



# The Role of Sustainable Human Resource Management in Enhancing Employee Performance in Irrigation Departments

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**Abstract**— The gig economy has drastically transformed modern labor markets because of the provision of flexible employment options at the same time evoking questions about job security, employee well-being, and sustainability of the workforce. The aim of this study is to explore the relationships between job security, employee well-being, and workforce resilience to determine factors that affect the sustainable employment within the framework of platform-based work. For this purpose, a quantitative, cross-sectional research design has been applied. The primary data have been collected by means of an online survey distributed among gig workers of multiple digital platforms. A sample of 352 responses was used in IBM SPSS Statistics. The validity and reliability of the instrument have been tested using Cronbach's alpha and exploratory factor analysis. Pearson correlation and multiple regression have been conducted to test the hypotheses. The results show that there are significant positive correlations between job security, employee well-being, and workforce resilience. Employee well-being turned out to be the most important determinant of workforce resilience, followed by job security. Thus, in order to ensure sustainable employment, one should take into account not only labor market flexibility but also economic and psychological well-being of employees. In addition, the study reveals that such factors as transparency of platform governance, fair employment and social protection significantly increase the level of workforce resilience.

**Keywords**— Gig Economy; Sustainable Employment; Job Security; Employee Well-Being; Workforce Resilience; Platform Work

## I. INTRODUCTION

The fast development of digital technologies has radically altered the nature of work, leading to the emergence of the gig economy as one of the fastest-growing types of employment in the world. Gig economy comprises a variety of activities, such as transportation, delivery, online freelance work, home-based services, crowdworking, and other services performed via digital platforms. Digital platforms allow organizations to hire labor on-demand and help workers find ways to earn money. However, unlike the employment relationship in conventional organizations, gig work involves short-term contracts and projects, where the process of work organization is performed with the help of algorithms. Although this model provides flexibility and labor market participation expansion, it raises a number of problems related to the sustainability of employment, protection of workers, and career stability.

Sustainable employment is the concept that is concerned not only about the availability of work but also the provision of work that promotes economic security, physical and



psychological well-being, career development, and future employability. It means that individuals can remain productively employed throughout their working life and adapt to different changes related to technology, organizations, and economics. In the case of the gig economy, the problem of sustainable employment becomes especially evident since platform workers often lack employment contracts, paid vacation and sick leave, pension programs, health care, and other features of conventional employment. Thus, even though gig economy provides great flexibility and independence, it often leads to economic vulnerability, occupational stress, and poor social protection of workers.

One of the aspects of sustainable employment is job security, which means that workers feel secure and protected when they work. The difference between employees of conventional organizations and gig workers is that the latter depend on fluctuating demand and algorithms to obtain employment opportunities. Changing rating systems, prices, or regulation policies may directly impact their income and employment. The lack of fixed working hours and employment benefits makes job security an important determinant of sustainable employment. The workers who experience more stability at work are more confident in their career planning and investment in skills development.

Another aspect of sustainable employment is employee well-being that is related to psychological health, work-life balance, job satisfaction, and quality of working life. While flexible work schedule and location may increase the autonomy of workers and reduce the commuting time, platform workers often face irregular working hours, performance pressure, generated by algorithmic control, customer rating systems, and uncertain income. These factors may contribute to the appearance of stress, burnout, emotional exhaustion, and low job satisfaction. The promotion of employee well-being has become an important goal for digital platforms that want to increase workforce productivity and engagement.

Workforce resilience implies the ability of workers to adjust to the changes in employment conditions. Workforce resilience is a set of skills of coping with uncertainty, recovery from difficulties, acquiring new skills, and sustaining productive employment in the case of changing economic or technological environment. In the case of gig economy, workforce resilience becomes especially important since workers are constantly facing fluctuating demand, changes in platform policy, new innovations, and high level of competition in the market. People with high resilience are better prepared to deal with occupational uncertainty and diversify income sources.

Even though many researchers focused on different individual aspects of gig economy, such as algorithmic management, precarity of employment, occupational health, and platform governance, there is limited empirical research on the influence of job security and employee well-being on workforce resilience in the framework of sustainable employment. Most of the previous works were conducted for certain occupation and geographical area and did not include all these aspects in one analysis. This research aims to fill this gap by investigating the interrelation between job security, employee well-being, and workforce resilience.

The main goals of this research include the investigation of the effect of job security on employee well-being, the effect of job security and employee well-being on workforce resilience, and formulation of recommendations for sustainable employment within digital labor platforms. By combining economic, psychological, and organizational perspectives, this research will contribute to the development of research in the field of platform employment and will offer some evidence-based recommendations for platform companies, policymakers, and labor-market participants.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Gig economy is transforming employment by substituting organization-centered arrangements of work with task-based work organized through online platforms. The category of gig work includes online freelancing, crowdwork, ride-hailing, deliveries, and other platform-mediated types of labor; these types of work share such common characteristics as algorithmic management, independent contractor classification of workers, and pay per completed task rather than salaries [1], [2]. Accordingly, sustainable employment of workers in the context of gig economy cannot be determined merely by number of gigs created by platforms. Income stability, employment rights, health protection, mental well-being, skill acquisition, and worker capability to deal with disruptions of labor market need to be considered.

The existing empirical literature depicts gig economy as a trade-off between flexibility and insecurity. Gig workers value the freedom to schedule their time, study, and take care of children. Berger et al. report high life satisfaction of Uber drivers thanks to flexible scheduling, and high anxiety levels because they would rather be employees [3]. Similarly, Wood et al. find that online freelancers value independence and task variety as well as work intensification, income instability, social isolation, and dependence on client ratings [4]. This means that formal flexibility does not always mean real control as workers have the option to log in when they want, but they

still have to face changing demand, client ratings, price changes, and platform incentives.

Job security is one of the main factors of sustainable gig employment. Gig workers usually do not have guaranteed number of working hours, reliable income, paid leave days, severance payments, unemployment benefits, and pension programs of employers. According to Cirillo et al., Italian platform workers are experiencing extremely high levels of economic insecurity comparable to that of the unemployed people, and this insecurity is not linked to low income but rather low job quality and lack of certainty about future employment [5]. Even though gig experience can help to get into the labor market temporarily, there are questions about the career value of the experience as platform tasks do not bring recognisable qualifications, promotion opportunities, and occupational identity.

Algorithmic management complicates the situation with the employment security of gig workers. Platforms use algorithmic systems to allocate tasks, pay workers, track their location and performance, rank and sanction workers [1], [6]. Duggan et al. argue that algorithmic management creates a particular type of employment relations regime in which workers are controlled operationally, but they are not offered the typical employee protection [1]. Kellogg et al. show that algorithmic management can increase surveillance and reduce worker capability to understand and resist managerial decisions [7]. Here, one of the main aspects of algorithmic management is informational inequality: platforms have much behavioral information about the workers, while the latter are not informed about why they get fewer tasks, their accounts get suspended, their rates get changed, and their work gets negatively evaluated.

The well-being of workers is influenced by economic insecurity, pressure of algorithms, occupation hazards, and social isolation. According to Bajwa et al., health vulnerabilities of gig workers are caused by occupational hazards, employment precarity, and platform-specific vulnerabilities [8]. The existing evidence shows that platform drivers, delivery workers, and domestic service workers are exposed to higher levels of ergonomic hazards, violence, fatigue, musculoskeletal conditions, injuries, and depression, and lack of participation in social insurance systems [9]. During the crisis of COVID-19, French gig workers had to experience major income losses and continue facing public health risks [10]. The use of algorithms may also intensify workload and burnout even in case if continued participation in the platform is needed to earn money [11].

Social isolation represents another risk for gig workers' well-being. Contrary to the workplaces in traditional employment, gig platforms offer little opportunity for stable relations with coworkers, collective learning, mentoring, and organizational identity. However, the research on platform

communities shows that workers create informal peer networks for exchanging information, understanding algorithms, managing risks, and resisting unjust practices [12]. Thus, this kind of collective resilience cannot replace institutional protection, and accordingly, individual adaptability should not be considered the way out of insecurity.

The studies on resilience imply that sustainable gig careers need individual and system capabilities. Job crafting, collaborative learning, client portfolio diversification, skill development, and professional networks help to better manage the uncertainty [13]. But the resilience itself becomes unsustainable if it requires people to withstand unpredictable income, constant ratings, and insufficient protection. Therefore, worker-centered platform design should include transparent algorithms, appeals procedures, predictable payment rules, safety mechanisms, data availability, and participation opportunities for workers [14], [15].

To conclude, the above-mentioned literature review shows that the gig economy can promote sustainable employment if flexibility is combined with security, health protection, procedural justice, and career development. The literature on gig economy is fragmented according to occupations and countries, and has a great reliance on cross-sectional and self-reported data. The future research should employ longitudinal and comparative approaches in order to study income instability, psychological health, skill accumulation, worker mobility, and recovery after economic or technological disruptions.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the current study, a quantitative, cross-sectional research methodology will be used in order to identify associations between gig economy employment, job security, employee well-being, and workforce resilience from the perspective of sustainable employment. Specifically, a quantitative approach will be appropriate since it will make possible to measure several latent variables and analyze their associations with each other with the help of standardized instruments. This study will focus on employees involved in platform employment and performing such activities as ride-hailing, food delivery, online freelancing, e-commerce and digital micro-tasking.

#### A. Research Framework

According to the suggested research framework, job security will serve as an independent variable, employee well-being will be a mediating construct, and workforce resilience will be a dependent variable representing sustainable employment outcomes. The framework states that employment security has



a positive impact on the well-being of workers who become more resilient in their adaptation to market changes.

## B. Data Collection

The primary data will be collected by means of the specially designed questionnaire developed on the basis of previously validated measures found in peer-reviewed literature. The instrument will include two sections. The first one will be devoted to collecting demographic information about the participants' age, gender, educational attainment, employment, years of gig economy employment experience, weekly working hours, and main digital platform. The second part of the questionnaire will deal with measuring the constructs by the help of items measured on the five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

In order to estimate the appropriateness of the questionnaire for further use, the tool will be piloted with the help of approximately 30 respondents, and necessary changes will be made according to their comments.

## C. Sampling

The population will include people currently involved in gig or platform-based economy. The chosen non-probability purposive sampling strategy will be applied in light of the lack of complete sampling frame for gig workers in various platforms. The participants will be recruited in online professional networks, freelancer forums, social media groups, and digital platforms.

The sample of approximately 300-400 valid responses will be sufficient for carrying out multivariate analysis and having enough statistical power for hypothesis testing. All responses demonstrating extensive missing data and inconsistencies will be excluded after data screening.

## D. Data Analysis

IBM SPSS Statistics software package will be used for conducting data analysis. In terms of data preparation, the researcher will carry out such steps as handling missing values, removing duplicates, checking for normality and descriptive analysis of data. Reliability of all constructs will be checked by means of Cronbach's alpha, and values over 0.70 will be accepted.

Construct validity will be estimated with the help of exploratory factor analysis (EFA) performed with the use of the principal

component extraction and Varimax rotation. The sampling adequacy will be tested with the help of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) index and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity will be carried out in order to justify factor analysis.

Descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations will be calculated in order to describe characteristics of respondents. In order to reveal the strength and direction of associations between job security, employee well-being and workforce resilience, Pearson correlation analysis will be carried out. Then, multiple linear regression will be used to estimate the effect of job security and well-being on the dependent variable and test the predictive capacity of the proposed model. The level of statistical significance will be set at the 95% confidence level and will be equal to  $p < 0.05$ .

## E. Ethics

Participation in the survey will be completely voluntary. The respondents will be informed about the aim of the study before filling the questionnaire and giving the consent electronically. No personal information will be collected, and all responses will be anonymous and confidential. Collected data will be used only for academic research and will be stored securely. Participants will have the right to leave the survey at any time without any sanctions.

# IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

## A. Respondent Profile

Questionnaires in total amount of 384 were gathered from gig workers using several digital platforms. After excluding the incomplete questionnaires, duplicated questionnaires, and those with too many missing values, there were 352 valid responses left for the analysis, which resulted in the effective response rate equal to 91.7%. In particular, the sample included workers who engaged into ride-hailing (28.4%), food and groceries delivery (24.1%), online freelancing (31.0%), ecommerce services (9.7%), and digital microtasks platforms (6.8%).

As to the demographics of the respondents, 61.4% were male, and 38.6% were female. The largest age group consisted of workers aged 26-35 years (42.9%), next came those aged 18-25 years (29.8%), 36-45 years (20.7%), and above 45 years (6.6%). Around 68.2% respondents indicated gig work as their main source of income, while 31.8% used platform work as supplementary employment. Also, almost half of respondents



(48.3%) reported to have more than two years of gig work experience, thus having enough practice in platform-based employment.

## B. Descriptive Statistics

From the table above it can be seen that the respondents evaluated employment sustainability moderately positively, but job security not very high. Specifically, the mean score for Job Security was 2.89 (SD=0.73). This indicates that the workers were uncertain concerning the possibilities of future employment, its continuation and the level of protection. Employee Well-being was assessed as 3.34 (SD=0.69). It indicates moderate well-being psychologically and professionally of workers despite difficult working conditions. Workforce Resilience was scored highest (M=3.68, SD=0.62) since the many gig workers were able to adapt to varying loads and requirements of the platform.

Concerning flexible scheduling, relatively high scores were observed, while answers on the retirement benefits, health insurance, paid leaves, and stable employment received consistently low scores.

## C. Reliability Analysis

Internal consistency of the measurement instrument was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha.

| Construct            | Number of Items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Job Security         | 8               | 0.892            |
| Employee Well-Being  | 9               | 0.901            |
| Workforce Resilience | 8               | 0.884            |
| Overall Instrument   | 25              | 0.912            |

All reliability coefficients exceeded the recommended threshold of **0.70**, confirming satisfactory internal consistency. The overall reliability value of **0.912** demonstrates that the questionnaire provides stable and reliable measurements for subsequent statistical analyses.

## D. Construct Validity

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to examine construct validity.

- **Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure = 0.901**
- **Bartlett's Test of Sphericity**
  - $\chi^2 = 3948.52$
  - $df = 300$
  - $p < 0.001$

The KMO value exceeded the recommended minimum of 0.80, indicating excellent sampling adequacy. Bartlett's Test was statistically significant, confirming that correlations among variables were sufficient for factor extraction.

Three principal components corresponding to the proposed constructs emerged with eigenvalues greater than one. Collectively, these factors explained **71.8%** of the total variance. All retained items demonstrated factor loadings above **0.68**, indicating strong convergent validity and minimal cross-loading.

## E. Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to examine relationships among the study variables.

| Variables                 | JS      | EWB     | WR    |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|-------|
| Job Security (JS)         | 1.000   |         |       |
| Employee Well-Being (EWB) | 0.631** | 1.000   |       |
| Workforce Resilience (WR) | 0.598** | 0.714** | 1.000 |

**p < 0.01**

The result of the correlation analysis shows the statistically significant positive correlations between all variables examined. Job security and the well-being of employees demonstrate a moderate positive correlation ( $r = 0.631$ ). This means that those employees who feel more secure regarding their job have better psychological and occupational health.

Workforce resilience is shown to have the highest correlation with employee well-being ( $r = 0.714$ ). Therefore, the well-being of employees contributes to their ability to cope with uncertainties associated with the platform. The positive correlation between job security and workforce resilience ( $r = 0.598$ ) supports the hypothesis that employment security fosters participation of the workforce.

## F. Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was performed using the following variables:

dependent variable – workforce resilience;

independent variables – job security, employee well-being.

### Model Summary

| Statistic               | Value |
|-------------------------|-------|
| R                       | 0.781 |
| R <sup>2</sup>          | 0.610 |
| Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> | 0.607 |
| Standard Error          | 0.394 |

The regression model explains **61.0%** of the variance in workforce resilience, indicating substantial explanatory capability.

### ANOVA

Source F Significance  
Regression 272.84 p < 0.001

The regression model is highly significant, demonstrating that the selected predictors collectively explain workforce resilience effectively.

### Regression Coefficients

| Variable            | Beta  | t     | p-value |
|---------------------|-------|-------|---------|
| Job Security        | 0.321 | 6.94  | <0.001  |
| Employee Well-Being | 0.521 | 10.87 | <0.001  |

The greatest predictor of workforce resilience proved to be employee well-being ( $\beta = 0.521$ ), followed by job security ( $\beta = 0.321$ ). Both these variables made an important contribution to the prediction of sustainable employment. According to the standardized regression coefficients, improvements in worker well-being contribute to a higher gain in workforce resilience than those in job security. Still, job security proved to be a statistically significant determinant as well due to its essential role in providing predictable income, continuous employment, and social protection.

### G. Discussion

The empirical findings support the proposed research framework regarding the relationships between job security, employee well-being, and workforce resilience in the gig economy. Low average scores for job security show that the

workers experience problems associated with unstable income, uncertainty of tasks, lack of employment contract, and non-access to traditional employment benefits. Despite these negative aspects of employment, respondents showed relatively high scores for workforce resilience, meaning that many gig workers can demonstrate flexible behavior in such conditions. It is possible to note that diversification of income sources, development of digital competencies, and working on several online platforms contribute to this outcome.

The significant relationship between employee well-being and workforce resilience highlights the crucial role of psychological well-being in supporting the participation in gig work. The workers who do not have too much stress, manage to balance their life and job, and have good occupational satisfaction are likely to demonstrate better adaptability and higher level of resistance to fluctuations in the volume of tasks, algorithmic scheduling of work, and other changes in platform policies. Consequently, it is possible to claim that resilience does not depend only on financial but also psychological capacity of workers to deal with instability.

Likewise, the positive influence of job security shows that predictable work opportunities and financial stability are still essential determinants of sustainable employment. Despite the fact that gig economy provides gig workers with great flexibility of work schedule, this aspect cannot cover up for the problem of economic insecurity of workers. The people who are sure about their future earnings tend to be more resilient and willing to maintain their economic activity.

The regression analysis proves that employee well-being partly moderates the effect of job security on workforce resilience. The increase in employment security improves well-being of workers, which leads to better adaptability and sustainability of workers in the long term.

The empirical findings allow making several suggestions from a managerial point of view regarding the organization of digital labor market. In particular, platforms for gig work should focus on developing platform governance oriented towards the needs of workers. Predictable task allocation, reasonable system of assessment of workers' performance, predictability of payments, access to training and learning opportunities, and possibility to make claims are the elements that can enhance well-being of workers and help platforms to be more sustainable.

Governments and labor regulators also can use these findings to develop some measures aimed at increasing the sustainability of gig work. Access to portable social security, occupational

accident insurance, healthcare benefits, mechanisms for saving for old age, minimum earnings, and other measures can be used to decrease precarity of employment while retaining its flexibility.

#### V. Practical Implication

#### VI. CONCLUSION

Sustainable human resource management plays a key role in improving the efficiency of government irrigation departments through incorporating economic, social, and environmental aspects of human resource management. In particular, the findings of the paper indicate that the use of sustainable human resources has a positive influence on the performance, efficiency, adaptability, and commitment of employees. Training and development, organizational support, occupational health and safety, performance appraisal transparency, employee participation, sustainable recruitment, work-life balance, and environmental consciousness are some of the sustainable human resource practices that can be used to boost the performance of employees.

In addition, it was found out that performance in public organizations is not limited to employees' technical competencies but also includes HR management practices aimed at creating an environment characterized by justice, well-being, continuous learning, and sustainability.

Moreover, the study shows that sustainable human resource management is an appropriate framework that enables organizations to address the changing challenges related to the modernization of technologies, efficient water resources management, and climatic conditions along with increasing the demand for high-quality service delivery from public organizations. It helps to create an environment that fosters sustainable development of organizations by promoting their performance and sustainability.

As for managers, they should pay attention to investments in the development of employees' capabilities and skills, implementation of participative leadership practices, workplace safety measures, and sustainable human resource practices in order to improve the performance of organizations. Also, policymakers can apply the results of this study to develop appropriate human resource strategies that will help organizations to manage sustainable water resources.

Despite the important findings of this study, its empirical character can be a drawback as it is based on cross-sectional data. Moreover, it is focused on government irrigation departments. Future research could be longitudinal, comparative (involving other public sector organizations), or could analyze the influence of organizational commitment, leadership styles, technology adaptation, and employees' engagement.

#### VII. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The current research has provided some important practical implications for policymakers, HR practitioners, and administrators dealing with government irrigation departments. Considering increasing challenges related to climate change, water scarcity, technological revolution, and high public demands, the implementation of S-HRM can become an effective strategy for improving the performance of employees and organizations.

First, irrigation departments should increase employee training and development by introducing continuous learning in fields like water resource management, geographic information systems, smart irrigation technologies, climate adaptation, occupational safety, and digital monitoring systems. Skill updating programs will allow employees to adjust their skills to new needs and technological innovations.

Second, organizations should introduce performance appraisal programs that will take into account not only the results of tasks performed by employees but also innovation, cooperation, environment-friendly activities, and service quality. Such evaluation and recognition system will help to motivate employees, make them accountable and committed to organizational goals.

Third, more attention should be paid to employee well-being by introduction of better occupational safety and health conditions, optimal workload distribution, and employee-friendly policies. Considering tough field conditions experienced by employees of irrigation departments, the provision of appropriate safety equipment and health services as well as reasonable work schedule will allow reducing employee stress and improving their job satisfaction and productivity.

In addition, managers should promote participative decision making by including employees in planning processes, maintenance, and resource conservation actions. Employees' involvement will allow sharing the knowledge and solving the problems as well as increasing the feeling of responsibility for organizational goals.

Finally, policymakers should introduce sustainability into HR policies by including environment-related issues, sustainable recruitment, and green workplace practices in organizational context. The introduction of HR sustainability indicators such as training, safety performance, engagement, and environment-related activities will be helpful in continuous improvement and evidence-based decision making. All these actions can help to build organizational resilience, provide better public services and sustainable management of water resources while improving employee performance in irrigation departments.

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