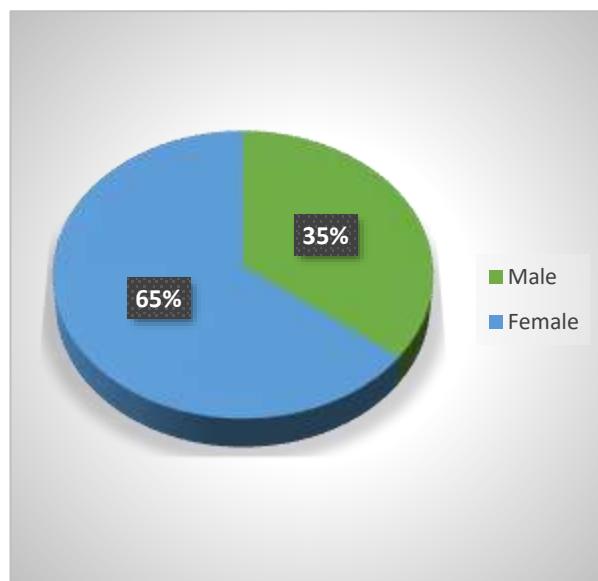
Data analysis and interpretation in this study come from responses collected from a sample of 30 respondents. The data obtained through the questionnaire were organized, listed, and analysed using simple statistical tools like percentages and frequencies. This analysis identified patterns, trends, and relationships among variables. We explained the results logically, which provided useful insights and supported the study's goals.

7.1 Analysis of gender wise distribution of respondents:

Table no-7.1: Table showing gender wise distribution of respondents-

| Gender | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|--------|--------------------|------------|
| Male | 11 | 35.5 |
| Female | 20 | 64.5 |
| TOTAL | 31 | 100 |

Graph no-7.1: Graph showing gender wise distribution of respondents-



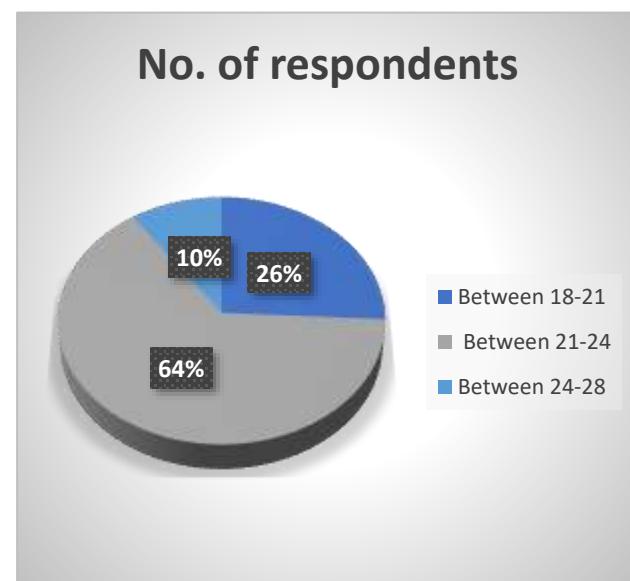
Interpretation: The study reveals that out of 31 respondents, 64.5% are female while 35.5% are male. This indicates a higher representation of female participants in the sample. As a result, the findings predominantly reflect female perspectives.

7.2 Analysis of age wise distribution of respondents:

Table no-7.2: Table showing age wise distribution of respondents-

| Sr. no. | Age Group | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|---------|---------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1 | Between 18-21 | 8 | 25.8 |
| 2 | Between 21-24 | 20 | 64.5 |
| 3 | Between 24-28 | 3 | 9.7 |
| | TOTAL | 31 | 100 |

Graph no-7.2: Graph showing gender wise distribution of respondents



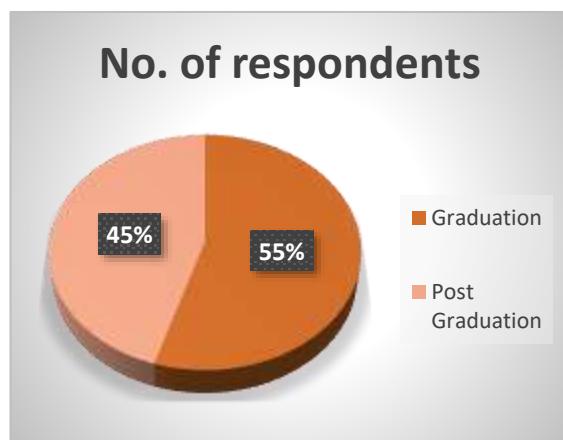
Interpretation: The study reveals that the majority of respondents (64.5%) belong to the 21–24 age group, followed by 25.8% in the 18–21 age group. A smaller proportion of respondents (9.7%) fall within the 24–28 age group. This indicates that the sample is largely composed of young adults aged between 21 and 24 years.

7.3 Analysis of education qualification distribution of respondents:

Table no-7.3: Table showing education qualification distribution of respondents:

| Sr. no. | Education | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|---------|-----------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1 | Graduation | 17 | 54.8 |
| 2 | Post Graduation | 14 | 45.2 |
| | TOTAL | 31 | 100 |

Graph no-7.3: Graph showing education qualification distribution of respondents:



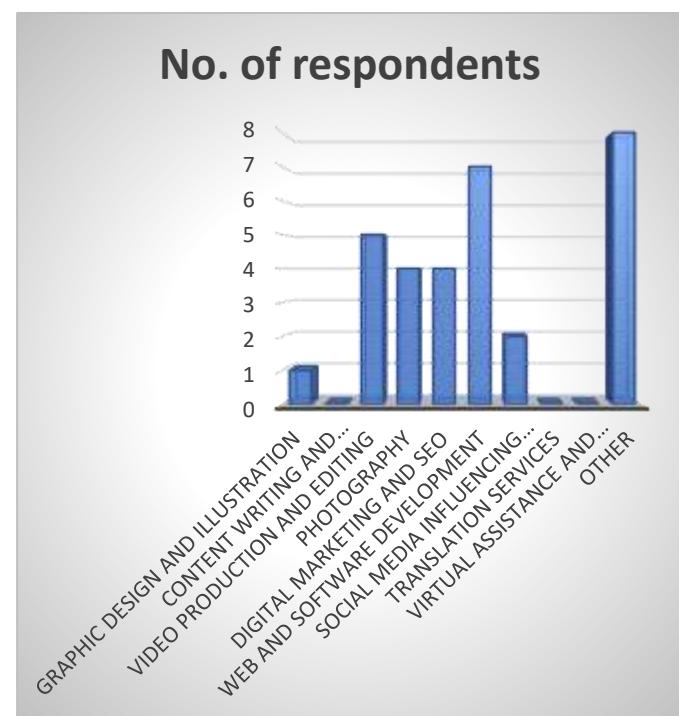
Interpretation: The study reveals that a majority of the respondents (54.8%) are graduates, indicating that most participants have completed undergraduate education. A substantial proportion (45.2%) consists of postgraduates, reflecting a strong representation of higher educational qualifications.

7.4 Analysis of work domain distribution of respondents:

Table no-7.4: Table showing work domain distribution of respondents:

| Sr. no. | Work domain | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|---------|---|--------------------|------------|
| 1 | Graphic design and illustration | 1 | 3.2 |
| 2 | Content writing and copywriting | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | Video production and editing | 5 | 16.1 |
| 4 | Photography | 4 | 12.9 |
| 5 | Digital marketing and SEO | 4 | 12.9 |
| 6 | Web and software development | 7 | 22.6 |
| 7 | Social media influencing and/content creation | 2 | 6.5 |
| 8 | Translation services | 0 | 0 |
| 9 | Virtual assistance and administration support | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | Other | 8 | 25.8 |
| | TOTAL | 31 | 100 |

Graph no-7.4: Graph showing work domain distribution of respondents:



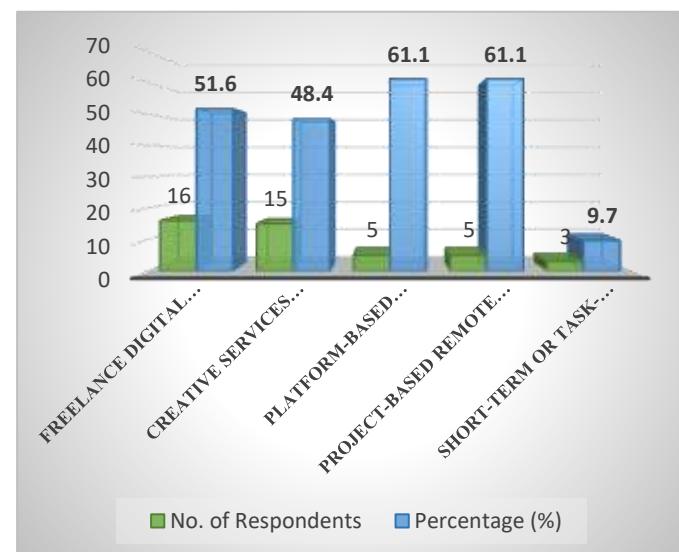
Interpretation: The study reveals that the highest proportion of respondents (25.8%) are engaged in other work domains, followed by web and software development (22.6%). Video production and editing (16.1%), photography, and digital marketing and SEO (12.9% each) also show notable participation. In contrast, no respondents were involved in content writing, translation services, or virtual assistance, indicating limited interest or participation in these domains.

7.5 Analysis of Awareness of Gig Economy Opportunities in Digital and Creative Services to respondents

| Sr. no | Type of Gig Economy Opportunity | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Freelance digital services (IT, data, web, digital marketing) | 16 | 51.6 |
| 2 | Creative services (design, content creation, media) | 15 | 48.4 |
| 3 | Platform-based professional services (consulting, virtual assistance) | 5 | 61.1 |
| 4 | Project-based remote work for global clients | 5 | 61.1 |
| 5 | Short-term or task-based online gigs | 3 | 9.7 |
| TOTAL | | 31 | Multiple responses |

Table no-7.5: Table showing Awareness of Gig Economy Opportunities in Digital and Creative Services to respondents

Graph no-7.5: Graph showing Awareness of Gig Economy Opportunities in Digital and Creative Services to respondents



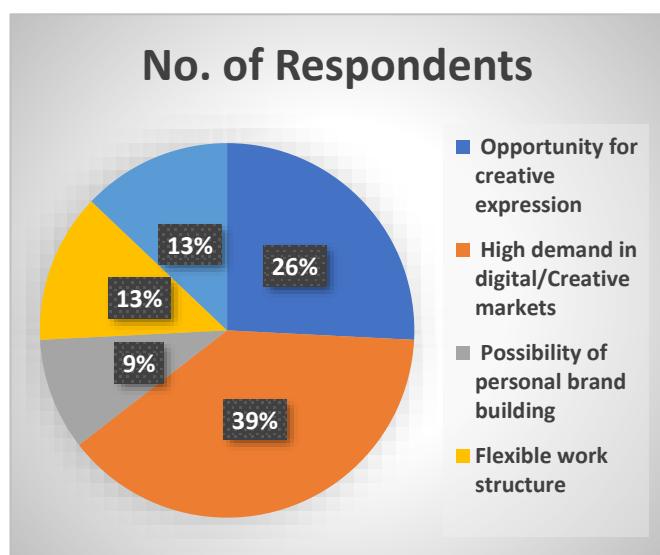
Interpretation: The study indicates that freelance digital services are a prominent gig economy opportunity, selected by 51.6% of the respondents, showing a strong preference for IT- and digital-related work. Creative services also account for a considerable share (48.4%), reflecting interest in design and media fields. Additionally, many respondents participate in platform-based professional services and project-based remote work for global clients (61.1% each, based on multiple responses). In contrast, short-term or task-based online gigs show comparatively lower participation at 9.7%.

7.6 Analysis of Primary Reasons for Choosing a Preferred Domain in the Gig Economy by respondents

Table no-7.6: Table Showing Reasons for Choosing a Preferred Domain in the Gig Economy by respondents

| Sr. no | Reason for Choosing Gig Domain | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------|---|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Opportunity for creative expression | 8 | 25.8 |
| 2 | High demand in digital/Creative markets | 12 | 38.7 |
| 3 | Possibility of personal brand building | 3 | 9.7 |
| 4 | Flexible work structure | 4 | 12.9 |
| 5 | Long-term professional growth | 4 | 12.9 |
| TOTAL | | 31 | 100 |

Graph no-7.6: Graph showing Reasons for Choosing a Preferred Domain in the Gig Economy by respondents



Interpretation: The study highlights that high demand in digital and creative markets is the primary reason for choosing a gig domain, as reported by 38.7% of the

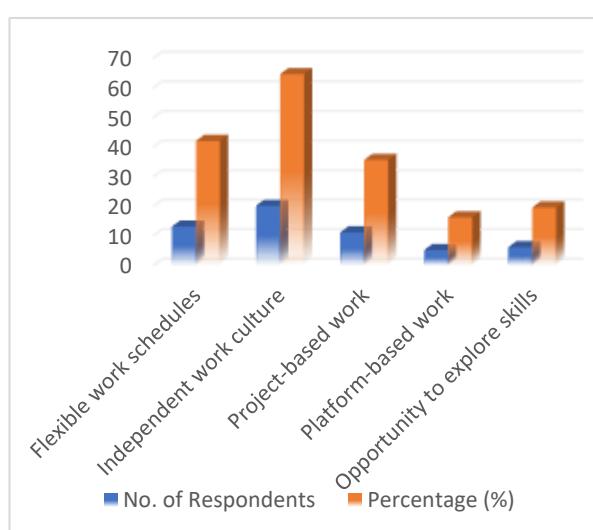
respondents. Opportunity for creative expression follows with 25.8%, indicating the importance of creativity in career choice. Flexible work structure and long-term professional growth are equally valued by 12.9% of respondents each. In comparison, personal brand building is a less influential factor, cited by 9.7% of the respondents.

7.7 Analysis of Awareness-Related Factors Influencing the Choice of a Career in the Gig Economy among respondents

Table no-7.7: Table Showing Awareness-Related Factors Influencing the Choice of a Career in the Gig Economy among respondents

| Sr. no | Influencing Reason | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Flexible work schedules | 13 | 41.9 |
| 2 | Independent work culture | 20 | 64.5 |
| 3 | Project-based work | 11 | 35.5 |
| 4 | Platform-based work | 5 | 16.1 |
| 5 | Opportunity to explore skills | 6 | 19.4 |
| TOTAL | | 31 | Multiple responses |

Graph no-7.7: Graph Showing Awareness-Related Factors Influencing the Choice of a Career in the Gig Economy among respondents



Interpretation: The study shows that an independent work culture is the most influential reason for opting for gig-based work, with 64.5% of respondents selecting this factor. Flexible work schedules also play a significant role, influencing 41.9% of the participants. Project-based work attracts 35.5% of respondents, reflecting interest in task-oriented assignments. In contrast, platform-based work (16.1%) and opportunities to explore skills (19.4%) are relatively less influential factors.

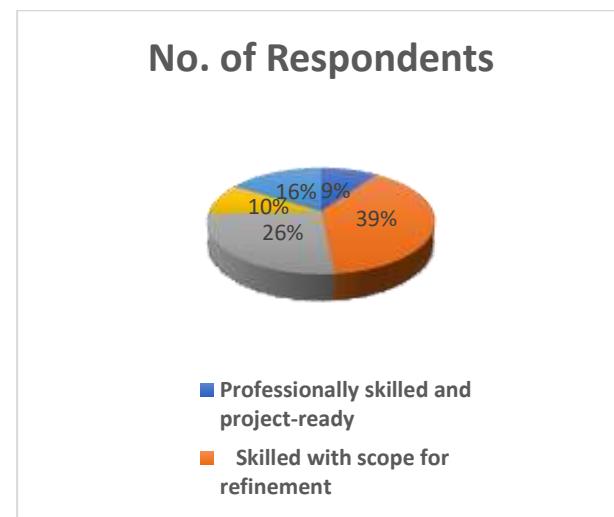
7.8 Analysis Self-Assessment of Creative and Technical Skill Levels for Gig Work of respondents

Table no-7.8: Table Showing Self-Assessment of Creative and Technical Skill Levels for Gig Work of respondents

| Sr. no | Self-Evaluated Skill Level | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------|--|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Professionally skilled and project-ready | 3 | 9.7 |
| 2 | Skilled with scope for refinement | 12 | 38.7 |
| 3 | Moderately skilled requiring training | 8 | 25.8 |
| 4 | Basic skills with limited exposure | 3 | 9.7 |
| 5 | Beginner level with learning interest | 5 | 16.1 |

| | | |
|-------|----|-----|
| TOTAL | 31 | 100 |
|-------|----|-----|

Graph no-7.8: Graph showing Reasons for Choosing a Preferred Domain in the Gig Economy by respondents



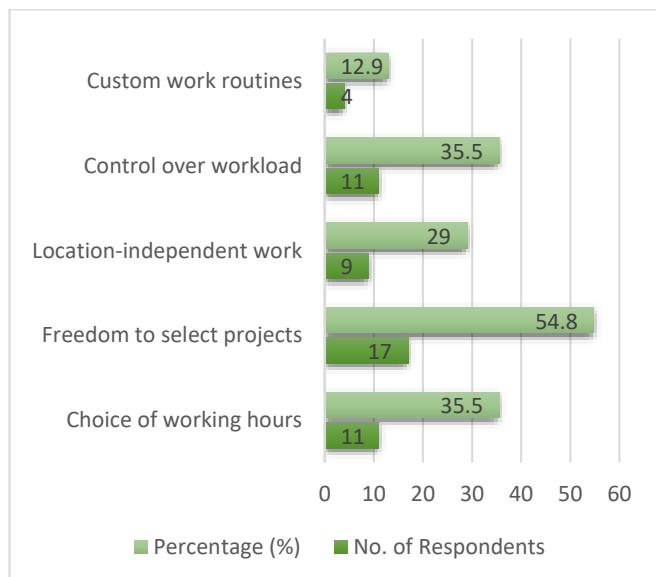
Interpretation: The study reflects that the largest proportion of respondents (38.7%) consider themselves skilled but still in need of refinement, indicating awareness of continuous skill improvement. About 25.8% rate themselves as moderately skilled and requiring further training. A smaller share identify as beginners with learning interest (16.1%), while equal proportions (9.7% each) perceive themselves as professionally project-ready or possessing only basic skills with limited exposure.

7.9 Analysis of Flexibility Factors Attracting Individuals Towards Gig Work

| Sr. no | Aspect of Flexibility | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Choice of working hours | 11 | 35.5 |
| 2 | Freedom to select projects | 17 | 54.8 |
| 3 | Location-independent work | 9 | 29 |
| 4 | Control over workload | 11 | 35.5 |
| 5 | Custom work routines | 4 | 12.9 |
| TOTAL | | 31 | Multiple responses |

Table no-7.9: Table Showing Flexibility Factors Attracting Individuals Towards Gig Work

Graph no-7.9: Graph showing Flexibility Factors Attracting Individuals Towards Gig Work



Interpretation: The study indicates that freedom to select projects is the most valued aspect of flexibility, preferred by 54.8% of the respondents. Choice of working hours and control over workload are equally important, each cited by 35.5% of participants.

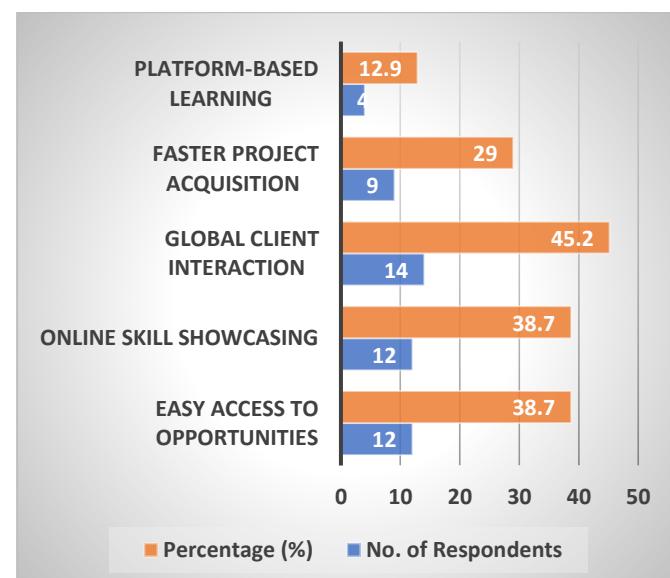
Location-independent work is also a significant factor for 29% of respondents. In contrast, custom work routines are considered less influential, selected by 12.9% of the respondents.

7.10 Analysis of Influence of Digital Platforms on Interest in Gig Work

Table no-7.10: Table Showing Influence of Digital Platforms on Interest in Gig Work

| Sr. no | Influence of Digital Platforms | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Easy access to opportunities | 12 | 38.7 |
| 2 | Online skill showcasing | 12 | 38.7 |
| 3 | Global client interaction | 14 | 45.2 |
| 4 | Faster project acquisition | 9 | 29 |
| 5 | Platform-based learning | 4 | 12.9 |
| TOTAL | | 31 | Multiple responses |

Graph no-7.10: Graph showing Influence of Digital Platforms on Interest in Gig Work



Interpretation: The study shows that interaction with global clients is the most influential impact of digital

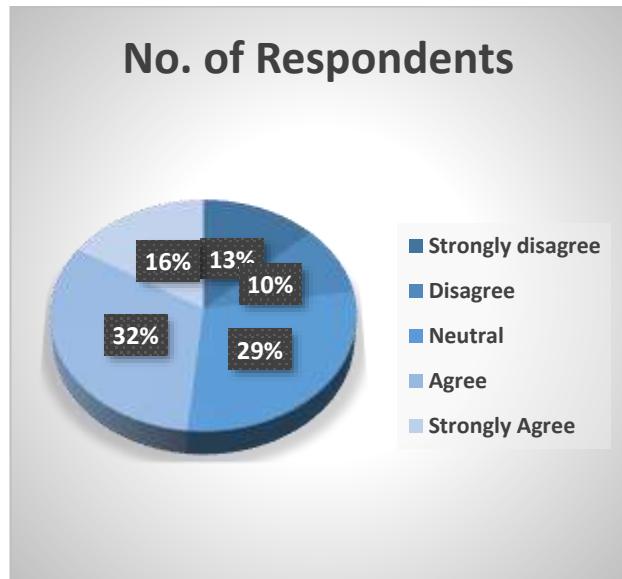
platforms, reported by 45.2% of the respondents. Easy access to opportunities and online skill showcasing are equally significant, each influencing 38.7% of participants. Faster project acquisition is also noted by 29% of respondents as a contributing factor. In contrast, platform-based learning has relatively lower influence, selected by 12.9% of the respondents.

7.11 Analysis of Perceived Income Resilience in the Early Stages of a Gig Economy Career

Table no-7.11: Table Showing Perceived Income Resilience in the Early Stages of a Gig Economy Career

| Sr. no | Level of Agreement | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Strongly disagree | 4 | 12.9 |
| 2 | Disagree | 3 | 9.7 |
| 3 | Neutral | 9 | 29 |
| 4 | Agree | 10 | 32.3 |
| 5 | Strongly Agree | 5 | 16.1 |
| TOTAL | | 31 | 100 |

Graph no-7.11: Graph showing Perceived Income Resilience in the Early Stages of a Gig Economy Career



Interpretation: The study indicates that a majority of respondents express a positive inclination toward the statement, with 32.3% agreeing and 16.1% strongly

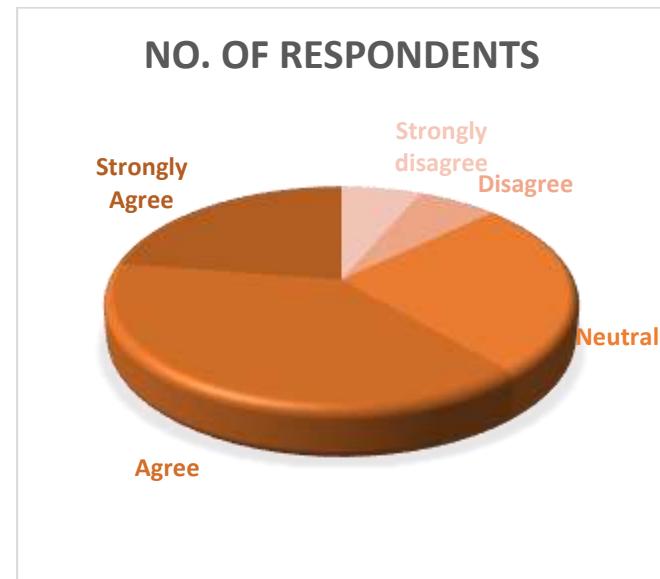
agreeing. A notable proportion of participants (29%) remain neutral, suggesting mixed or uncertain perceptions. In contrast, a smaller share of respondents show disagreement, with 12.9% strongly disagreeing and 9.7% disagreeing.

7.11 Analysis of Respondents' Willingness to Learn New Technologies and Techniques

Table no-7.11: Table Showing Respondents' Willingness to Learn New Technologies and Techniques

| Sr. no | Level of Agreement | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Strongly disagree | 2 | 6.5 |
| 2 | Disagree | 2 | 6.5 |
| 3 | Neutral | 8 | 25.7 |
| 4 | Agree | 12 | 38.7 |
| 5 | Strongly Agree | 7 | 22.6 |
| TOTAL | | 31 | 100 |

Graph no-7.11: Graph showing Respondents' Willingness to Learn New Technologies and Techniques



Interpretation: The study demonstrates an overall favorable response, as 38.7% of respondents agree and

22.6% strongly agree with the statement. A quarter of the participants (25.7%) maintain a neutral stance, indicating moderate or undecided views. Meanwhile, only a small proportion express disagreement, with 6.5% each strongly disagreeing and disagreeing.

8. Findings of the Study

Based on the data collected from 31 respondents, the following key findings stand out:

- The group is mostly female, with women making up 64.5% of the sample. This highlights the strong involvement of women in studies related to gig economy careers.
- A large majority of respondents (64.5%) are in the 21 to 24 age group. This shows that young adults are the most active and interested in gig-based career options.
- When it comes to education, the respondents are fairly balanced. About 54.8% are graduates, and 45.2% are postgraduates. This reflects a good level of academic qualification among the participants.
- The most preferred work areas are web and software development (22.6%) and other emerging fields (25.8%). In contrast, content writing, translation services, and virtual assistance received no participation.
- Freelance digital services (51.6%) and creative services (48.4%) are the most recognized opportunities in the gig economy, demonstrating strong awareness of digital and creative work.
- High demand in digital and creative markets (38.7%) is the main reason for choosing a gig field. This is followed by the chance for creative expression (25.8%).
- The independent work culture (64.5%) and flexible work schedules (41.9%) are the top factors encouraging respondents to pursue gig careers.
- Most respondents see themselves as skilled but needing improvement (38.7%) or moderately skilled and needing training (25.8%). This suggests a clear need for ongoing upskilling.
- The freedom to choose projects (54.8%) is the most appealing aspect of flexibility, followed by the ability to select working hours and control workload (35.5% each).
- Digital platforms are crucial for sparking interest in gigs. Global client interaction (45.2%) is the most influential factor, along with easy access to opportunities and the ability to showcase skills.
- Many respondents have a positive view of income stability in the early stages of a gig career,

although a significant number remain neutral, indicating cautious optimism.

➤ Respondents show a strong willingness to learn new technologies and skills. Over 60% express agreement or strong agreement, showing their readiness for change and growth in the gig economy.

➤ Overall, these findings suggest that Gen Z graduates see the gig economy as a flexible, skill-oriented career path filled with opportunities. This is supported by digital platforms and a strong desire for continuous learning.

9. Managerial Implications

The findings of this study provide important insights for organizations, HR professionals, platform managers, and policymakers involved in the gig economy, especially in digital and creative fields. Understanding the preferences, motivations, and skill perceptions of Gen Z graduates can help managers create better strategies to attract, engage, and retain gig talent.

First, the strong preference for an independent work culture and flexible structures shows that managers need to rethink traditional supervision models. They should focus on outcome-based performance management instead of time-based monitoring. Setting clear project goals, defining deliverables, and implementing fair evaluation systems can boost productivity while respecting the autonomy that gig workers value. Allowing flexibility in project selection and workload can further enhance engagement and satisfaction.

Second, the high interest in freelance digital and creative services means that managers should build project ecosystems that fit these areas. Organizations and platform operators can invest in digital infrastructure to support seamless collaboration, quicker project allocation, and effective communication with clients worldwide. Since global exposure is a major motivating factor, managers should encourage cross-border projects and offer guidance on managing international clients, pricing, and compliance.

Third, the self-assessment of skill levels shows that many respondents believe they need to improve their skills and receive training. Managers should focus on continuous learning initiatives like short-term certifications, online learning modules, mentoring programs, and skill-building workshops. Promoting learning through increasingly complex projects can help close skill gaps while maintaining quality. This also

supports long-term professional growth, which is a key motivator for gig workers.

Fourth, insights about income resilience indicate that although respondents feel optimistic, some uncertainty remains. Managers and platform administrators can tackle this by providing transparent payment systems, timely compensation, milestone-based payouts, and options for income stabilization through repeat contracts or retainer projects. These actions can foster trust and reduce perceived financial risks.

Finally, the strong interest in learning new technologies offers a strategic opportunity. Managers should take advantage of this willingness by introducing new tools, AI-driven platforms, and digital workflows to keep gig workers ready for the future. By combining flexibility, learning, and digital support with their strategic aims, managers can create a sustainable, skilled, and motivated gig workforce that enhances long-term organizational competitiveness.

10. Limitations of the Study

- Limited Sample Size: The study included only 31 respondents, which may not fairly represent the diverse Gen Z graduates across different regions, education levels, and economic backgrounds.
- Time Constraints: The study took place over a short period, which limited the depth of data collection and did not allow for a long-term look at changing views and career preferences.
- Self-Reported Data: The reliance on personal assessments may have been affected by individual bias or subjective views.
- Limited Secondary Data: Limited access to industry reports and other sources restricted the ability to compare and provide context for the findings.
- Generalizability Issues: Because the sample was small and specific, the results may not apply broadly to all gig economy workers.
- Scope Limitation: The study mainly concentrated on digital and creative services, which might leave out valuable insights from other parts of the gig economy.

11. Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, organizations and managers can make several practical recommendations to effectively engage Gen Z graduates in the gig economy, especially in digital and creative fields.

➤ Improve Flexibility and Autonomy:

Organizations should create work structures that allow freedom in choosing projects, flexible hours, and control over workload. Focusing on autonomy matches Gen Z's preference for independent work culture and can boost motivation, productivity, and retention.

➤ Skill Development and Training: Since many respondents view themselves as skilled but needing improvement, managers should start continuous learning programs. This could involve online courses, mentorship, project-based skill building, and access to workshops that improve technical and creative skills.

➤ Use Digital Platforms: Managers should use digital platforms to connect gig workers with global clients and job opportunities. Helping showcase skills online, speed up project assignments, and enable international teamwork can improve engagement and draw in talent looking for a range of projects.

➤ Clear Compensation and Income Stability: To tackle worries about income stability, organizations should set up straightforward payment structures, milestone-based payouts, and regular project opportunities. This builds trust and lowers perceived financial risks for early-stage gig workers.

➤ Encourage Innovation and Creativity: Opportunities for creative expression and building personal brands are important motivators for Gen Z. Managers should assign projects that challenge creativity, promote experimentation, and allow individuals to receive recognition for their contributions.

➤ Monitor and Support Work-Life Balance: While promoting flexibility, managers should also guide workers on managing their workloads, meeting deadlines, and prioritizing projects to prevent burnout and ensure consistent performance.

By following these strategies, organizations can successfully attract, retain, and grow a skilled and motivated gig workforce while meeting the goals of Gen Z professionals. This approach improves operational efficiency and builds a sustainable and competitive talent pool.

12. Scope for Future Research

This study offers useful insights into the engagement of Gen Z graduates with the gig economy. However, there are several areas where future research could improve understanding. One potential focus is increasing the sample size and diversity. Including respondents from various regions, educational backgrounds, and socio-economic groups would make the findings more

applicable and provide a better view of trends in the gig economy.

Future studies could also take a long-term approach to look at how perceptions, skills, and career preferences change over time, especially as gig workers gain experience and deal with market fluctuations. Examining the effects of new technologies like AI, automation, and blockchain on gig opportunities and skill needs could offer practical insights for managers and policymakers.

Additionally, research could expand to cover other gig economy sectors beyond digital and creative services. This might include logistics, e-commerce, healthcare, and education to uncover sector-specific motivations and challenges. Studying the stability of income, job satisfaction, and mental well-being of gig workers would also be beneficial. Financial and psychological aspects are important in career choices.

Overall, future research can lead to a deeper, more detailed understanding of gig work dynamics. This can help create better strategies for developing talent, managing platforms, and shaping policies.

13. Conclusions

- The study looked at what affects Gen Z graduates' career choices in the gig economy, focusing on digital and creative services.
- Data from 31 respondents showed that young adults, especially females, prefer gig-based careers.
- The main motivators are high demand in digital and creative markets, chances for creative expression, and a culture of independent work.
- Factors like the freedom to choose projects and interact with global clients greatly affect engagement and satisfaction.
- Respondents see themselves as moderately skilled or skilled, with room for improvement. This suggests the need for ongoing learning and skill development.
- Theoretical Contribution: Improves understanding of how Gen Z makes career decisions in the gig economy, connecting skills, motivations, and the impact of digital platforms.
- Practical Contribution: Offers practical insights for managers and organizations to attract, engage, and retain gig talent through flexible work structures, skill

development programs, and clear compensation systems.

○ Overall, the study gives a clear view of how Gen Z engages in gig work and serves as a basis for future research and informed management strategies.

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