A Study of "Online Food Delivery Executives' Job Insecurity": A case study in Mysuru City

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The surge in online food delivery services has given rise to job insecurity challenges for delivery personnel. Operating in the gig economy, these workers face inconsistent earnings due to fluctuating orders and tips, as well as unpredictable workloads. The competitive nature of the job, tied to customer ratings, adds pressure to accept low-paying orders. Classification as independent contractors denies them benefits and protections typical of traditional employees. Physical strain, unpredictable weather, and challenging customer interactions also impact their well-being. Balancing technological advancements and maintaining fair working conditions remains a critical challenge for the industry's future. This article consists of the opinion about insecurity factors of 75 respondents from online food delivery executives of Swiggy in Mysuru city.

Key words: Online food delivery, Executives, insecurity, Swiggy, job.

1.1 Introduction

Job insecurity is the pervasive fear or apprehension that one's employment may be jeopardized due to a range of factors. These factors include economic downturns, technological advancements, organizational restructuring, performance concerns, and global competition. This concern has far-reaching implications on individuals and societies, affecting mental health, financial stability, and overall quality of life.

During economic recessions, companies may downsize or halt hiring to cut costs, leading to heightened job insecurity. Technological progress, while beneficial in many ways, can also lead to the displacement of certain jobs, causing employees to worry about their future relevance. Globalization contributes to job insecurity by prompting companies to outsource jobs to countries with lower labor costs. Organizational changes like mergers and acquisitions can result in job redundancies and role shifts, adding to employees' uncertainty. Moreover, the fear of poor performance and subsequent job loss can be a significant stressor.

Job insecurity brings about various adverse effects. It causes stress, anxiety, and even depression among individuals, impacting their emotional well-being. Financial stability is compromised, as uncertainty makes it difficult to plan for expenses or save for the future. Productivity at work can decline, and health may suffer due to prolonged stress. Societally, job insecurity can lead to reduced consumer spending, slower economic growth, and a heavier reliance on social support systems.

1.2 Review of Literature

Jyothishman Das (2018) conducted a study on customer perceptions of online food ordering and delivery services. The study found that factors like doorstep delivery, rewards, and cashbacks were key motivators for consumers to use mobile phone food ordering. Zomato was preferred due to its better on-time delivery and discounts.

Meenatchi Somasundari M (2018) explored the relationship between job satisfaction, job performance, and stress among online food delivery executives. The study revealed that job satisfaction significantly affected employees' performance. Additionally, job stress was identified as a direct factor impacting the functioning of workers in the online food delivery industry.

Neha Parashar (2018) et al. focused on customer attitudes and perceptions towards digital food app services. The study highlighted the popularity of food delivery apps in India and the importance of user-friendly features. While Cash on Delivery remained an option, the study emphasized the need for apps with enhanced usability for placing orders.

Mitali Gupta (2019) examined the influence of online food delivery apps on restaurant businesses, particularly Swiggy and Zomato. The research highlighted the potential for growth in the food delivery industry due to changing urban lifestyles. It emphasized the importance of active branding to capture a significant share of the online food service market.

Ankit Katrodia (2020) investigated job stress and insecurity among employees in the food delivery industry. The study pointed out that long working hours were a major stress factor for employees of platforms like Swiggy, Zomato, and Uber. It recommended the establishment of a grievance appraisal committee and providing training to mitigate work-related stress.\

1.3 Research Gap:

The research gap in this study pertains to the limited exploration of comprehensive strategies addressing job insecurity factors in the online food delivery industry. While existing research highlights specific challenges faced by delivery personnel, there is a lack of in-depth analysis on how online food delivery platforms, regulatory bodies, and advocacy groups can collaboratively mitigate job insecurity's effects. This study seeks to bridge this gap by proposing holistic solutions that encompass economic, regulatory, technological, and social dimensions, aiming to enhance job stability and overall well-being for workers in this sector.

1.4 Need and Significance of the Study

The need for this study arises from the increasing prevalence of job insecurity in the online food delivery industry and its significant implications for workers, the industry itself, and society at large. Several factors underscore the urgency and importance of investigating this issue. By conducting this study, we aim to fill this knowledge gap, providing insights that can inform stakeholders, shape policies, and lead to tangible improvements in the working conditions and job security of online food delivery personnel.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study encompasses a thorough investigation into the factors contributing to job insecurity within the online food delivery industry. It will focus on understanding the challenges faced by delivery personnel, the impact on their well-being, and the broader implications for the industry and society. The study will analyze the role of technology, economic fluctuations, regulatory frameworks, and industry practices in shaping job insecurity. It will also explore the effectiveness of existing support mechanisms and identify best practices from within the sector or related industries. The study's ultimate aim is to provide actionable recommendations for online food delivery platforms, regulatory authorities, and advocacy groups to collaboratively address job insecurity and improve the working conditions of delivery personnel.

1.6 Objective of the Study

Objective 1: To analyze the extent and impact of job insecurity factors faced by online food delivery personnel, including factors such as lack of job stability, inconsistent earnings, and competition.

Objective 2: To raise awareness among stakeholders, including policymakers, industry players, and the general public, about the challenges posed by job insecurity in the online food delivery sector and the need for collaborative solutions.

Objective 3: To contribute to the academic literature by providing valuable insights into the multifaceted issue of job insecurity in the context of the online food delivery industry and to suggest evidence-based interventions for its mitigation.

1.7 Limitations

While this study aims to provide valuable insights into job insecurity within the online food delivery industry, there are several limitations that should be acknowledged:

1. Sample Size and Generalizability: The study's findings may be limited to the specific geographic area or platforms included in the research, potentially limiting their generalizability to a broader context.

2. Self-Reporting Bias: Data collected through surveys and interviews may be subject to self-reporting bias, where participants may provide socially desirable responses or may not accurately recall their experiences.

3. Time Constraints: The study's timeframe may restrict the depth of analysis, preventing a comprehensive examination of the long-term effects of job insecurity and potential changes over time.

4. Limited Access: Some online food delivery platforms or workers may be inaccessible for participation, leading to potential underrepresentation of certain perspectives.

Despite these limitations, the study aims to offer valuable insights into job insecurity within the online food delivery industry and provide practical recommendations for improving the working conditions and well-being of delivery personnel.

1.8 Research Methodology

The study will employ a mixed-methods approach to comprehensively examine job insecurity in the online food delivery industry. Quantitative data will be collected through surveys to assess the prevalence and impact of job insecurity factors on delivery personnel's well-being. Qualitative data will be gathered through interviews and focus groups to gain deeper insights into individual experiences and perceptions. A thorough review of industry literature, regulatory frameworks, and best practices will provide a contextual backdrop for analysis. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data will enable a holistic understanding of the issue and support the formulation of practical strategies to alleviate job insecurity and enhance the working conditions of online food delivery workers. For this study 75 respondents from various online food delivery apps in Mysuru city selected and collected the data and that has summarized.

1.9 Job insecurity factors that online food delivery executives may face include:

Lack of Job Stability: Many online food delivery jobs are gig-based or contractual, which means there is no long-term job security. Delivery personnel may not have consistent work or income.

Inconsistent Earnings: Earnings for delivery personnel can vary widely based on factors such as order volume, tips, and peak hours. This inconsistency can make it difficult to predict income and plan for expenses.

Unpredictable Workload: The volume of orders can fluctuate significantly, leading to periods of high demand and low demand. This uncertainty can make it challenging to maintain a steady income.

Competition: The gig economy nature of food delivery work means there's often competition for orders among multiple delivery personnel. This can lead to pressure to work longer hours or accept low-paying orders to stay competitive.

Rating System Pressure: Many delivery platforms use a rating system where customers rate their experience with the delivery person. Low ratings can impact a delivery person's ability to receive orders and maintain their job.

Job Automation: As technology and automation continue to advance, there is a potential threat that some of the delivery tasks could be automated, reducing the need for human delivery personnel.

Lack of Benefits: Gig economy jobs often lack benefits such as health insurance, sick leave, paid time off, and retirement plans. This lack of benefits can leave delivery personnel financially vulnerable in times of need.

No Job Advancement: In many cases, online food delivery jobs don't offer clear pathways for career advancement or skill development, leading to a lack of professional growth.

Dependence on Technology: Delivery personnel rely heavily on smartphone apps for order assignments, navigation, and communication. Technical issues or app glitches can disrupt their ability to work.

Economic Fluctuations: Economic downturns can lead to decreased consumer spending, which might result in reduced demand for food delivery services and subsequently fewer opportunities for delivery personnel.

No Employee Protections: In many cases, online food delivery personnel are classified as independent contractors rather than employees. This classification can result in fewer legal protections and employment rights.

Physical Strain: The nature of the job involves spending long hours on the road, often under challenging weather conditions. This can lead to physical fatigue and strain.

Customer Interactions: Dealing with a wide range of customers, some of whom may be demanding or rude, can contribute to stress and job dissatisfaction.

Burnout: The pressure to meet delivery targets, work long hours, and manage other job-related challenges can lead to burnout and negatively impact overall well-being.

1.10 Analysis and Interpretation:

Table1:Age of respondents of food delivery Executives

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Below 25 years	16	22
26 to 35years	34	45
36 to 45years	21	28
Above 45 years	04	5
Total	75	100

Source: Collected from primary data through field survey

The above table shows that 22% of respondents are under the age of below 25years 45% of respondents are under the age of 26 to 35 years. 28% of respondents are under 36 to 45 years. 5% of respondents are above 45 years.

Table 2: Education qualification of food delivery Executives

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Below SSLC	26	34.67
PUC	25	33.33
DEGREE	20	26.67
ABOVE DEGREE	4	5.33
Total	75	100.00

Source: Collected from primary data through field survey

The data indicates that out of the total 75 respondents surveyed:

It's noteworthy that the largest percentage of respondents falls into the "Below SSLC" category, constituting 34.67% of the total. On the other hand, the smallest group comprises those with education levels "Above Degree," accounting for 5.33% of the respondents.

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Table 3: Marital status of food delivery Executives

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Married	23	30.67
Unmarried	52	69.33
Total	**75**	**100.00**

Source: Collected from primary data through field survey

According to the data:

Married: 30.67% of the food delivery executives are married.

Unmarried: The majority, 69.33%, are unmarried.

Table 4: Size of the mily of food delivery Executives

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Small family	54	72.00
Large family	21	28.00
Total	**75**	**100.00**

Source: Collected from primary data through field survey

The data reveals:

Small Family: The majority, 72.00%, of food delivery executives come from small families.

Large Family: 28.00% of the surveyed executives belong to large families.

Table 5: Nature of Job of food delivery Executives

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Part time	47	62.67
Full time	28	37.33
Total	**75**	**100.00**

Source: Collected from primary data through field survey

The data reveals:

Part-time: A majority of food delivery executives, 62.67%, are engaged in part-time work.

Full-time: 37.33% of the surveyed executives work full-time.

Table 6: Monthly Income of the food delivery Executives

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Less than .10, 000	18	24.0
Rs.10, 001 – Rs.15, 000	31	41.34
Rs.15, 001 – Rs.20, 000	22	29.33
Above Rs.20,000	**75**	**100.00**

Source: Collected from primary data through field survey

The data reveals:

Less than Rs.10,000: 24.00% of food delivery executives earn less than Rs.10,000 per month.

Rs.10,001 – Rs.15,000: The majority, 41.34%, earn between Rs.10,001 and Rs.15,000 per month.

Rs.15,001 – Rs.20,000: 29.33% of the surveyed executives earn between Rs.15,001 and Rs.20,000 per month.

Above Rs.20,000: A small percentage, 5.33%, earn above Rs.20,000 per month.

Analysis of Job Insecurity Factors of Food Delivery Executives

Table 7:

	Insecurity factors	S.A	A	NAND	D.A	S.DA
1	I have threat of losing the job	29	16	3	21	6
2	This job has enhanced my social status	15	36	6	13	5
3	I am seldom rewarded for my hard work and efficient performance	30	18	6	19	2
4	I do my work under tense circumstances	29	16	3	19	8
5	I get less salary in comparison to the quantum of my work	32	15	3	22	3
6	I have entered into a proper employment agreement/contract	14	6	4	41	10
7	I have difficulty in finding a new job	38	14	4	13	6
8	I have a stable source of income	11	9	12	35	8
9	I have fear of changes in the incentive scheme	11	35	4	21	4
10	I have fear of losing the job in near future	10	36	4	17	8

(SA-Strongly agree : A-Agree: NAND: Neither agree nor disagree: D-Disagree::SD-Strongly disagree)

Likert scale responses of above table

1. **Threat of Losing the Job:** Respondents generally express concerns about the possibility of losing their jobs. A significant portion of them (29) strongly agree, and 16 agree that this threat is present. A smaller number (21) disagree, while 3 respondents are neutral, and 6 strongly disagree.

2. **Enhancement of Social Status:** The majority of respondents (36) agree that their current job has improved their social status. Additionally, 15 respondents strongly agree, while 13 disagree and 5 strongly disagree. Six respondents are neutral on this factor.

3. **Rewards for Hard Work and Performance:** There's a mix of responses regarding rewards for hard work and efficient performance. 30 respondents feel that they are seldom rewarded, while 18 agree with receiving recognition. On the other hand, 19 disagree, and 6 are neutral. Only 2 respondents strongly disagree.

4. **Work Under Tense Circumstances:** A significant proportion of respondents (29) agree that they often work under tense circumstances, and 16 respondents strongly agree. On the contrary, 19 disagree, 3 are neutral, and 8 strongly disagree.

5. **Salary Discrepancy:** Many respondents (32) feel that they receive less salary in comparison to the amount of work they do. Conversely, 15 disagree with this perception, and 3 are neutral. There's a split between 22 respondents who strongly disagree and 3 who are neutral.

6. **Employment Agreement/Contract:** A notable number of respondents (41) disagree with the idea that they have entered into a proper employment agreement or contract. This is in contrast to 14 who agree, 6 who strongly agree, 4 who are neutral, and 10 who strongly disagree.

7. **Difficulty Finding New Job:** A substantial portion of respondents (38) express difficulty in finding a new job, with 14 agreeing. On the contrary, 13 disagree, 4 are neutral, and 6 strongly disagree with this notion.

8. **Stable Source of Income:** Respondents seem divided on having a stable source of income. While 11 strongly agree and 9 agree, a larger number (35) disagree. Additionally, 12 respondents are neutral, and 8 strongly disagree.

9. **Fear of Changes in Incentive Scheme:** A significant number of respondents (35) express fear or concern about changes in the incentive scheme, and 11 agree. Conversely, 21 disagree, 4 are neutral, and 4 strongly disagree.

10. **Fear of Losing the Job:** A considerable proportion of respondents (36) feel insecurity in their job and fear losing it. Additionally, 10 respondents strongly agree, while 17 disagree and 4 are neutral. Eight respondents strongly disagree.

Overall, these responses indicate that the majority of respondents have not sure about job security, feel that their work environment can be tense, and believe that they are not adequately rewarded for their efforts. The perception of social status improvement due to the job is mixed. The factors related to salary, employment agreements, and changes in incentive schemes also elicit various responses.

1.11 Suggestion

1. Transparent Communication:Establish open channels of communication between delivery workers and management to share updates on company performance, changes in policies, and business strategies.

Regularly inform workers about their performance metrics and areas for improvement, helping them understand their job security status.

2. Fair Compensation and Benefits: Ensure fair wages and incentives that reflect the effort and risks associated with the job.

Provide benefits such as health insurance, accident coverage, and retirement plans to enhance the overall sense of security.

3. Skill Enhancement: Offer opportunities for skill development and cross-training to increase workers' versatility and make them better equipped for various roles within the company.

4. Diversified Services: Expand service offerings beyond just deliveries to create more stable and diverse job roles for workers, reducing dependence on a single aspect of the business.

5. Flexibility and Control: Implement flexible scheduling options that allow delivery workers to balance work with personal commitments, providing them a sense of control over their work-life balance.

6. Performance Recognition: Recognize and reward top-performing delivery workers to incentivize consistent high-quality work and instill a sense of job security among them.

7. Job Stability Programs: Design programs that guarantee a minimum number of hours or deliveries per week, providing a baseline of income and job security.

8. Clear Performance Metrics: Define clear performance metrics and expectations so that delivery workers have a transparent understanding of what is required to maintain their positions.

9. Job Redundancy Plans: Establish contingency plans that outline steps to support delivery workers in case of a slowdown in demand, ensuring they're aware of the company's commitment to their job security.

10. Supportive Work Environment: Foster a supportive workplace culture where delivery workers feel valued, respected, and part of a team, reducing feelings of isolation and insecurity.

11. Access to Resources: Provide access to resources such as financial planning assistance, mental health support, and educational opportunities to help workers navigate job insecurity concerns.

12. Unionization and Advocacy: Encourage or support the formation of worker unions or associations to collectively negotiate for improved job security and working conditions.

13. Technology Adoption: Use technology to provide real-time updates, optimize routes, and streamline operations, which can contribute to efficiency and better job security.

1.12 Conclusion

Addressing these job insecurity factors requires a combination of efforts from online food delivery platforms, regulatory bodies, and advocacy groups. Establishing fair compensation structures, offering benefits, improving job stability, and providing opportunities for career growth and skills development are some steps that can help mitigate these challenges.

To cope with job insecurity, individuals can focus on continuous skill development to remain adaptable to changing job demands. Building a professional network can provide access to alternative job opportunities and emotional support. Creating a financial safety net through savings and careful budgeting can mitigate the impact of job loss. Maintaining high work performance can improve job security during times of organizational change. Seeking psychological assistance is crucial for those significantly affected by the emotional toll of job insecurity.

In an era of dynamic workplaces, understanding job insecurity's causes, effects, and coping mechanisms is essential. This awareness empowers individuals to navigate the uncertain employment landscape with resilience, safeguarding their well-being and future prospects.

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