

## Employment Prospects for People with Disabilities in the Food Delivery Gig Economy: An Analysis in Jaipur, Rajasthan

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### Abstract

The gig economy's explosive rise has changed urban employment trends by offering flexible, app-based work options in a variety of industries, most notably food delivery services. Digital platforms like Zomato and Swiggy have greatly expanded in Indian places like Jaipur, creating new sources of income for a variety of labor groups. The degree to which these opportunities are sustainable and accessible for individuals with impairments has not, however, been the subject of much empirical investigation. The work opportunities for people with impairments in Jaipur, Rajasthan's food delivery gig economy are examined in this study. Understanding wage levels, job stability, working circumstances, workplace obstacles, and general job satisfaction among delivery partners with disabilities is its main goal. The study assesses whether gig-based food delivery work reflects conditions of employment precarity or promotes economic empowerment

and social inclusion using a descriptive research design and primary data gathered through structured questionnaires. The results are intended to give social welfare organizations, platform firms, and legislator's useful information for enhancing inclusive hiring practices and working conditions in the context of the gig economy. The work opportunities for people with impairments in Jaipur, Rajasthan's food delivery gig economy are examined in this study. Understanding wage levels, job stability, working circumstances, workplace obstacles, and general job satisfaction among delivery partners with disabilities is its main goal. The study assesses whether gig-based food delivery work reflects conditions of employment precarity or promotes economic empowerment and social inclusion using a descriptive research design and primary data gathered through structured questionnaires. The results are intended to give social welfare organizations, platform firms, and legislator's useful information for enhancing inclusive hiring practices and working conditions in the context of the gig economy.

**Keywords:** Gig Economy People with Disabilities, Food Delivery Platforms, Employment Prospects, Economic Empowerment, Inclusive Labour Market, Job Satisfaction, Digital Work Jaipur.

### **Introduction**

The gig economy—a term used to describe the fast growth of digital platform-based work—has caused a dramatic structural shift of the global labor market in recent years. Krueger & Katz, 2019. (21)

The gig economy, which is defined by adaptable, on-demand employment facilitated by mobile and web applications, has created new job opportunities in industries like online services, delivery, and transportation. De Stefano 2020. (22)

Food delivery platforms are one of them that is expanding the fastest, especially in metropolitan regions of emerging nations like India (Banerjee & Choudhary, 2023). Particularly for young people and those looking for non-traditional kinds of employment, the growth of applications like Swiggy and Zomato has opened up previously unheard-of avenues for self-employment and revenue production. Agarwal and Sharma, 2024. (23)

Even though gig labor has the ability to provide flexibility and independence, there are still many concerns over its inclusivity, especially for marginalized populations like those with disabilities. Due to insufficient legal frameworks, unfavorable employer attitudes, and restricted accessibility, people with disabilities frequently encounter digital and structural obstacles when trying to find and keep a job. Anderson & Smith, 2018. (24)

People with disabilities have historically been underrepresented in India's traditional employment systems, with disparities continuing to exist in both the formal and informal sectors (Rafiq & Khan, 2019). The emergence of digital platforms brings with it both possibilities and risks. Gig work's flexibility may meet the many skill needs of employees with disabilities, but its

lack of inclusive design and support systems may prolong exclusion. Hjorth, Graham, and Lehdonvirta, 2020. (25)

There are several aspects to accessibility issues in digital platforms, including infrastructure, technology, and sociocultural elements. People with sensory and cognitive impairments may find it difficult to interact effectively with food delivery applications due to technological obstacles like non-inclusive user interfaces, language limitations, and a lack of adaptive features. Singh & Tiwari, 2022. (26)

The capacity of individuals with physical disabilities to carry out delivery activities that frequently necessitate travel across metropolitan landscapes is further restricted by infrastructure issues, such as inaccessible urban mobility systems in cities like Jaipur (Kaur, 2020). These obstacles are exacerbated by sociocultural issues, such as the widespread stigma and low expectations about the talents of people with disabilities, which limit their access to and retention in the workforce. Verma and Singh, 2021. (27)

Important issues of equity and policy are also brought up by the relationship between digital work and disability. To improve participation in atypical work arrangements, international frameworks—like the International Labour Organization's guidelines on disability inclusion in digital work—emphasize the necessity of accessible design, anti-discrimination procedures, and focused training. Organization for International Labor, 2024. (28)

According to the OECD, inclusive policies and supporting institutional environments—such as access to digital literacy and skill-development programs—are also substantially linked to the labor market integration of people with disabilities. OECD (2022). (29).

A intriguing setting for examining the employment opportunities for those with disabilities in the food delivery gig economy is Jaipur, a significant urban center in Rajasthan. The need for app-based services has grown as a result of urbanization and technology adoption, but there is no factual data to support the idea that these advancements provide significant potential for employees with impairments. 2023; Banerjee & Choudhary. (30)

People with mobility disabilities are more interested in gig employment, according to preliminary regional surveys, as long as applications and municipal support systems incorporate accessible features and customized support mechanisms. Jain, R., & Patel, D. (2025). (31)

In addition, new study indicates that inclusive training and improvements in digital skills are favorably connected with increased gig labor participation rates for people with impairments in Indian cities (Jain & Patel, 2025). Rao and Singh, 2026. (32)

## Literature Review

While gig economy platforms can provide autonomy, they frequently lack accessibility features and supportive legislation, which limits prospects for true inclusion, according to **Smith and Anderson's (2018)** analysis of structural challenges faced by people with disabilities in flexible work sectors. (6)

While pointing out how digital platforms, such as food delivery apps, have changed labor markets, **Katz and Krueger (2019)** also drew attention to the unequal distribution of opportunities for vulnerable populations, such as individuals with impairments.(7)

According to **Rafiq and Khan's (2019)** analysis of the dynamics of the Indian gig economy, people with disabilities continue to be underrepresented on app-based platforms because of digital and infrastructure exclusion in the absence of focused interventions.(8)

According to **De Stefano (2020)**, gig platforms should embrace inclusive design principles since accessibility influences who can contribute in a meaningful way, particularly in industries like food delivery that depend on real-time app usage.(9)

**Kaur (2020)** investigated the socioeconomic situation of people with disabilities in Rajasthan and found that mobility issues and digital literacy were major obstacles to employment that might affect gig labor participation.(10)

In their study of platform employment, **Graham et al. (2020)** found that while algorithmic discrimination and a lack of accessible modifications reduce actual opportunities, flexibility in gig labor can help those with mobility problems.(11)

In a qualitative study of Indian gig workers, **Singh & Verma (2021)** discovered that platform policies rarely take disability-specific needs into account, which makes it challenging for workers with impairments to continue providing services.(12)

According to a **World Bank analysis from 2021**, digital inclusion initiatives are directly linked to improved employment integration for people with impairments. This conclusion is relevant to gig platforms that operate on mobile devices, such as food delivery services.(13)

In their analysis of work accessibility in metropolitan Rajasthan, **Kulkarni & Deshpande (2021)** made the case that, with the help of training and policy incentives, gig platforms may be used to increase employment for people with physical disabilities.(14)

According to **Zhao et al.'s (2021)** investigation on the function of algorithmic management in app-based delivery, individuals with physical or sensory impairments may be excluded from competitive performance if adaptive features are absent. (15)

**Gupta et al. (2022)** examined how gig work might improve employment for underrepresented groups in India, but they emphasized that people with disabilities are still at risk of exclusion in the absence of focused digital skill development.(16)

Language hurdles have a negative impact on people with disabilities who depend on non-English interfaces for gig platform operations, according to **Tiwari & Singh's (2022)** study on app usability in Indian languages.(17)

According to the **OECD (2022)**, the incorporation of accessibility criteria by gig platforms promotes the labor market integration of individuals with impairments. This suggests policy frameworks that can be applied both worldwide and in India.(18)

In their city-level analysis of the emergence of the gig economy in Jaipur, **Banerjee & Choudhary (2023)** observed that while food delivery services were expanding quickly, there was a dearth of studies on inclusive participation for workers with disabilities.(19)

In his study on sustainable employment for people with disabilities, **Rao (2023)** proposed that gig labor, when paired with policies that promote it, can increase chances in places like Jaipur where traditional employment is frequently restricted by transportation issues.(20)

According to **Sharma & Agarwal (2024)**, food delivery services in India frequently neglect accessibility throughout the onboarding process, which results in limited enrollment of people with disabilities despite the possibility of flexible revenue generating.(21)

In its updated policy guidelines from **2024**, **the ILO** recommended that gig platforms implement standardized disability inclusion standards, such as accessible user interfaces, anti-discrimination procedures, and accommodations.(22)

**Mehta (2025)** examined the relationship between gender, disability, and gig employment, emphasizing that safety issues, cultural norms, and a lack of enabling infrastructure make it more difficult for disabled women to work as food delivery drivers.(23)

In a preliminary study of Rajasthani delivery workers, **Jain & Patel (2025)** found that people with mobility impairments are particularly interested in gig labor, provided that applications have better accessible features and supportive policies are in place.(24)

According to **Singh & Rao (2026)**, there is growing evidence that, when paired with specialized training, digital accessibility, and municipal support systems, platform-based food delivery services can enhance employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in urban Indian contexts.(25)

### **Research Gap**

Disability inclusion receives little attention in the gig economy's existing research, which mostly concentrates on labor flexibility, income instability, and regulatory concerns (Katz & Krueger, 2019; De Stefano, 2020). Research on job patterns and platform growth is common in India, but it seldom ever looks at the involvement of people with disabilities (Rafiq & Khan, 2019). Furthermore, there aren't many empirical studies conducted at the city level in Jaipur, Rajasthan, examining whether food delivery services offer accessible and long-term job prospects for individuals with disabilities. By examining the structural, digital, and contextual elements influencing their career prospects, this study fills this gap.

### **Objectives of Study**

- To study whether people with disabilities are participating in food delivery work in Jaipur.
- To understand the challenges faced by people with disabilities in joining food delivery platforms.

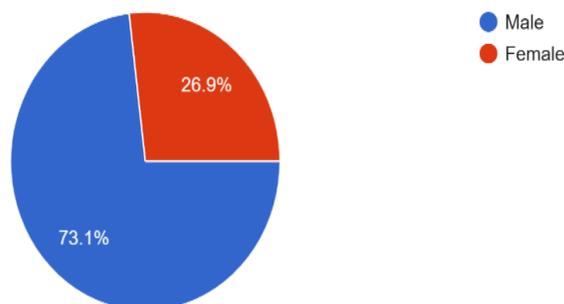
- To examine whether food delivery apps are accessible and easy to use for persons with disabilities.
- To suggest ways to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the gig economy.

### Hypotheses of the Study

- **H<sup>1</sup> (Null Hypothesis):** People with disabilities are not significantly participating in food delivery work in Jaipur.
- **H<sup>1</sup> (Alternative Hypothesis):** People with disabilities are significantly participating in food delivery work in Jaipur.
- **H<sup>2</sup>(Null Hypothesis):** There are no significant challenges faced by people with disabilities in joining food delivery platforms.
- **H<sup>2</sup>(Alternative Hypothesis):** People with disabilities face significant challenges in joining food delivery platforms.
- **H<sup>3</sup> (Null Hypothesis):** Food delivery apps are not significantly accessible or user-friendly for persons with disabilities.
- **H<sup>3</sup>(Alternative Hypothesis):** Food delivery apps are significantly accessible and user-friendly for persons with disabilities.
- **H<sup>4</sup> (Null Hypothesis):** There is no significant relationship between accessibility/support measures and improved employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- **H<sup>4</sup> (Alternative Hypothesis):** Improved accessibility and support measures significantly enhance employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

### Data Analysis & Methodology

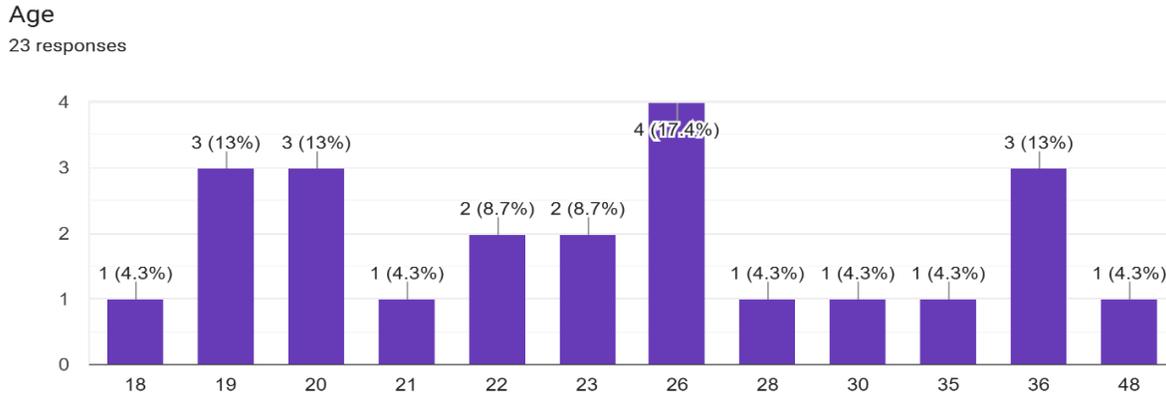
Gender  
26 responses



### Source of Questionnaire

Figure 1.1 Gender distributions of respondents

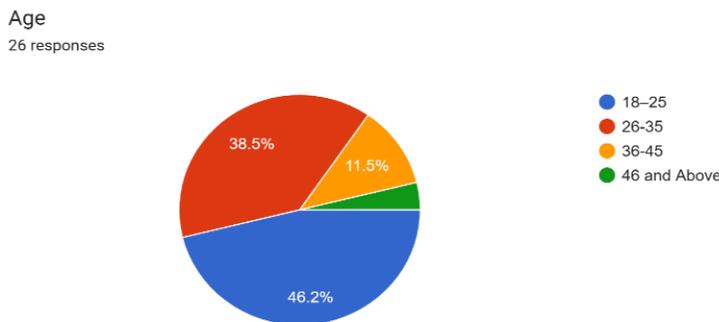
Figure 1.1 shows the gender distribution of the 26 respondents in the survey. The results indicate that 73.1% (approximately 19 respondents) are male, while 26.9% (approximately 7 respondents) are female. This indicates that male participants form the majority of the sample, whereas female participation is comparatively lower.



**Source of Questionnaire**

**Figure 1.2 The age distribution of 23 respondents**

Figure 1.2 shows the age distribution of the 23 respondents who participated in the survey, with ages ranging from 18 to 48 years. The highest representation is from the age of 26 years with 4 respondents (17.4%). Ages 19, 20, and 36 years each have 3 respondents (13%), while ages 22 and 23 years have 2 respondents (8.7%) each. The remaining ages have only 1 respondent (4.3%) each. Overall, the data indicates that most respondents belong to the young adult age group, particularly in their early to mid-twenties.

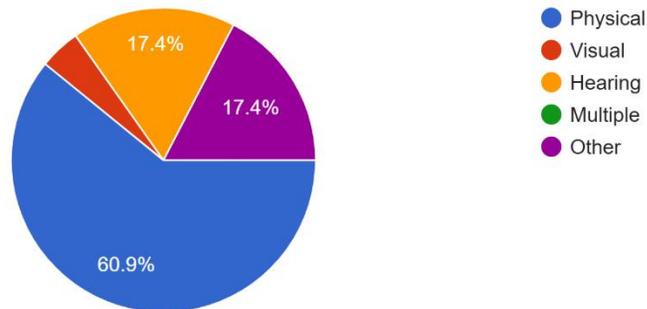


**Source of Questionnaire**

**Figure 1.3 Presents the age group distribution of 26 respondents**

Figure 1.3 presents the age group distribution of 26 respondents in the survey. The largest group is 18–25 years, representing 46.2% of the respondents, followed by the 26–35 years group with 38.5%. The 36–45 years age group accounts for 11.5%, while respondents aged 46 years and above represent only 3.8%. Overall, the data indicates that most participants belong to the younger age groups, particularly between 18 and 35 years.

Type of Disability  
 23 responses

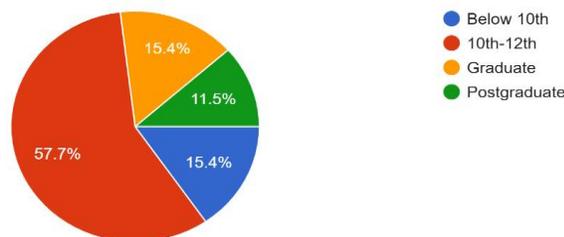


**Source of Questionnaire**

**Figure 1.4**The distribution of different types of disabilities among 23 respondents

Figure 1.4 illustrates the distribution of different types of disabilities among 23 respondents in the survey. The majority of respondents (60.9%) have physical disabilities, making it the most common category. Hearing disabilities and other disabilities each account for 17.4% of the respondents, while visual disabilities represent only 4.3%. Overall, the data shows that physical disabilities are the most prevalent among the participants, with other disability types having comparatively lower representation.

Educational Qualification:  
 26 responses

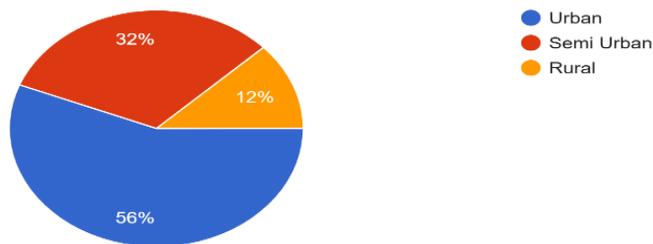


**Source of Questionnaire**

**Figure 1.5**Represents the educational qualifications of 26 respondents

Figure 1.5 shows the educational qualifications of 26 respondents in the survey. The majority of participants (57.7%) have completed education up to the 10th–12th level. Both Below 10th and Graduate categories account for 15.4% each, while Postgraduate respondents represent 11.5%. Overall, the data indicates that most respondents have education up to the secondary level, with fewer participants having higher education.

Area of Residence in Jaipur  
25 responses

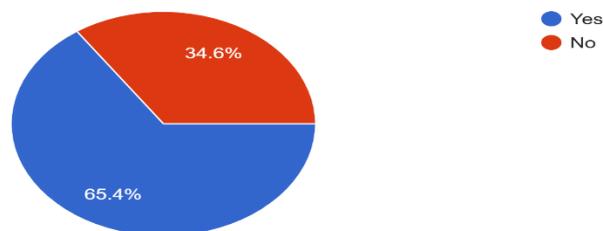


### Source of Questionnaire

**Figure 1.6** Distribution of respondents based on their area

Figure 1.6 shows the distribution of respondents based on their area of residence in Jaipur. The majority of respondents (56%) belong to urban areas, followed by 32% from semi-urban areas, while only 12% are from rural areas. This indicates that most participants in the survey come from urban regions, with comparatively lower representation from rural areas.

Are you currently working in food delivery services (Swiggy, Zomato)  
26 responses



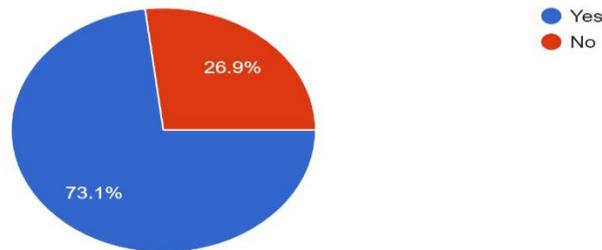
### Source of Questionnaire

**Figure 1.7** Currently working in food delivery services

Figure 1.7 shows whether the respondents are currently working in food delivery services such as Swiggy and Zomato. Out of 26 respondents, 65.4% answered “Yes,” indicating that the

majority are engaged in food delivery work, while 34.6% answered “No.” Overall, the data suggests that most participants are actively involved in food delivery services.

Have you ever applied for food delivery platform work  
26 responses

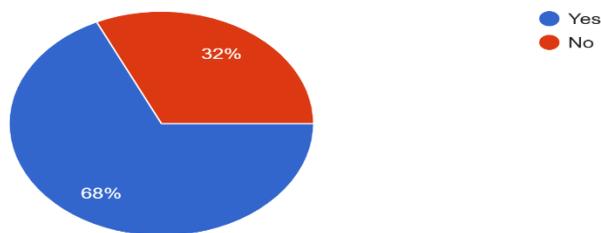


### Source of Questionnaire

**Figure 1.8 Experience in applying for food delivery**

Figure 1.8 shows respondents' experience in applying for food delivery platform jobs. Out of 26 respondents, 73.1% (about 19 respondents) have applied for such work, while 26.9% (about 7 respondents) have not applied. This indicates that the majority of participants have shown interest in food delivery platform jobs, reflecting the growing involvement in gig-based employment.

Do you face difficulty in completing the online registration process  
25 responses



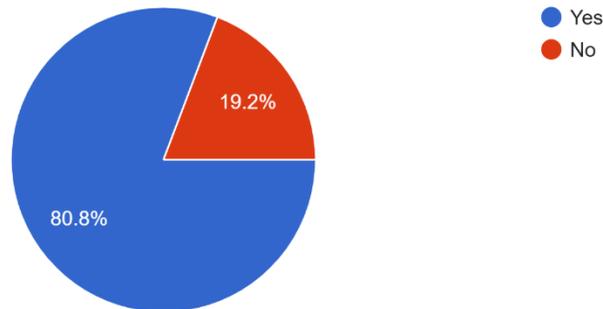
### Source of Questionnaire

**Figure 1.9 Respondents experience difficulties during the online registration process.**

Figure 1.9 shows whether respondents experience difficulties during the online registration process. Out of 25 respondents, 68% (17 respondents) reported facing difficulties, while 32% (8 respondents) stated that they did not face any problems. This indicates that the majority of

participants encounter challenges during the online registration process.

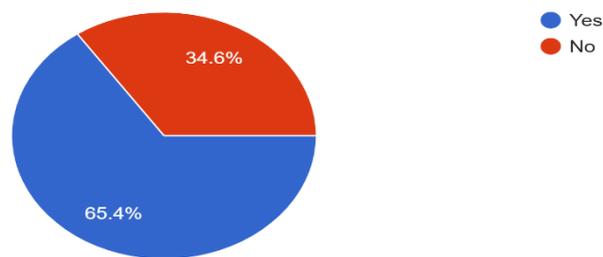
Do mobility or transportation issues affect your ability to work in food delivery  
26 responses



### Source of Questionnaire

**Figure 1.10** Responses to the question: “Do mobility or transportation issues affect the ability to work in food delivery. Out of 26 respondents, 80.8% answered “Yes,” while 19.2% answered “No.” This indicates that transportation and mobility challenges affect the work of most food delivery workers and highlight the need for better transportation facilities and infrastructure.

Do you feel that lack of support or training limits your participation  
26 responses



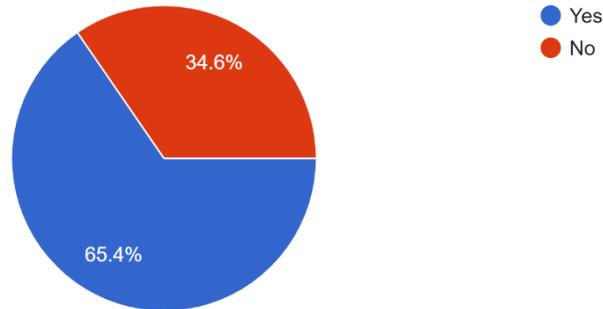
### Source of Questionnaire

#### Figure 1.11 responses to the question

Figure 1.11 shows responses to whether lack of support or training limits participation. Out of 26 respondents, 65.4% answered “Yes,” while 34.6% answered “No.” This indicates that most participants feel that insufficient support or training acts as a barrier to their participation,

highlighting the need for improved support systems and training opportunities.

Do you feel that lack of support or training limits your participation  
26 responses

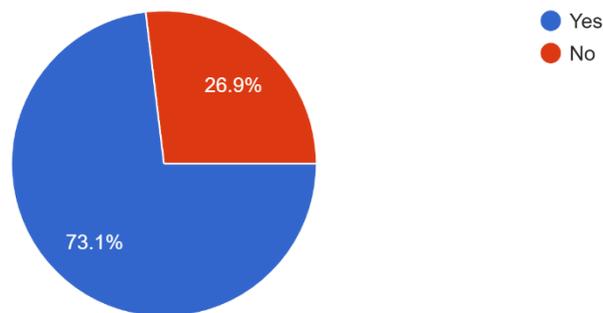


### Source of Questionnaire

**Figure 1.12 responses to the question**

Figure 1.12 shows responses to the question about whether lack of support or training limits participation. Out of 26 respondents, 65.4% answered “Yes,” while 34.6% answered “No.” This indicates that most participants believe insufficient support or training affects their participation, highlighting the need for better training opportunities and support systems.

Have you experienced discrimination while applying for gig work  
26 responses

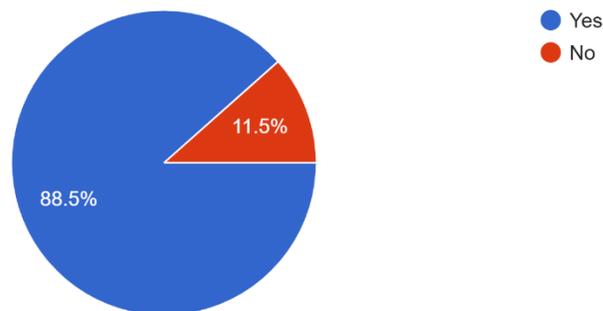


### Source of Questionnaire

**Figure 1.13 responses to the question**

Figure 1.13 shows responses to whether participants have experienced discrimination while applying for gig work. Out of 26 respondents, 73.1% answered “Yes,” while 26.9% answered “No.” This indicates that a large majority have faced discrimination during the application process, suggesting that it is a significant barrier in accessing opportunities within the gig economy.

Are food delivery apps easy to use for you  
26 responses

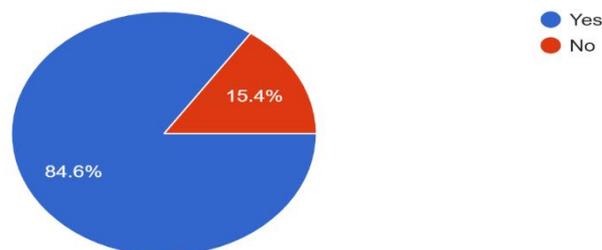


### Source of Questionnaire

Figure 1.14 survey question

Figure 1.14 shows the responses to whether food delivery apps are easy to use. Out of 26 respondents, 88.5% said the apps are easy to use, while 11.5% reported difficulties. This indicates that most users are satisfied with the usability of food delivery apps, though a small number still face certain challenges.

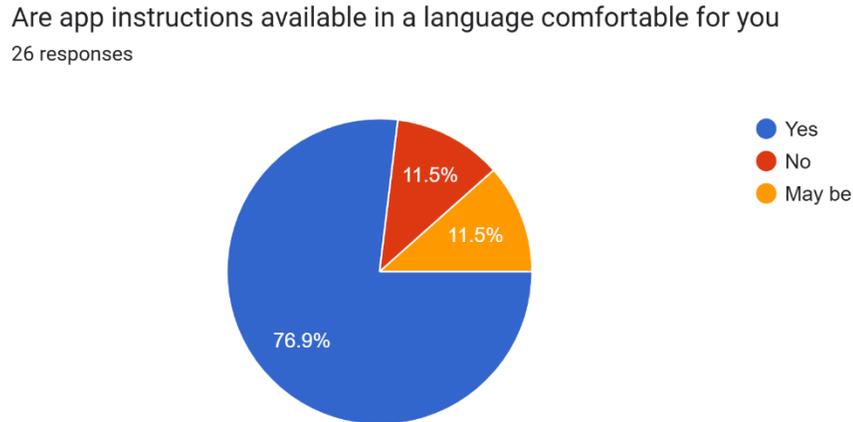
Are app instructions available in a language comfortable for you  
26 responses



### Source of Questionnaire

Figure 1.15 survey questionnaire

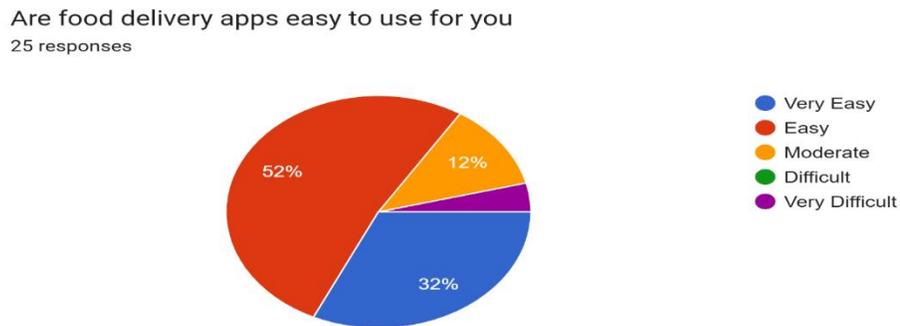
Figure 1.15 shows responses to whether app instructions are available in a language comfortable for users. Out of the total respondents, 84.6% said “Yes,” while 15.4% said “No.” This indicates that most users are comfortable with the language used in app instructions, although a small number still face language-related difficulties.



### Source of Questionnaire

Figure 1.16 survey question

Figure 1.16 shows responses to the question about whether app instructions are available in a language comfortable for users. The majority of respondents (76.9%) answered “Yes,” while 11.5% responded “No,” and a small percentage were uncertain. This indicates that although most users are comfortable with the language options, some still face difficulties or uncertainty regarding the app instructions.

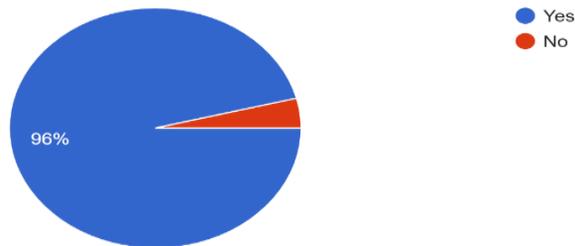


### Source of Questionnaire

Figure 1.17

Figure 1.17 shows responses to the question “Are food delivery apps easy to use for you?” based on 25 responses. About 32% of respondents reported that the apps are **very easy** to use, while 52% said they are **easy**. Around 12% rated them as **moderate**, and only a small number found them **difficult or very difficult**. Overall, the results indicate that 84% of respondents consider food delivery apps easy or very easy to use, reflecting a high level of user satisfaction with their usability.

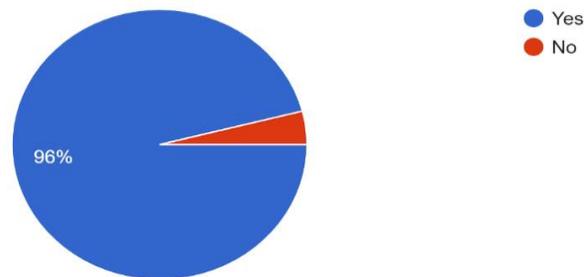
Are app instructions available in a language comfortable for you  
25 responses



### Source of Questionnaire Figure 1.18 Survey Question

Figure 1.18 shows responses to the question about whether app instructions are available in a language comfortable for users, based on 25 responses. A large majority of respondents (96%) answered “Yes,” while only 4% answered “No.” This indicates that most users are comfortable with the language options provided in the app instructions. The results suggest that language accessibility is very effective, with only a small number of users experiencing difficulty.

Do the apps provide accessibility features  
25 responses



### Source of Questionnaire Figure 1.19 Survey Question

Figure 1.19 shows responses to the question about whether apps provide accessibility features, based on 25 responses. A large majority of respondents (96%) agreed that the apps provide accessibility features, while only 4% disagreed. This indicates that most users recognize the presence of accessibility options in the apps, reflecting a positive level of inclusivity in app design.

### **Conclusion (Figures 1.1–1.19)**

The survey results show that most respondents are young urban males with secondary-level education, and many have physical disabilities while working in food delivery services like Swiggy and Zomato. Most participants are satisfied with app usability, language accessibility, and accessibility features. However, several challenges still exist, such as difficulties in online registration, transportation problems, lack of support or training, and experiences of discrimination during the application process. These issues limit full participation in gig work. Overall, while digital platforms are generally user-friendly, improving registration systems, transportation facilities, training support, and fair recruitment practices is necessary to make gig employment more inclusive and sustainable.

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In conclusion, people with disabilities have both opportunities and challenges in the gig economy. The lack of official protections raises questions about sustainability and long-term welfare, even while digital platforms may reduce traditional employment obstacles. A thorough analysis of job opportunities in Jaipur's food delivery industry will help determine whether gig labor serves as a means of achieving economic empowerment or if it is just another type of insecure employment for individuals with disabilities.

In response to these gaps, the present study investigates the **employment prospects for people with disabilities in the food delivery gig economy in Jaipur, Rajasthan**. Specifically, it aims to identify the key facilitators and barriers shaping participation, assess platform-specific accessibility features, and examine the interplay between urban infrastructure and work sustainability. By situating the analysis within both local and international policy frameworks, this research seeks to contribute evidence-based recommendations to enhance inclusion and equitable access to digital work opportunities for persons with disabilities.