

HR CHALLENGES IN FOSTERING EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT AND COMMITMENT THROUGH ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE IN THE GIG ECONOMY

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Abstract

With the emergence of the gig economy, the traditional paradigms of employment have been re-organised by introducing the flexible and freelance type of work. Although such arrangements have increased income opportunities and improved work life balance, they have also spawned the problems of preserving organisational culture and commitment of the workforce. The proposed study aims to explore the barriers to employee involvement and commitment as a strategy of human resource (HR) departments in the context of the gig economy. It also intends to determine strategic human resource management (HRM) interventions that may promote organisational culture and engagement. In this study, the secondary qualitative research design is implemented, which is based on an interpretivist philosophy and an inductive approach to analysis. Eight secondary publications, which were peer-reviewed and reputable, were used as a source of data. Thematic analysis was then used to extract salient outcomes. This study analysis that though gig economy enhances flexibility and productivity, it gives HR a challenge in maintaining labour commitments. The main issues include labour misclassification, job insecurity and legal risks. Nevertheless, the challenges notwithstanding, the strategic deployment of digital human resource applications and real-time feedback systems came out as useful tools of enhancing engagement and alleviating compliance gaps. To support HRM practises in the gig economy, organisations must make use of agile approaches, enhance digital HR systems, and agree on specific contractual obligations. These strategies have the potential to increase the engagement of employees, the level of legal compliance, and the general organisational culture in the context of gig-based job arrangements.

Key words: *Gig economy, employee involvement and commitment, HR challenges, Organisational culture*

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Gig Economy is associated with the short-term and temporary hiring of employees as well as freelance workers to empower the working process through digital platforms. The gig economy plays a vital role in redefining the working process with the enhancement of freelancing opportunities with flexible employment arrangements (Mehta, 2023). This flexibility in employee agreements indicates the market growth of the Gig economy globally. For instance, the market size of the Global Gig economy has reached £426.63 million in 2025, projecting 15.79% growth annually (Business Research Insights, 2024) (Refer to Figure 1). In this regard, the Gig Economy is responsible for changing the overall employee management processes with the encouragement of flexibility in agreements and introducing freelancing opportunities as well. Based on this market growth and flexible employee opportunities, this research focuses on determining the strategic implementation process of the Gig economy with the implementation of HRM practices.

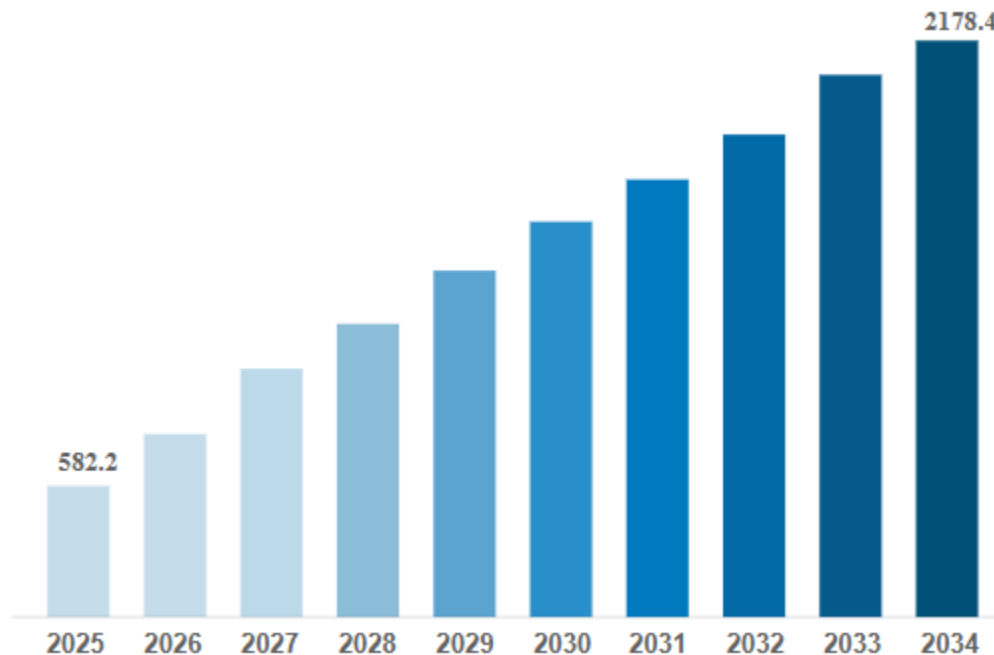


Figure 1.1: Market size of the Gig Economy (Source: Business Research Insights, 2024)

1.2 Problem statements

Human resources managers are facing complexity in managing traditional employee relationships to increase involvement and create a collaborative working culture due to the intervention of the Gig economy. Moreover, inadequate enrichment of workers' rights, including job security, income stability, impacts employee engagement and performance due to the dispersed workforce management for the Gig economy. Employee misclassification, lack of collaboration and communication among workers, and legal obligation for immediate consideration of workers' risks are significant complexities in HRM in the gig economy. (Choughari, 2024). Considering these aspects, this research focuses on identifying an effective solution to managing the complexity of HRM and integrating the policies of workers' management in the Gig economy.

1.3 Aim

This research aims to analyse challenges in maintaining commitments and enhancing employee engagement with the identification of strategic solutions to improve organisational culture and HRM system in the Gig economy.

1.4 Objectives

- 1) To identify the concepts of the Gig economy with the evaluation of potential impacts on the organisational culture
- 2) To evaluate the significance of maintaining commitments and increasing employee involvement for improving organisational culture in the Gig economy
- 3) To analyse contemporary challenges of HRM to maintain commitments and enhance employee engagement concerning improvements of organisational culture in the Gig economy
- 4) To suggest strategic solutions for the improvement of HRM to maintain commitments and increase employee involvement through overcoming current challenges of the Gig economy

1.5 Research question

- 1) What is the Gig economy and its impacts on organisational culture?
- 2) How does HRM maintain commitments and increase employee involvement for improving organisational culture in the Gig economy?
- 3) Which type of challenges is HRM facing to maintain commitments and enhance employee engagement concerning improvements of organisational culture in the Gig economy?
- 4) How can HRM overcome the current challenges of the Gig economy to maintain commitments and increase employee involvement?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concepts of the Gig economy in organisational culture

The preservation of workplace flexibility can be considered a major concept of gig culture that enables corporate entities to deliver optimal work-life balance for experienced professionals to avoid workplace burnout situations. For instance, in 2020, almost 20% of the global workforce was operating under a gig economy that enabled organisational HR managers to modify existing business infrastructure to ensure employee performance (Celestin and Vanitha, 2023). By 2023, almost 120 million gig workers were operating in the international marketplace, which further indicates organisational reliance on the newly developed gig economy for procuring quality work from third-party professionals (Celestin and Vanitha, 2023). It can be seen that the current gig economy has also experienced around 8.3% of annual growth for 2023, which further supports the effectiveness of contractual workers in the global marketplace (Celestin and Vanitha, 2023). Therefore, workplace flexibility and effective HR management are essential parts of the gig economy incorporated by multinational corporations and their HR employees for procuring high-quality service.

2.2 Benefits of the workplace commitment and employee engagement in the gig economy

Increased workforce performance can also be achieved by business enterprises through recruiting highly-engaged gig workers to perform complex business tasks without overwhelming the contemporary employee base. In 2016, almost 8% of US employees mentioned partaking in various forms of gig work for third-party firms through employing organisational digital platforms (Kuhn et al. 2021). For the United Kingdom, around 4% of the national workforce have been operational as gig workers for multinational corporations that permitted them to deliver digital platform-based labour to respective employers (Kuhn et al. 2021). It can be seen that the gig economy is becoming a dominant workplace culture for developed nations that have enabled business enterprises to employ diverse workers. Therefore, heightened employee productivity and diverse employee hiring are major benefits of a gig-based culture for multinational companies to ensure an optimal workforce commitment level.

The procurement of specialised talent can be considered a major contribution of gig culture within multinational firms for assigning specific projects to employees based on existing skillsets. For instance, almost 25% of HR professionals have underscored the development of an adequate performance management system that has permitted them towards monitoring the daily productivity of gig employees (Aslam et al. 2024). Around 20% of HR professionals have also highlighted the fact that they have provided adequate training to their newly employed gig workers for maximising their personal contributions (Aslam et al. 2024). As a result, the creation of an effective performance management and training regimen has permitted the HR department to better monitor the daily productivity of gig employees to avoid workplace errors.

2.3 HRM issues faced within the Gig economy for maintaining employee commitment

The lack of job security can prove to be a major problem faced by multinational corporations and their respective HRM departments, which negatively influences the productivity level of individual gig workers. For example, almost 67% of gig workers presently employed for online food delivery platforms have mentioned their concerns regarding job insecurity, which has greatly reduced their commitment level towards business corporations (Salleh et al. 2023). It is essential for multinational corporations and their HR department to develop an inclusive workplace environment that can encourage gig workers to effectively address individual concerns regarding job security. In the case of global educational institutions, almost 49% of teachers have mentioned being employed on a contractual basis for providing adequate guidance towards students (Aboobaker et al. 2022). Hence, the HR department of a global corporation needs to employ innovative systems, such as AI monitoring systems, for delivering regular feedback to gig workers to maintain optimal performance and avoid premature termination.

2.4 HRM solutions for retaining employee engagement in the gig economy

The integration of an AI-based feedback system can be employed by HR managers of multinational conglomerates for delivering real-time insights to gig workers to instigate personalised development of individuals. For example, almost 40% of administrative workers for global corporations have employed an AI-oriented performance review system that permitted them to lower unnecessary workplace incidents among employees (Ozobu et al. 2025). Apart from that, around 57.1% of employees have also showcased the importance of a positive relationship between gig workers and HR employees that enabled them to deliver meaningful work (Mousa and Chaouali, 2023). Therefore, the creation of positive workplace relationships and AI-based feedback processes are major solutions for HR managers to maintain employee engagement levels with gig workers.

2.5 Theoretical underpinning

Maslow's hierarchy of needs (MHN)

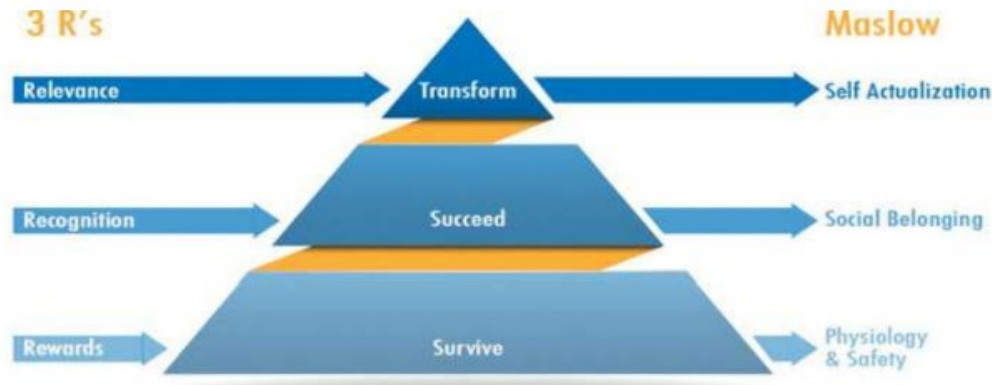


Figure 2.1: Maslow's hierarchy of needs (MHN)

(Source: Dar and Sakthivel, 2022)

The UK-based multinational corporations employs the MHN technique for determining the physiological requirements of their gig employee base for delivering adequate performance-based incentives. For instance, almost 88% of US firms currently employ different types of gig workers within their current organisational infrastructure for effectively streamlining the workflow process (Cropanzano et al. 2023). Hence, both the UK and US business industries intend to employ the MHN process for delivering suitable financial incentives to high-performing employees and ensuring positive organisational growth.

2.6 Literature gap

The existing literature has yet to address the current employment legislation available in the global market that can safeguard the overall needs of gig workers for preserving workforce commitment. The current learning infrastructure among Indian and multinational corporations has yet to be addressed in existing literature that can help elaborate on sustainable professional growth experienced by gig workers in the world.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

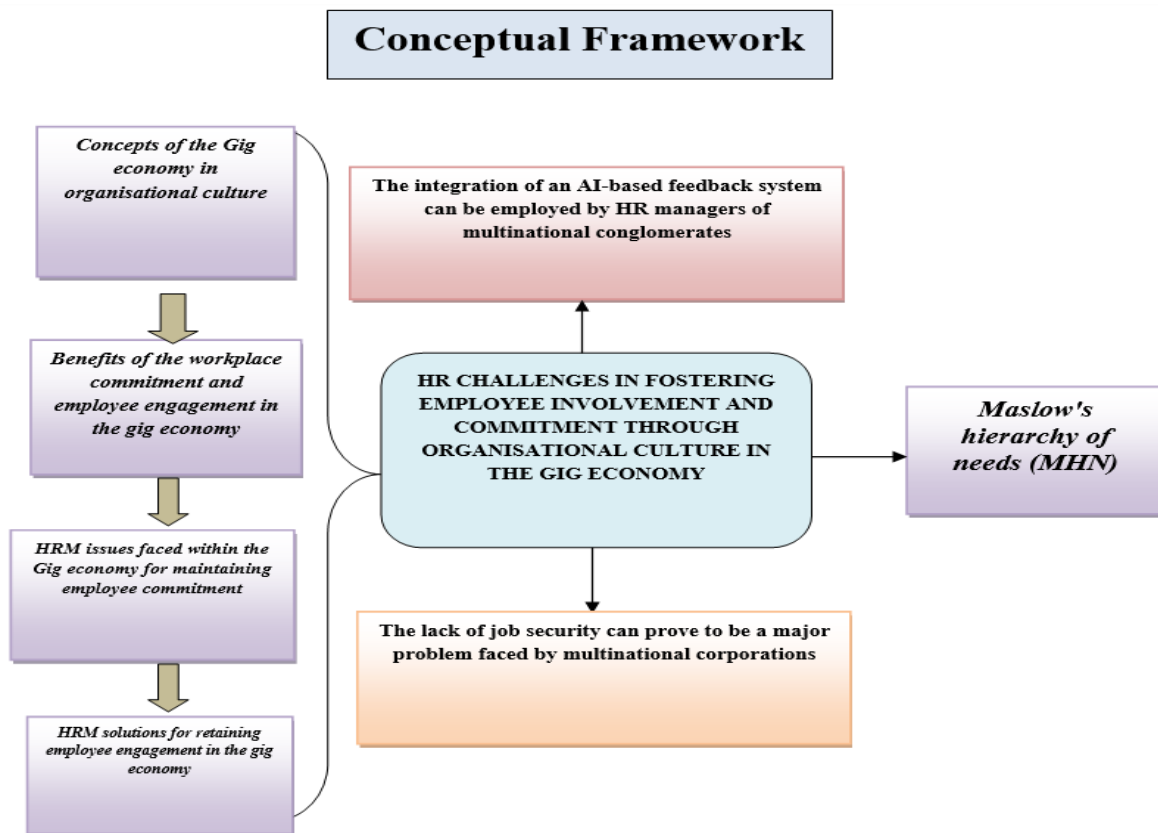


Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework (Source: Self-Developed)

The above Figure 2.2 clearly indicates the prevalence of the gig economy in the global marketplace, which requires HR managers to recruit workers on a contractual basis. The insufficient job security has also been demonstrated here as a crucial drawback of gig culture that needs to be rectified by HR managers to elevate local workforce productivity.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Design and strategy

In this research, the use of a secondary qualitative research strategy has enhanced clarity of concepts regarding HRM in the Gig economy by in-depth illustration of each component. Secondary qualitative research strategy generates knowledge on the research topics by in-depth theoretical interpretation of research variables within a limited time (Cheong et al., 2023). In addition, the evaluation of the co-construction of knowledge and individual lives' experiences has started the discussion on the change of traditional organisational culture in the Gig economy by using interpretivism philosophy. Interpretivism philosophy guides the evaluation of ideographic concepts development based on individuals' life experiences (Pervin and Mokhtar, 2022). Framing of new data patterns by using an inductive approach has determined the strategies for the integration of HRM in the Gig economy. Building theory by observing and analysing information relating to research topics ensures systematic procedures of empirical research in an inductive approach (Kumar and Ujire, 2024). The use of exploratory design has built relationships among key variables, including HR departments, the Gig economy, organisational culture, and employee engagement to reach findings. Exploratory design tailors a more in-depth theoretical interpretation of concepts and established relationships of research variables for achieving high validity of research findings (Saka, Chinagozi, and Joe, 2023). Thus, the use of exploratory design, interpretivism philosophy, and an inductive approach has ensured the clarity and validity of concepts regarding HRM in the Gig economy to reach findings.

3.2 Data collection method

In this research, qualitative information has been collected from secondary sources, including news articles, company websites, industry reports, and previously researched articles. The authentic articles have been gathered from databases including PubMed, ProQuest, ScienceDirect, Wiley, MDPI, Sage publications, Frontiers, Taylor and Francis, as well as other available sources in Google Scholar. The consideration of DOI links, authors' names, publications from 2019 or onwards, in the English language has helped to collect 8 articles for data interpretation. The assessments of relevance, accessibility without any paid version, have helped to gather secondary qualitative data for interpreting concepts regarding the HRM system in the Gig economy, with the enhancement of employee engagement.

3.3 Data analysis technique

The systematic approaches for analysing objective-specific themes by generating code from the use previously researched articles have developed concepts on increasing employee engagement and proficiency in integrating the HRM system in the Gig economy. In these aspects, the systematic approaches of the thematic analysis process include code generation and, by reading collected information, defining, developing, and reviewing themes for the developed concepts of the research topic (Ahmed et al., 2025). This code generation has minimised complexity in extracting information and ensuring evidence-based data illustration in this research relevant to the Gig economy in employee management.

3.4 Ethical Consideration

The consideration of authenticity and data security has helped to maintain the ethical boundaries of secondary qualitative research. Moreover, the use of university guidelines during referencing and citation of each information has enhanced the quality of this research. The use of formal tone during data interpretation minimised the possibility of ethical risks concerning social and environmental impacts in their secondary qualitative research.

4. RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Thematic data analysis

4.1.1 Impacts of the Gig economy on the current organisational culture

The gig economy plays a vital role in influencing freelance workers and their integration into workplace culture. In these aspects, the remarkable flexibility of the Gig economy fundamentally reshaped the employee management process and corporate cultures through increasing freelance opportunities (Freiling, 2025). Moreover, the opportunity for more income rather than 9-5 jobs has been increased by the implication of freelancing as a Gig economy for the proactive board engagement workforces. Nearly 70% freelance workers and employees agreed that the Gog economy enhances income opportunities with high levels of flexibility in the working process (Henderson, 2020). Thus, the Gig economy changes the traditional organisational culture by encouraging flexibility, increasing the opportunity to earn more.

4.1.2 Importance of commitments and enhancements of employees through improving organisational culture in the Gig Economy

Commitments regarding income tax, payment methods, and enhancements lead to a structured overall working process of the Gig economy, focusing on enhancing productivity with the integration of a flexible working culture. In order to enhance productivity, organisations focused on developing contracts with Gig workers that include Central income tax and a range of flexibility in the working process (Kelly, 2024). Furthermore, contracts provide an opportunity for work-life balance to increase adequate engagement and enhance overall productivity by satisfying working experience (Vadavi and Sharmiladevi, 2024). Thus, commitment and contracts between HRM and Gig workers play a crucial role in enriching the changed demand and productivity for economic development (Vadavi and Sharmiladevi, 2024). Thus, commitment and involvement of employees are important in the Gig economy to enhance overall productivity with encouragement of economic growth.

4.1.3 Challenges among HR departments in commitment and enhancing the involvement of employees in the Gig economy

The complex process of classification of labour and inadequate payments and employee benefits-related policies in the Gig economy enhances the possibility of legal issues. In this context, the HR departments are persevering with misclassification of labour, and a lack of maintaining labour protection regulations concerning the representation of unethical labour management practices (Wiessner et al., 2022). The possibility of legal challenges increases against the organisation and HR managers due to instability in payments, insecurity in jobs among Gig workers (Katiyatiya and Lubisi, 2024). Apart from that, the challenges in employee management of the Gig economy include complexity in the classification of employees and freelancers, and enforcing every policy of renewable labour protection regulation, concerning the possibility of legal threats for HR managers and companies as well.

4.1.4 Strategic solution for HR departments to overcome current challenges in employee management in the Gig economy

In order to integrate employee management, HR departments of the Gig economy need to introduce a critical feedback loop and an HR app. The critical feedback loop helps to set rising guidelines for managing employee engagement and maintaining commitments in the HR practice of the Gig economy (Kihlstrom, 2020). Moreover, the use of HR apps increased the effectiveness in classifying freelancers and employees to maintain proper connections (Lee, 2019). This contributes to the overall activity of managing gig workers with the increase in overall engagements. Thus, the strategic solution of integrating the HRM system of the Gig economy includes developing a critical feedback loop and an HR app for enhancing productivity and engagement, overcoming misclassification and legal threats.

4.2 Findings

Based on the above analysis, the Gig economy influences the opportunity for flexibility in the working process and earning more rather than 9-5 jobs through freelancing. This opportunity induces employee engagement for increasing productivity and ensures the economic growth of the organisation. In order to maintain labour involvement, the HR departments of the Gig economy focus on using contracts with commitments regarding flexibility, work-life balance opportunities, adequate payments, and managing federal income tax. However, misclassification of employees and freelance workers and inadequate consideration of federal labour protection regulations enhance the possibility of legal threats for the HR department in the Gig economy. In this context, the effective solution for the implementation of the HRM system in the Gig economy includes feedback loops and developments of HR apps for the standardisation of policies and building connections with workers. This strategic solution provides the opportunity to overcome complexity in misclassification with the ability to maintain payments and the labour management process to reach required productivity and economic goals.

4.3 Discussion

4.3.1 Impacts of the Gig Economy

This research found the enhancement of flexibility in the working process with freelancing opportunities for the Gig economy. The flexible working process through digital platforms helps to increase employee engagement in the Gig economy rather than the traditional working process (Freiling, 2025). This leads to reducing employee burnout concerning the implications of a flexible and positive working culture. In the literature review, Celestin and Vanitha (2023), interpret that flexibility in the working process contributes to changing organisational culture by mitigating burnout in the Gig economy. Thus, the Gig economy helps to develop a flexible working culture with the reduction of employee burnouts that has met objective no.1 of this research.

4.3.2 Importance of employee engagement in the Gig economy

Commitments and engagements of employees are important, enriching the productivity of the Gig economy with the implementation of workplace infrastructure and business gravity. In these aspects, the commitments and contracts of the Gig economy manage working properly to enforce labour-forced engagement with flexibility (Kelly, 2024; Vadavi and Sharmiladevi, 2024). This indicates the workforce involvement increased due to commitments of flexibility by HR in the Gig economy that

enhances overall productivity as well. As per the interpretation of Kuhn et al. (2021), the Gig economy works as a market dominant due to enhancing overall productivity through encouraging flexible working processes for labour engagement. Thus, the importance of commitments and enhancements of employees in the Gig economy includes increased productivity that has met the objective 2 of this research.

4.3.3 Challenges in employee management in the gig economy

Misclassification and legal obligations are current challenges of HR departments in the Gig economy due to the complexity in managing labour management regulations. HR managers in the Gig economy are able to classify labourers and manage federal labour protection regulations properly which increases the possibility of regulatory threats (Wiessner et al., 2022; Katiyatiya and Lubisi, 2024). This reflects the capacity in managing Gig workers and employees impacts the HRM system. As per the statements of Salleh et al. (2023), the lack of job security and income stability of workers impacts the policies of labour protection that create complexity in HRM system of the Gig economy. Thus, current challenges of HR departments in the Gig economy to increasing employee management and maintaining commitments include misclassification of workers, considering labour laws that has met objective 3 of this research.

4.3.4 Strategy in HRM in the Gig Economy

HRM in the Gig economy can focus on the development of apps and collect feedback from workers to integrate policies and commitments, focusing on the income stability and job security of workers. HRM apps established connections among workers and HR managers, whereas feedback influences the opportunity of integrating policies based on requirements (Kihlstrom, 2020; Lee, 2019). This represents the implication of policies and commitments based on workers' feedback, and integration of HRM apps can manage each activity properly, with the reduction of complexity in managing Gig workers. As per the opinion of Ozobu et al. (2025), technology intervention concerning the development of apps is a significant solution to improving HR practices in the Gig economy. Thus, HRM app and feedback are strategic solutions to enhance engagement of workers and integrate commitments in the Gig economy that has met objective 4 of this research.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

Throughout this research, it has been concluded that the Gig economy includes the opportunity of freelance work, focusing on flexibility and adequate work-life balance by analysing secondary qualitative data. The flexible working process, with the opportunity of balancing work based on a contract between HR and labour, contributes to increasing engagement to reach the required productivity. HR managers in the Gig economy face diverse challenges in managing workforces and increasing engagement, including misclassification among freelancers and employees. Moreover, enrichment of the necessity of freelance workers with the consideration of employee protection regulations increased the possibility of legal obligations. This complexity in the HRM systems can be mitigated by increasing the HR app to manage the overall activity of managing and maintaining connections with freelancers. Moreover, continuous feedback from freelancers and employees can integrate the HRM practice of the gig economy to overcome contemporary issues.

5.2 Recommendation

In order to improve the employee management process, the use of agile approaches may be beneficial for the enhancement of labour productivity in the Gig economy. Agile approaches propose for integrating employee management processes through integrated IT functions (Mohd et al., 2024). Nearly 42% of HR focused on the use of the agile approach in the HRM system to standardise principles, develop growth mind-sets, and enhance performance among workers (Mohd et al., 2024). Furthermore, the construction and maintenance of a flexible working process for a long-term is possible through the adoption of an agile approach in HRM practices with the implication of the Gig economy. Based on these aspects, the improvements of HRM practices in the Gig economy through increasing flexibility in standardised policies and working processes can enhance overall productivity with proper consultation of commitments. Thus, HR in the Gig economy can use agile methods for the improvement of the working process by stabilising policies with the consideration of a flexible working culture.

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Appendices Appendix 1: Thematic Table

Theme	Key words	Articles
Impacts of the Gig economy on the current organisational culture	Fundamentally reshaped, corporate cultures, remarkable flexibility, Opportunity of more income rather than 9-5 jobs, proactive board engagement	Freiling, T. (2025) Creating Corporate Culture in A Gig Economy, Forbes. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesbusinesscouncil/2025/01/28/creating-corporate-culture-in-a-gig-economy/ .
		Henderson, R. (2020) How COVID-19 Has Transformed the Gig Economy, Forbes. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/rebeccahenderson/2020/12/10/how-covid-19-has-transformed-the-gig-economy/ .
Importance of commitments and enhancements of employees through improving organizational culture in the Gig Economy	Federal income tax, gravitating toward the flexibility, labour force engagement, economic development, changes in demand and productivity, ensures work-life balance	Kelly, J. (2024) The Gig Economy Is Here to Stay—Here's How to Embrace It, Forbes. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/sites/jackkelly/2024/06/20/gig-economy-success-tips/ .
		Vadavi, S. and Sharmiladevi, J. C. (2024) 'Analysing the evolution and patterns of the gig economy: a bibliometric examination of growth and trends', Cogent Business & Management, 11(1). doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2424480 .
Challenges among HR departments in commitment and enhancing the involvement of employees in the Gig economy	Misclassification, federal labour protections, liability related to misclassification, and legal challenges	Wiessner, D., Bose, N., Shepardson, D. and Wiessner, D. (2022) 'Biden's labour rule to shake up gig economy that relies on contractors', Reuters, 11 October. Available at: https://www.reuters.com/world/us/new-biden-labor-rule-would-make-contractors-into-employees-2022-10-11/ .
		Katiyatiya, L. M. and Lubisi, N. (2024) 'The current social protection discourse, gig economy within the advent of COVID-19: some emerging legal arguments', Labor history, 66(1), pp. 1–13. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/0023656x.2024.2340610 .
Strategic solution for HR departments to overcome current challenges in employee management in the Gig economy	Critical feedback loop, set of guidelines, HR app, connect workers	Kihlstrom, G. (2020) 'Improving the Employee Experience for Gig and Contract Workers', Forbes, 12 May. Available at: https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesagencycouncil/2020/05/12/improving-the-employee-experience-for-gig-and-contract-workers/ .
		Lee, J. L. (2019) 'Gig economy HR app Utmost raises \$11.2 mln from Greylock, others', Reuters, 8 October. Available at: https://www.reuters.com/article/business/gig-economy-hr-app-utmost-raises-112-mln-from-greylock-others-idUSL2N26S152/ .