

Exploring The Challenges of Food Delivery Personnel: A Socio-Commercial Perspective

Ajay Kumar.S¹, Merlin Usha.T²

¹Department of commerce and Research, VLB Janakiammal College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

²Head Of The Department, Department of Commerce PG and Research, VLB Janakiammal College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India.

ABSTRACT:

This research investigates the various challenges faced by food delivery personnel in the gig economy, focusing on social, economic, and occupational aspects. It analyses issues like job insecurity, work pressure, and customer interaction. The study provides insights into improving the working conditions and satisfaction of delivery partners.

Keywords: Food delivery personnel, gig economy, job satisfaction, occupational challenges, socio-commercial issues.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the food delivery industry has emerged as one of the fastest-growing sectors in India, driven by the convenience offered through mobile applications and digital platforms such as Swiggy, Zomato, and Uber Eats. The increasing demand for quick and reliable delivery services has created employment opportunities for thousands of delivery personnel, many of whom rely on this work as their primary source of income. These delivery partners form the backbone of the online food delivery ecosystem, bridging the gap between restaurants and customers in urban and semi-urban areas.

However, behind the growing popularity of this service lies a range of challenges faced by the delivery workers. They often struggle with long working hours, job insecurity, health issues, and fluctuating income. Despite being essential service providers, they frequently experience limited social recognition and minimal employee benefits.

This study attempts to explore these issues from both social and commercial perspectives, understanding not only the economic pressures but also the human and societal aspects affecting the lives of food delivery personnel.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1.To study the Demographic factors of food delivery personnel.
- 2.To examine the work-life balance and social challenges faced by food delivery personnel.
3. To identify the level of job stress and health issues experienced by food delivery workers.
4. To analyze the commercial challenges such as income instability, fuel costs, and incentive policies.
5. To suggest possible measures to improve the socio-economic conditions of food delivery personnel.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Though the food delivery sector has witnessed rapid growth and offers flexible employment, the delivery personnel working in this gig economy face numerous socio-commercial challenges. From a social standpoint, they experience poor work-life balance, lack of dignity of labour, and rising stress and health

issues due to long hours and unpredictable schedules. From a commercial viewpoint, inconsistent earnings, high fuel costs, and inadequate incentive structures further complicate their financial stability. The absence of job security, insurance benefits, and social protection leaves them vulnerable to risks. Therefore, it is essential to study and understand these multidimensional challenges to identify measures that can improve their welfare, job satisfaction, and sustainability within the food delivery industry.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study focuses on understanding the various socio-personal challenges faced by food delivery personnel in their day-to-day work life. It aims to explore factors such as work-life balance, social status, job stress, health issues, and lack of social security that influence their overall well-being and job satisfaction. The study is limited to food delivery workers employed in leading delivery platforms such as Swiggy, Zomato, and others within the selected geographical area.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research in common refers to a search for knowledge. Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. The research design indicates the steps that have been taken in the sequence they occurred.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the arrangement of conditions analyses of data in a systematic manner that aims to combine relevance to research purpose. The research study applied here is convenience sampling.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The sampling technique used in this study is 'convenience sampling'. Respondents From Coimbatore were selected on the basis of convenience and comfort of the researcher to The information for this study.

SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size is certified to its nature of data collection. Data collection is based on

The primary data. 50 respondents are selected from coimbatore district for the purpose of the Study. Direct questionnaires are used to survey the respondents.

SOURCES OF DATA

The data is collected in two ways;

Primary Data: Surveys and interviews with food delivery personnel working in various delivery platforms such as Swiggy, Zomato, and Uber Eats to gather first-hand information about their socio-commercial challenges.

Secondary Data: Review of existing literature, research articles, reports, and publications related to the food delivery industry, gig economy, working conditions, and socio-economic aspects of delivery workers in India.

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

The tools used under for the study are

- Simple percentage method
- Chi square

SIMPLE PERCENTAGE METHOD

1. A percentage analysis is used to interpret the data by the researcher for analysis and Interpretation. Through the use of percentages, the data are reduced in the standard form with Base equal to 100 which fact facilitates relative comparisons. In the percentage analysis, Percentage is calculated by multiplying the number of respondents into hundred and it is Divided by the same size.

Formula:

Percentage = $\frac{\text{No. of .Respondents}}{100} * 100$

Total Respondents

CHI – SQUARE:

The chi-squared test is done to check if there is any difference between the observed value and expected value.

Formula:

$$\text{Chi square formula } \chi^2 = \sum (O - E)^2 / E$$

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Non-random sampling may limit generalizability.
2. Self-report bias for income and health.
3. Time-of-day sampling may miss some worker segments (night-only riders).
4. Platform cooperation constraints.

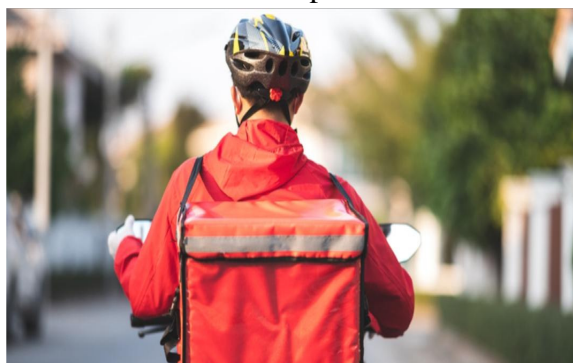
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Apouey et al. (2020) conducted empirical research on occupational health, showing that delivery workers face elevated physical risks due to long working hours, repetitive motions, and pressure to meet delivery times. Their study linked these conditions to musculoskeletal injuries, road accidents, and chronic fatigue, emphasizing the need for improved safety protocols and training.
2. Wood, Graham, Lehdonvirta, and Hjorth (2019) explored the sociological aspects of gig work, examining social stigma, customer interactions, and social isolation. Their findings revealed that delivery personnel often experience low social status, verbal abuse from customers, and limited social mobility, despite playing an essential role in urban service networks..
3. De Stefano (2016) highlighted the precarious nature of gig work in the platform economy. His research found that platform-based employment often lacks social

protections such as paid leave, health insurance, and pension benefits, leading to economic insecurity and high turnover among food delivery personnel.

OVERVIEW OF STUDY

this study aims to examine the multi-dimensional challenges faced by food delivery personnel from both social and commercial perspectives. It combines survey data on working conditions, income, and safety with qualitative interviews to understand daily experiences, customer relations, and the effects of platform policies. the research seeks to map how economic incentives, algorithmic management, and urban infrastructure shape labour outcomes.



Furthermore, the study explores how these challenges impact delivery personnel's physical and mental health, household economy, and social status. by bringing together sociological theory and commercial analysis, the research aims to produce policy-oriented recommendations for stakeholders—platform companies, municipal authorities, customers, and worker organizations—to improve working conditions without compromising service efficiency.

DATA AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE 1: SHOWS THE GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO	Gender	No.of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	41	82%
2	Female	9	18%
	Total	50	100

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows the gender-wise distribution of the respondents. Out of 50 respondents, 41(82%) are male and 9 (18%) are female. This indicates that the majority of the respondents are male.

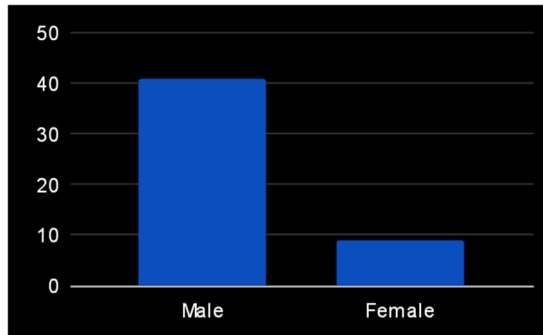
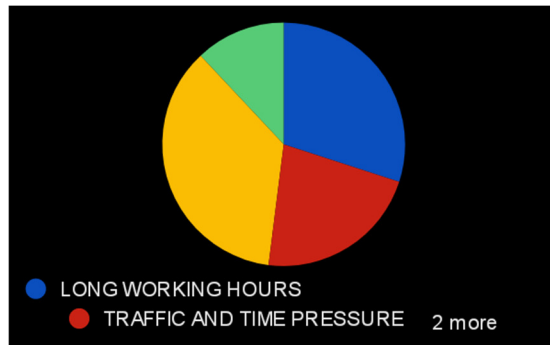


TABLE 2 : SHOW THE SOURCE OF JOB STRESS

S.NO	Particulars	No.of Respondents	Percentage
1	Long Working Hours	15	30.0%
2	Traffic And Time Pressure	11	22.0%
3	Customer Behaviour	18	36.0%
4	App Target Pressure	6	12.0%
	Total	50	100%

INTERPRETATION

The About Table Shows 30% Of Long working hours 22% of traffic and time pressure 36% of customer behaviour 12% of app target pressure.



CHI-SQUARE TEST

Table 1.1: Observed Frequencies (O) for Age and Job Stress

Age Group	Long working hours	Traffic and time pressure	Customer behavior	App target pressure	Total
Below 20 years	2	1	6	0	9
21-25 years	5	4	7	2	18
26-30 years	8	5	5	2	20
Above 30 years	0	1	0	2	3
Total	15	11	18	6	50

INTERPRETATION:

The table shows the distribution of job stress sources across four age groups. The largest group of respondents falls into the 26-30 years age bracket (40%). The most frequently cited source of stress overall is Customer behavior (36%).

Chi-Square Analysis Formula: $\chi^2 = \sum (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$

H₀ (Null Hypothesis): There is no relationship between age and the main source of job stress (Independent).

H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a relationship between age and the main source of job stress (Dependent).

O	E	$(O_i - E_i)^2/E_i$
2	2.70	0.1815
1	1.98	0.4851
6	3.24	2.3511
0	1.08	1.08
5	5.40	0.0296
4	3.96	0.0004
7	6.48	0.0417
2	2.16	0.0119
8	6.00	0.6667
5	4.40	0.0818
5	7.20	0.6722
2	2.40	0.0667
0	0.90	0.9
1	0.66	0.1752
0	1.08	1.08
2	0.36	7.4711
Total	50	15.2949

RESULT: Significance Level : 0.05

Degree of Freedom = $(r-1) \times (c-1) = (4-1) \times (4-1) = 3 \times 3 = 9$

Critical Chi-Square Table Value (significance level=0.05, df=9): 16.919

The Calculated Chi-Square value (15.2949) is lesser than the Critical Chi-Square Table value (16.919). Hence, we fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_0).

Conclusion: Based on the Chi-Square test, there is no statistically significant relationship between the age group of the respondent and their main source of job stress at the 0.05 significance level. The differences observed in the table are likely due to random chance.

FINDINGS

1. Majority of the respondents are aged 21–25 years (55%).
2. Majority of the respondents are male (82%).
3. Majority of the respondents have Diploma / Undergraduate qualification (50%).
4. Majority of the respondents have 1–2 years of experience in food delivery work (60%).
5. Majority of the respondents are currently working with Zomato (50%).
6. Majority of the respondents work 6–8 hours per day (45%).
7. Majority of the respondents get time to spend with family or friends sometimes (55%).
8. Majority of the respondents feel that an unstable work schedule affects their work-life balance the most (50%).
9. Majority of the respondents perceive their job as respectable by society (50%).
10. Majority of the respondents feel their work is given recognition sometimes (50%).
11. Majority of the respondents' friends and family are accepting of their profession (55%).
12. Majority of the respondents report long working hours as their main source of job stress (40%).
13. Majority of the respondents experience back pain or body pain as the most common health issue (60%).
14. Majority of the respondents feel somewhat secure about their future in this profession (50%).
15. Majority of the respondents earn ₹10,000–₹20,000 per month from deliveries (50%).
16. Majority of the respondents spend 10–25% of their daily earnings on fuel and vehicle maintenance (55%).

17. Majority of the respondents report their income from delivery work occasionally fluctuates (60%).

18. Majority of the respondents lack health insurance in their current work (50%).

19. Majority of the respondents feel that the incentive systems in their delivery app are somewhat transparent (50%).

20. Majority of the respondents' suggestions for improvement are good (40%).

SUGGESTIONS

1. platform companies should introduce minimum earnings guarantees, transparent pay structures, and accessible grievance mechanisms.

2. municipalities and companies must implement safety training, provide personal protective equipment, and designate safe parking/rest areas for delivery workers.

3. labour policy reforms should explore social protection models for gig workers — including health coverage, accident insurance, and contributory pension options.

4. businesses and civil society should promote public awareness campaigns to improve customer behaviour, reduce abuse, and recognise delivery personnel as essential workers.

CONCLUSION

In sum, food delivery personnel occupy a critical but vulnerable position in modern urban economies: they enable convenience and growth in the on-demand food sector while bearing significant economic, health, and social risks. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated action—regulatory interventions, platform reform, improved safety practices, and social supports—to ensure sustainable, humane work conditions that also maintain commercial viability.

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