

C/DETAILED OUTLINE

Question 1: Suggested 600-700 words

❖ Who is responsible for ensuring fair pay and working conditions for workers in the gig economy?

- This question requires an exploration of the entities responsible for fair pay and working conditions in the gig economy, along with the steps to improve these aspects.
- It involves discussing legal frameworks, examining the role of different stakeholders (like gig platforms, governments, and worker unions), and analyzing potential solutions.

● First 1-2 sentences: Definition

Provide a definition of the gig economy

Example: "The gig economy is defined as a labor market characterized by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work, as opposed to permanent or long-term jobs. This economic system emphasizes flexibility and independence, with workers engaging in temporary, flexible jobs, often facilitated by digital platforms ([Kuhn & Maleki, 2017](#)). In the gig economy, workers are typically classified as independent contractors rather than traditional employees, which impacts their access to benefits and job security ([De Stefano, 2015](#))."

● Next 1-2 sentences: Examine the Impact

You should **examine how the gig economy affects workers' rights** by researching and documenting the various labor practices within the gig economy (contract work, lack of benefits, and job insecurity)

Example: The independent contractor status often places gig workers in a legal gray area, excluding them from employee rights and protections. For example, research found that a gig worker in South Africa earned significantly less than the national minimum wage for extensive work hours ([Graham, 2021](#))

● Next 2-3 sentences: Analysis of Impact

Make an analysis the impact of these practices on workers' rights (minimum wage, healthcare, and job stability) and provide up-to-date data, statistics or insights relevant

Examples: The impact of gig economy practices on workers' rights, particularly concerning minimum wage, healthcare, and job stability, can be analyzed through the following examples with real references and citations:

- **Minimum Wage Violations:** A significant proportion of gig workers earn less than the minimum wage. About 14% of gig workers earned less than the federal minimum wage on an hourly basis, and more than a quarter (29%) earned less than the state minimum wage applicable for W-2 service-sector workers. This stark contrast with W-2 employees, where only 1% reported hourly wages below state minimum wage thresholds, highlights the disparities in income security between gig workers and traditional employees ([Economic Policy Institute, 2022](#)).
- **Lack of Wage Protections and Loss of Earnings:** Gig workers frequently lose earnings due to technical difficulties related to their digital work platforms. More than 60% of gig workers reported not being paid for their work at least once due to these issues, compared to only 19% of W-2 service-sector workers. This issue is exacerbated by the fact that gig workers, classified as independent contractors, lack legal recourse to recover lost wages, which can be considered a form of wage theft ([Economic Policy Institute, 2022](#)).
- **Loss of Protections Against Discrimination and Harassment:** As independent contractors, gig workers lose rights to a safe and healthy work environment as well as protections against discrimination and harassment. This lack of legal safeguards places them at a distinct disadvantage compared to traditional employees who benefit from these fundamental workplace rights ([Well, 2023](#)).

- **Next 1-2 sentences: Nature of Gig Work and Independent Contractor Status**

To explain why gig workers don't earn fair pay and working conditions like normal employees, you should:

- + Highlight the nature of gig work, emphasize how many gig economy platforms classify their workers as independent contractors rather than employees → explain the classification often denies workers access to traditional employee benefits (health insurance, retirement plans, job security)

→ **This independent contractor status** can make workers **vulnerable** to income instability, lack of labor protections, and limited legal recourse **in cases of disputes or mistreatment** by gig companies.

- **Next 1-2 sentences: Applicability of Model Work Health and Safety (WHS) Rules**

For this part, you should highlight the Model Work Health and Safety (WHS) rules' applicability to gig workers:

1. You must emphasize the **broad definitions** of WHS => designed to encompass **a wide range of work arrangements**.
 2. You should explain **how these definitions** can potentially **cover gig workers**, despite the flexible and unconventional nature of their employment.
 3. Remember to mention that **the applicability** of these rules to **gig workers** can vary depending on **local jurisdictions** to ensure that gig workers receive adequate workplace protections and safety measures.
- **Next 3-4 sentences: Steps to Improve Compensation and Working Conditions**
 - **First**, you can describe the existing problem of gig workers, and what the authorities have done to mitigate the problem.

Example: Mentioned government efforts to address these gaps, such as giving the "Fair Work Commission " additional authority. [Fair Work Foundation](#), which scores work platforms on fair work principles and publishes results to promote transparency and accountability. This initiative led to significant improvements: at least 11 platforms improved terms and conditions for thousands of workers worldwide, and in the UK, 4.7 million gig workers gained legal rights to personal protective equipment ([Graham, 2023](#)).
 - **Next**, you can pick 2-3 solutions from the above list to improve gig's workers compensation and working conditions:
 1. **Reclassification:** Consider classifying gig workers as employees for better benefits.
 2. **Minimum Wage Standards:** Set a minimum wage for gig workers.
 3. **Enhanced Protections:** Enforce labor laws and protect workers' rights.
 4. **Contracting Regulations:** Regulate gig worker contracts for fairness.
 5. **Benefit Access:** Provide gig workers access to benefits like healthcare.
 6. **Collective Bargaining:** Encourage worker organization for negotiations.
 7. **Safety Nets:** Create support systems during income fluctuations.
 8. **Skills Development:** Invest in gig worker training and skills.
 9. **Monitoring:** Regularly audit gig platforms for compliance.
 10. **Public Awareness:** Raise awareness about gig workers' challenges.

- Try to elaborate on how each solution you chose can improve gig workers compensation and working conditions.
- Then, you can conclude the answer to this question by suggesting amendments in laws → gig workers, safe work regulators and labor and employment authorities can cooperate together to ensure that health and safety factors are included in decisions about salary, reward, and contracts of gig workers.

Example: Solutions to Improve Compensation and Working Conditions

1. **Reclassification as Employees:** By reclassifying gig workers as employees, they would gain access to benefits such as healthcare, paid leave, and job security. This shift can significantly improve their financial stability and work-life balance. A study by [Cherry and Aloisi \(2017\)](#) discusses how employment classification impacts worker rights and benefits, emphasizing the need for legal adjustments to protect gig workers.
2. **Setting Minimum Wage Standards:** Implementing minimum wage standards for gig workers ensures they earn a fair income, reducing financial precarity. [Healy, Nicholson, and Pekarek \(2017\)](#) explore the implications of setting minimum wages in the gig economy, highlighting its role in providing income security.
3. **Enhanced Legal Protections:** Enforcing labor laws that protect workers' rights can prevent exploitation and improve working conditions. Legal protections also ensure gig workers have recourse in disputes. [Valenduc and Vendramin \(2017\)](#) provide insights into the necessity of legal protections for gig workers.

→ **Conclusion with Legal Amendment Suggestion**

Amending laws to foster cooperation between gig workers, safe work regulators, and labor authorities is crucial. Such amendments should aim to integrate health and safety considerations into salary and contract decisions. This cooperative approach can lead to a more equitable gig economy.

Question 2: Impact of Algorithms on Worker Well-being

- **First 1-2 sentences:** Introduce **the use of algorithms** by platform companies in the gig economy for tasks like matching gig workers, setting pay rates, and evaluating worker performance.

Example:

- + Deliveroo: Deliveroo utilizes an algorithm that optimizes the delivery process by assigning orders to riders based on factors such as distance, delivery time, and rider availability. The algorithm aims to maximize efficiency and customer satisfaction.
 - + Uber: Uber employs an advanced algorithm for matching drivers with passengers, setting fares, and optimizing routes. This algorithm considers various factors such as the passenger's location, the nearest available driver, traffic conditions, and estimated travel time to efficiently assign rides. The fare calculation also includes dynamic pricing, which can increase prices during high demand periods to balance supply and demand. This algorithmic approach aims to minimize wait times for passengers while maximizing the number of rides for drivers, thereby enhancing overall efficiency and user satisfaction. Uber's use of data and algorithms has been extensively studied and discussed in the context of the gig economy and its impact on labor dynamics.
- **Next 2-3 sentences: analyze the impact of algorithmic management** used by platform companies on the well-being of gig workers. The impact should revolve around:
 - + **Unpredictable earnings:** Fluctuating pay rates and inconsistent order assignments can make it challenging for workers to anticipate their income.
 - + **Intense competition among workers:** The algorithmic management system promotes a competitive environment among gig workers, as they have to compete for higher-paying orders.
 - + **Lack transparency:** Gig workers often have limited visibility into how the algorithm calculates pay rates and assigns orders.
 - + **Limit worker autonomy:** The algorithmic system heavily controls the work experience of gig workers, leaving them with limited autonomy. They have little control over the order assignments, pay rates, and scheduling.
 - **Next 3-4 sentences:** With the negative impact of algorithmic management used by platforms, you should delve into the adverse effects of unclear automated processes and pervasive monitoring on the psychological, financial, and physiological well-being of gig workers.

Example: The utilized algorithms system of Gojek and Grab manage deliveries and driver selection. However, these automated processes are often not transparent and the monitoring is extensive, which can have led to drivers experiencing increased stress, anxiety, and job insecurity due to unpredictable

earnings, intense competition for orders, and lack of control over work assignments.

- **Last 2-3 sentences:** You can use Hesketh and Cooper's principles of well-being to examine these effects, highlighting issues like stress, job insecurity, financial instability, and physical demands exacerbated by algorithmic decision-making.

Example:

- ***Stress:*** Algorithmic decision-making can increase stress levels due to the pressure to meet performance metrics and the lack of control over work assignments and earnings.
- ***Job insecurity:*** Gig workers may experience heightened job insecurity as algorithms determine order assignments and worker ratings, leading to a sense of unpredictability and vulnerability.
- ***Financial instability:*** Fluctuating pay rates and opaque algorithms for determining earnings can contribute to financial instability and difficulty in managing expenses.
- ***Physical demands:*** Algorithmic decision-making can result in increased physical demands on gig workers, such as long working hours and demanding delivery targets, leading to physical strain and exhaustion.

Tips:

Here are some sources where you can find detailed information about algorithms used by companies:

❖ **Academic Journals:**

- Journals like the Journal of Operations Management or Transportation Research Part C: Emerging Technologies often publish studies related to algorithms in the gig economy.
- Accessible via academic databases like JSTOR, ScienceDirect, or Google Scholar.

❖ **Technology News Websites:**

- Websites like TechCrunch, Wired, or The Verge often feature articles on the technology behind gig economy platforms.
- [TechCrunch](#)
- [Wired](#)
- [The Verge](#)

❖ **Research Institutions:**

- Many universities and technology institutes publish research papers and articles about the gig economy and its technological aspects.
- Check out university websites or digital repositories like [MIT's Technology Review](#) or [Harvard Business Review](#).

❖ **Industry Reports and White Papers:**

- Organizations like McKinsey & Company or Deloitte frequently release reports on technology and business models in the gig economy.
- [McKinsey & Company Insights](#)
- [Deloitte Insights](#)

❖ **Government and Regulatory Publications:**

- Regulatory bodies occasionally publish reports on the impact of technology in the gig economy.
- Check websites like the [U.S. Department of Labor](#) or the [European Commission](#).

❖ **Online Learning Platforms:**

- Websites like Coursera or edX offer courses and lectures that sometimes cover gig economy algorithms.
- [Coursera](#)
- [edX](#)

Question 3: Enhancing Gig Workers' Job-Related Well-being

- ❖ **Rationale:** This question is the most complex, requiring you to take on the role of a Chief Human Resource Officer and recommend five best practices. Each recommendation should be backed with reasons and evidence, which may include case studies, data, or first-hand experiences. This question also needs to cover a range of well-being aspects, necessitating a more substantial word count.
- ❖ You will need to **recommend 5 “Best Practices”**, in which each “Best Practices” paragraphs should take the following flow for reference:
- **First 2-3 sentences:**
 - Define the specific problem or challenge that gig workers are encountering within the gig economy.
 - After that, you need to utilize statistics, research findings, or real-world examples to illustrate the extent and impact of the problem.

Example:

Low Pay: A substantial number of gig workers earn below the minimum wage. [A study by Parrott and Reich \(2021\)](#) found that many app-based drivers in New York City were earning less than the city's minimum wage after accounting for expenses.

- **Next 2-3 sentences:** Find practical solutions or strategies to address the identified problem.

- ❖ The 15 suggested ideas below have been divided into three general solution areas that can help gig workers. You can **choose up to 3** from the below list depending on what you have chosen from the above question. The suggested solution should be compatible with the problem.

- **Financial Security and Stability:**

- + Offer financial planning and resources
 - + Implement fair compensation practices
 - + Provide access to affordable healthcare
 - + Advocate for labor rights and protections
 - + Offer access to affordable housing
 - + Offer access to affordable childcare services

- **Work-Life Balance and Well-being:**

- + Facilitate flexible work schedules
 - + Foster a sense of community
 - + Support mental health and well-being
 - + Improve safety measures
 - + Promote work-life balance

- **Professional Development and Support:**

- + Provide skill development and training opportunities
 - + Create opportunities for feedback and communication
 - + Offer access to networking and career advancement opportunities
 - + Establish a feedback loop for platform improvements

- **Next 2-3 sentences:** Explain how these solutions can benefit gig workers and the platform companies. Try to mention any relevant research or best practices.

Example:

1. **Implementing Fair Compensation Practices:** Fair compensation is crucial for financial stability and job satisfaction among gig workers. [*A study by Berger et al. \(2018\)*](#) found that fair payment practices are positively associated with job satisfaction among gig workers. When workers feel they are compensated fairly, it increases their motivation and overall job satisfaction.
2. **Facilitating Flexible Work Schedules:** Flexible work schedules can significantly contribute to better work-life balance and overall well-being. According to [*De Stefano \(2015\)*](#), flexible working arrangements can reduce stress levels and increase job satisfaction. This is particularly relevant in the gig economy, where workers value the ability to control their work hours.
3. **Providing Skill Development and Training Opportunities:** Investment in skill development and training can lead to higher job satisfaction and improved performance. [*A report by PWC \(2020\)*](#) highlights that gig workers who receive training opportunities exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction and performance.

This investment not only benefits the workers but also enhances the quality of service they provide.

- **Next 2-3 sentences:** Discuss the steps or methods required to implement the proposed solution. Remember to consider any potential challenges or obstacles and how to overcome them.

Example:

To implement the proposed solution of providing skill development and training opportunities to gig workers, platform companies can collaborate with training organizations or create their own training programs. Steps include identifying relevant skills, designing accessible online or in-person training modules, and incentivizing participation. Potential challenges may include the cost of training programs and ensuring that the training aligns with gig workers' needs...

- **Last 1-2 sentences:** In conclusion, you must explain the potential positive outcomes or improvements that the solution can bring. Try to emphasize how gig workers' well-being and working conditions can be positively affected.

Example:

- + *By doing..., gig workers can acquire new skills, enhance their employability, and increase their job satisfaction => improved working conditions, increased earning potential => a positive impact on their overall well-being.*
- + *Additionally, platform companies benefit from a more skilled and motivated workforce, resulting in higher-quality services and increased customer satisfaction.*

D/Useful sources:

Archer et al. 2021, *WHS: A Management Guide*, 6th edn, Cengage Learning, Australia.

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