

CHASING TIME, DELIVERING DREAMS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION, WORK-LIFE BALANCE, AND RETENTION INTENTIONS AMONG GIG WORKERS IN THE QUICK COMMERCE SECTOR OF CENTRAL KERALA

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ABSTRACT

The advent of the gig economy has drastically changed the current trends in the employment, especially in the fast-growing quick commerce market. By securing timely and efficient delivery of products to the consumers, gig workers have become a crucial asset to the platform-based business. Nevertheless, the nature of establishments of quick commerce enterprises brings up some crucial shipping issues about worker fulfilment, work-life balance, and labour ordeals amongst gig labourers. It is within this context that the current research, which is entitled Chasing Time, Delivering Dreams: An Empirical study of Employee Satisfaction, Work-life balance and Retention intentions among Gig Workers in the Quick Commerce Sector of Central Kerala, explores the relationship between these variables.

The research was carried out on 384 gig workers who are working in the sphere of quick commerce in Central Kerala. A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data and the data were analysed with the help of using the right statistical tools. The two variables were analysed using Correlation Analysis the relationship between the Employee Satisfaction and Retention Intention, the analysis carried out by Multiple Regression Analysis the impact of Work-Life Balance, Earnings Satisfaction, and Platform Support to Employee Satisfaction, and the correlation between the Work-Life Balance and Retention Intention examined through the aid of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using the Mediation Analysis.

The results showed that there was a significant positive association between Employee Satisfaction and Retention Intention ($r = 0.718$, $p < 0.01$). The output of the regression showed that Work-Life Balance was chosen as the most powerful predictor of Employee Satisfaction, then there was Earnings Satisfaction and lastly Platform Support. The mediation analysis assisted in proving the fact that the relation between Work-Life Balance and Retention Intention is partly mediated by Employee Satisfaction. The conceptual framework has been justified by good goodness-of-fit measures of the model. The paper concludes that, employee satisfaction is of critical importance in the increased retention intentions among the gig employees and that work-life balance is significantly linked to increased retention and satisfaction results.

The research extends the existing body of literature on the topic of gig employment by deliver empirical finding in the context of the quick commerce industry and introducing some valuable insights to policy-makers, platform operators, and researchers. The results highlight the need to create conducive workplace climates, work-life balance, and employee satisfaction that provide sustainability of the workforce and success of the organization in the dynamic gig economy.

Keywords

Gig Economy; Quick Commerce; Employee Satisfaction; Work-Life Balance; Retention Intention; Gig Workers; Platform Employment; Workforce Retention; Employee Well-Being; Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

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INTRODUCTION

The high rate of digital development has not just shifted the old-style relationships in the sphere of employment, but speeded up the development of the gig economy worldwide. The work setups through platforms have provided new avenues to people who

want flexible jobs and a new pool of on-demand workers to the organizations. Gig employees work on temporary, task-oriented jobs, which are afforded by digital intermediaries and have become a staple of the transport, food delivery, logistics, and fast commerce sectors. Although gig work comprises

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flexibility, in recent years, issues of worker well-being, job satisfaction, and career sustainability have gained increasing scholarly interest (Hasan, 2025; Hsieh et al., 2025).

Quick commerce (Q-commerce) is one of the important changes in the digital retail ecosystem since it is an example of goods delivery within a few minutes after placing an order. The achievement of this business model depends on the gig workers who are working under strict delivery schedules and consumer demands. Even though the platforms of quick commerce provide a steady stream of revenue and allow employees to work on their own schedule, employees are prone to a range of difficulties, including mechanization of workers, unpredictable revenues, overloads, and professional stress. These circumstances result in a complicated work environment that has a direct impact on employee satisfaction and commitment to platform-based jobs in the long term (Hernandez et al., 2024; Hasan, 2025).

Workforce sustainability and organizational effectiveness are very important factors of employee satisfaction. It indicates how satisfied the workers feel about their work as something rewarding, fulfilling and compelling to their personal expectations. Among factors affecting the employee satisfaction in the gig economy, there are autonomy, flexibility, earnings, technological support, social connectivity, and work life balance. Recent cases have established that individual, organizational, and technological factors interplay in influencing job satisfaction among gig worker and hence influence engagement, performance, and career sustainability (Hasan, 2025).

Among the various determinants of employee satisfaction, work-life balance has emerged as one of the most significant. A work-life balance is a term that describes how one can successfully juggle between work-related tasks and family life. Despite the flexibility of scheduling, gig workers tend to have an unclear separation of work and life because of the changing volume of work, incentives, and constant access to platforms. Studies have shown that a good work-life balance is associated with job satisfaction, higher productivity, improved psychological health, and quality of life, which are all positive (Parman et al., 2025; Kasperczuk et al., 2025).

Recently, it has been indicated that work life balance has been put into consideration by workers as a more preferable employment consideration over pay in most employment scenarios. Research shows that the workforce is becoming more and more concerned with flexibility, personal well-being and balanced living when considering jobs. There are more chances of increased employee satisfaction, engagement, and organizational commitment in

organizations that encourage work-life balance (Randstad, 2025; Kasperczuk et al., 2025).

Another key outcome variable in modern workforce studies is retention intention. It constitutes the desire of an employee to work with an organization or product on a long-term basis. Retention has become a strategy issue within the gig economy as employees can just simply switch platforms across rival sites. Previous studies have continuously revealed that satisfied employees will tend to adhere more to their organizations and dissatisfaction in employees normally results in turnover intention. Moreover, research shows that work-life balance has a strong direct and indirect impact on retention intention via employee satisfaction (Nurnaningsih et al., 2025; Parman et al., 2025).

The correlation between work-life balance, employee retention intention and employee satisfaction is especially noteworthy within the framework of the rapid-commerce environment, in which the working population has to cope with severe time constraints and performance standards. When workers feel that their workplace supports their work-life balance more, chances of increased job satisfaction and intentions to stay longer with the platform are higher. On the other hand, lack of a good work-life balance may lead to burnout, lower job satisfaction, and higher turnover intentions (Nurnaningsih et al., 2025; JIER, 2024).

In India and Central Kerala specifically, the propelled growth of quick commerce apps has created a lot of job prospects among gig employees. Nonetheless, there is limited empirical research investigating worker satisfaction, work-life balance and retention intentions in this developing group of workers. The majority of published research dwells upon more related topics of the gig economy and the gap in knowledge is that it is extremely important to examine the experience of the quick commerce worker in the specific conditions of the Kerala socio-economic context. Hence, this current paper, *Chasing Time, Delivering Dreams: An Empirical Study of Employee Satisfaction, work-life Balance, and Retention Intentions among Gig Workers in the Quick Commerce Sector in Central Kerala*, aims to fill this gap by examining the relationships between these variables and deriving ideas applicable to platform operators, policymakers, and researchers.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The swift growth in the gig economy has fundamentally changed what employment was, bringing flexible, platform-mediated interactions to supplant long-term work arrangements. Although gig work may be associated with autonomy, flexibility, and additional income, it also has numerous challenges indicating the aspect of job security, earnings, and well-being of a worker. Gig workers are often forced to work in conditions of unpredictable income, output-based compensation,

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opportunity-based management, and restricted availability to social benefits. Thus, the issues of employee satisfaction and the viability of gig jobs have acquired even greater importance among scholars and policy-makers (Wood et al., 2019; International Labour Organization [ILO], 2024).

These concerns have been compounded by the development of fast commerce. In contrast to traditional e-commerce, quick commerce applications assure extremely short delivery times, often ten to thirty minutes, which place significant pressure on delivery staff to deliver punctually. Employees in this field as gig workers must work in challenging conditions that involve traffic jam, bad weather, long working hours, expectations of customers and constant monitoring of performance by using digital apps. All these aspects can have negative impacts on their work experiences and levels of overall satisfaction (Bajwa et al., 2023; Hernandez et al., 2024).

Employee satisfaction has been a pivotal factor in worker productivity and business sustainability. Content employees are likely to have a better productivity, greater commitment and quality services. Nonetheless, recent research indicates that gig workers tend to have a lower degree of satisfaction because of the unpredictable work hours, variable earnings, reduced career opportunity advancement, and inefficient organizational support. Being a special type of employment, the subject of work on platforms brings critical questions about how much satisfaction the employees have with the job they perform and the reasons provoking either positive or negative experiences with work (Kaine and Josserand, 2019; Hasan, 2025).

Another important factor that has been a major issue in the gig economy is work-life balance. Despite the fact that flexibility is often praised as one of the most significant outcomes of gig work, the lack of definite boundaries between work and personal life often leads to the fact that people have to work longer and become more stressed at work. Gig workers can potentially be unable to balance family life, social activities, and physical health and well-being when trying to maximise income, using more time on the platform. Past studies have suggested that work-life balance is a factor in stress, burnout, decreased job satisfaction, and a decline in commitment to its organization among the workers in the platform (Allen et al., 2020; Parman et al., 2025).

In addition, platform-based organizations have also made retention intention a challenging issue. The high turnover rates of gig workers result in operational problems, high recruitment, and training expenses, as well as influences the quality of services. Dissatisfied and unfixed workers, as well as those with low work-life balance, tend to change platforms to find more opportunities. A current body of research has settled on the fact that employee

satisfaction and work-life balance are significant predictors of retention intention; nonetheless, the existing body of evidence on the nature of these relations on the quick commerce sector is scarce, especially in underdeveloped economies (Hom et al., 2020; Nurnaningsih et al., 2025).

The quick commerce sector in the Indian market has experienced soaring growth in the context of the proliferation of delivery apps like Blinkit, Zepto, or Swiggy Instamart. This expansion has created a lot of employment opportunities to gig workers particularly in the urban areas and semi urban areas. The rising digital adoption, urbanization, and evolving consumer preference have made Central Kerala a significant market in the quick commerce services. Although the use of gig workers has been on the rise in this region, there is a dearth of empirical researches that have attempted to investigate their satisfaction at work, work-life balance and their intention of retention. The majority of the available literature deals with food delivery options or the gig economy as a whole; still, little is known about workers who are directly involved with quick commerce activities.

Thus, the current research is aimed at filling this gap by exploring the rates of employee satisfaction, work-life balance, and retention intentions of gig workers in the category of quick commerce in Central Kerala. The research will also seek to explore the correlations between these variables and what factors can affect willingness of workers to persist in platform-based work. These dynamics should be understood to make it possible to create effective organizational strategies and policy interventions that will ensure well-being of workers, increase their satisfaction, and retention within the quickly changing setting of the quick commerce industry.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

One of the most disruptive trends in the modern labour market that has changed the nature of traditional employee relationships with the usage of the Internet and remote working has become the gig economy. With platform-based work steadily growing, the experiences and well-being of gig workers have become more vital to scholars, policymakers, and industry professionals. As highly technological and fast-delivery-oriented, the quick commerce segment depends on the availability of gig workers to ensure the efficiency of operations and customer satisfaction. Although gig workers play a crucial role in the process of delivering to the last mile, they frequently have to deal with workload-related issues, threats to a stable income, and restricted employment benefits. As a result, more and more research is necessary to investigate what factors impact their working conditions and the willingness to be committed to a platform-based job

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in the long run (Kalleberg and Dunn, 2016; Vallas and Schor, 2020).

The level of employee satisfaction has become an issue of significant focus as a measure of organizational performance and long-term sustainability of workforce. Satisfied employees will have an increased likelihood of increasing productivity, engagement and enhancing levels of service quality and reduction turnover intention. In the environment of fast commerce, when employees contact customers themselves and affect the quality of the service offered by the platform, the level of employee satisfaction gains even greater importance. The knowledge of what satisfies gig workers can assist organizations create favourable working environments and improve the overall performance of the organization (Judge et al., 2020; Bakker and Demerouti, 2023).

Balance between work and life is a topic that has been of an ever-growing concern in contemporary job environments. Although gig work is usually advertised as a flexible and autonomous option, employees regularly work irregular hours, long hours, and are consistently available online to digital applications. These circumstances may cause some contradictions between work obligations and personal life, which may result in mental health issues and dissatisfaction. The significance of work-life balance has consistently been emphasized in the literature as a way to enhance the health of employees, minimize stress levels and enhance performance in the work place. Thus, the study of the difference between work-life balance in quick commerce gig workers contributes to the knowledge base of how flexible work options can showcase how employee well-being and organizational performance can improve (Greenhaus and Allen, 2017; Haar et al., 2020).

The second important element of the research is the intention of retention, which recently has become a critical issue of organizations that have entered the gig economy. The high rate of workforce turnover may negatively impact the quality and customer satisfaction of the service, and efficiency of the organization. In the case of platform-based employment, employees can readily move to rival platforms, and employee retention can pose a very challenging problem. Past researchers have proposed that the more satisfied and the better work-life balance, employees tend to be the more they become committed to their organisations. These relationships can help quick commerce platforms to develop retention strategies and minimize the instability of workforce (Lee et al., 2018; De Stefano, 2021).

The current project is especially important in the context of India, where the rapid commerce industry has been characterized by a phenomenal growth over the last few years. The demand of instant

delivery services has improved faster due to growing smart phone penetration, digital payment adoption and the shift in consumer preference. This expansive development has created huge job prospects to gig employees but the question of working conditions and living standards of work has been under-researched. Empirical research on fast commerce workers has a dearth in the literature, with most of the analysis being done on food delivery workers or the wider representation of the gig economy. By concentrating on staff satisfaction, work-life balance, and retention intention in the quick commerce industry, the study thus fills a significant gap in the literature (NITI Aayog, 2022; World Economic Forum, 2024).

The paper also has its managerial implications. The results will assist the platform operators and human resource managers to trace the factors that affect worker satisfaction and retention across the board, thus allowing the adoption of policies that would elevate the emotional well-being of workers and improved performance in the organization. The results of the study could be used to develop equitable remuneration systems, effective work arrangements, flexible working arrangements, and programs to care about the employees. These are some of the measures that could maximize job stability and build a more sustainable gig work ecosystem (Boudreau and Ziskin, 2022; CIPD, 2024).

Politically, the research is also informative in terms of the obstacles and opportunities of the gig employment. The rights, welfare, and social protection of gig workers is an issue of growing concern among governments and regulatory agencies across all borders. The data may be used to develop labour policies that would enhance the requirements of various working conditions, the principal of decent working environment, and fair treatment of the workers. These policy interventions play a key role in promoting inclusive and sustainable growth in the digital economy (International Labour Organization, 2023; OECD, 2024).

Lastly, the research adds to the body of academic literature by expanding on the research on the topic of employee satisfaction, work-life balance, as well as retention intentions in a growing employment environment. The study adds to the current body of research in two aspects; firstly, it focuses on gig workers in the prompt-based business of Central Kerala and secondly, it develops a basis on which the researches related to platform-based employment in emergent economies would be conducted in the future. The research therefore has theoretical, practical, managerial and policy implications thus a good addition to the ever-increasing knowledge on the gig economy.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

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The current paper, Chasing Time, Delivering Dreams: An Empirical Study of Employee Satisfaction, Work-Life Balance, and Retention Intentions among Gig Workers in the Quick Commerce Sector of Central Kerala, is based on a set of already developed organizational and behavioural theories which describe the attitudes of employees to their work, motivation, work-life relationships, and retention intentions in the context of platform-based employment.

1. Job Satisfaction Theory

Edwin A. Locke, author of Value-Percept Theory of Job Satisfaction, is the main source of the concept of employee satisfaction. Locke (1976) suggests that employee satisfaction is as a result of the perceived fit between the expected and the actual job performances of an employee. Employees are more satisfied when their jobs meet critical personal values that address significant interests like personal autonomy, salary, prestige, and professional development. When it comes to gig workers, being satisfied relies on the earning, flexibility, technological support, and work autonomy. As quick commerce employees are engaged with very dynamic working environments, it is necessary to determine their degree of satisfaction through analysing their expectations and how well they correspond with their real working experiences.

2. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg (1959) came up with two sets of factors which determine the level of satisfaction, and dissatisfaction among the employees, namely, motivators and hygiene factors. Achievement, recognition, responsibility and advancement are motivators, which job satisfaction, whereas elements of hygiene, including pay, job security, working environment and company policies are discouraging dissatisfaction. Flexible schedules and autonomy can be the motivators of gig jobs, and the source of earnings, platform support, and safety can be regarded as hygiene factors. This theory offers a powerful guideline towards comprehending the determinants of worker satisfaction in the quick commerce gig workers.

3. Social Exchange Theory

The Social Exchange Theory, as formulated by George Homans (1958) and extended by Peter Blau (1964) is an idea that employment associations are founded on mutual transactions between people and organisations. When employees feel their employers treat them fairly, support and reward them, they are likely to be committed. In platform-based employment, gig workers rate their connection to the platform in terms of incomes, motivation, equity and support systems. Satisfaction and retention intentions, as well as turnover intentions, are more likely to increase with positive interactions and decrease with negative ones.

4. Work-Life Border Theory

The Work-Life Border Theory that was formulated by Sue Campbell Clark (2000) describes the manner in which individuals go about the boundaries between work and personal life. According to the theory, the negotiations and demands of both of these spheres keep on balancing with each other by the employees. Gig work provides flexibility in working, however, lack of boundaries that delineate the work usually presents tension between the work and personal lives. This theory offers a solid ground to explain work-life balance among gig workers who can often be subjected to rare working hours and performance demands.

5. Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory

The Job Demands-Resources Theory by Arnold Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti (2007) states that the degree to which employees remain well-being is attributed to the relationship between job demands and available resources. When work demands are high (workload, time pressure and physical demands), they can result in stress and burnout but when they are low (autonomy, organizational support and flexibility), they result in motivation and satisfaction. Quick commerce sector is the field with high delivery pressure and customer expectations, thus, JD-R theory is the most applicable in customer satisfaction, work/life balance, and retention intentions.

6. Consistency theory

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) by Icek Ajzen (1991) elucidates behavioural intentions using attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. This framework can be applied to retention intention among gig workers since workers choose to remain with a platform or quit a platform based on their level of satisfaction, their perceived opportunities, social factors, and their perceived control in their work conditions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gig Workers Satisfaction at Work

Wood et al. (2019) studied the working conditions in the context of the gig economy and discovered that autonomy and flexibility had a positive impact on job satisfaction, and income instability and algorithmic control had a negative impact on workers experiences. The research noted that flexibility and employment security can be a trade-off among platform workers.

Kaine and Josserand (2019) examined platform-mediated employment and they found that the perception of fairness, transparency, and platform support were crucial to worker satisfaction. The researchers have also stressed that the level of satisfaction depends on the reliance that workers have on gig work to earn their income.

Bajwa et al. (2023) wanted to investigate the future of platform work and discovered that the satisfaction of the employees towards the gig workers can depend on organizational support, technological

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infrastructure, income sufficiency, and skill-building opportunities. The paper proposed that enhancing worker welfare is a way of the research to increase worker satisfaction as well as productivity.

Balanced Work at the Gig Economy

In a multinational study on work-life balance, Haar et al. (2020) found that employees who reportedly managed work and personal responsibility were more satisfied with their jobs and stressed less. The research highlighted the value of flexibility and organizational supportive factors to enhance the well-being of employees.

Allen et al. (2020) have studied the interconnectedness between the work-life balance and the employee outcomes and have determined that work-life conflicts constituted a high decrease in satisfaction and an augmentation in turnover purposes. This paper implied that the successful practice of work-life management is associated with improved organisational performance.

Parman et al. (2025) conducted a study of the work-life balance within the group of platform workers and reported that flexibility is not sufficient to ensure work-life balance. The researchers established that unusual working hours and unpredictable workloads usually disrupt personal and family life, which has an overall effect on employee satisfaction.

Intention to Retain among Gig Workers

Hom et al. (2020) conducted a literature review across employee turnover studies and observed job satisfaction as a robust forecast of retention intention. When employees experience positive working environments, chances of them holding on to their organizations are likely to be high.

De Stefano (2021) studied the labour relations at digital platforms and longitudinal findings indicated that perceived fairness, earnings opportunities, and organizational support made workers decide to remain in the engagement of the platforms. The research emphasized the increased significance of retention approaches of the gig economy.

Nurmaningsih et al. (2025) established that platform workers had a high level of retention intention by satisfaction with work and work-life balance. It was also found in the study that the work-life balance mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and retention intention.

Literature related to Quick Commerce and Delivery Workers

Hernandez et al. (2024) examined the issue of working conditions in the rapid-delivery platform and were able to discover that the effect of time pressure, monitoring performance, and customer expectations on worker well-being and job satisfaction were significant. The article highlighted that platform-level solutions are required to address worker experiences.

Hasan (2025) conducted a study of the level of employee satisfaction in the digital platform workforce and found out that flexibility, earnings stability and work-life balance were important parameters in employee satisfaction and retention. The research also concluded that sustainable platform employment entails a trade-off between organizational objectives and the welfare of workers.

RESEARCH GAP

An overview of the available literature demonstrates that a considerable amount of research has been performed regarding employee satisfaction, work-life balance, and retention intent in the traditional employment environment and the concept of the gig economy in general. Nonetheless, research has not addressed quick commerce gig workers in particular. The majority of current studies have focused on ride-sharing services, food delivery platforms or overall platform employment. Moreover, there is little work that has concurrently reviewed relationship between employee satisfaction, work-life balance and retention intentions in the quick commerce field. Empirical evidence on these variables has been limited in the Indian context, and specifically Central Kerala. Consequently, the current research aims at filling this knowledge gap through a detailed discussion of the concept of employee satisfaction, work-life balance, and retention intentions among gig workers who work within the quick commerce industry in Central Kerala.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Objective 1

To examine the relationship between Employee Satisfaction and Retention Intention among gig workers in the quick commerce sector of Central Kerala.

Objective 2

To assess the impact of Work-Life Balance on Employee Satisfaction among gig workers in the quick commerce sector of Central Kerala.

Objective 3

To investigate the mediating role of Employee Satisfaction in the relationship between Work-Life Balance and Retention Intention among gig workers in the quick commerce sector of Central Kerala.

OBJECTIVE 1

Correlation Analysis

Table 1

Correlation between Employee Satisfaction and Retention Intention (N = 384)

| Variables | Employee Satisfaction | Retention Intention |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Employee Satisfaction | 1.000 | 0.718** |
| Retention Intention | 0.718** | 1.000 |

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$p < 0.01$

The Pearson correlation test was used to test the relationship aspect of Employee Satisfaction and Retention Intention amongst the gig workers in the quick commerce sector of Central Kerala. The result indicates that the correlation coefficient (r) between the two variables is 0.718 and thus the two variables are strongly related. It is statistically significant at 1 percent ($p < 0.01$) thus indicating that the observed correlation is not necessarily due to the chance.

The positive coefficient shows that the higher the employee satisfaction level, the more retention intention by gig workers will be inclined towards. In other words, when a worker has been satisfied with his or her problems at the job, then proceeds to have their income, job flexibility, job conditions, platform support and overall work experience, then they are bound to be in the platform longer. On the other hand, this decreases satisfaction leading to decreased motivation among the workers to stay active with the organization.

The correlation ($r = 0.718$) is high, indicating the important interaction between the variables, and hence employee satisfaction is an important element of retention intention among the gig workers. The latter indicates that satisfaction is a key factor in deciding whether or not workers will stay with the quick commerce platform they already use or pursue alternatives. Given the exceptionally competitive gig economy and that the employees can transition to the platforms without undergoing any major difficulties, it is essential to provide a high level of employee satisfaction to enhance workforce stability and avert turnover. The results suggest that rapid businesses in trade ought to put their efforts on initiatives that enhance satisfaction in employees including offering fair remuneration, clear compensation plans and total incentives, appropriate communications, technological assistance, and accommodability. These will help build the sense of loyalty of workers towards the platform and improve their willingness to remain in the company in the long term. Thus, the research concludes that satisfaction among the employees is an important factor in retention intention in gig workers in the Central Kerala quick commerce area.

OBJECTIVE 2

Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 2

Model Summary

Dependent Variable: Employee Satisfaction

| Model | R | R ² | Adjusted R ² | Std. Error |
|-------|-------|----------------|-------------------------|------------|
| 1 | 0.748 | 0.559 | 0.557 | 0.418 |

Table 3

ANOVA Table

| Source | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|------------|----------------|----|-------------|---------|-------|
| Regression | 84.671 | 3 | 28.224 | 161.432 | 0.000 |

| | | | | | |
|----------|---------|-----|-------|--|--|
| Residual | 66.407 | 380 | 0.175 | | |
| Total | 151.078 | 383 | | | |

Table 4

Regression Coefficients

Dependent Variable: Employee Satisfaction

| Predictor Variables | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. |
|-----------------------|-------|------------|-------|--------|-------|
| Constant | 0.842 | 0.171 | - | 4.924 | 0.000 |
| Work-Life Balance | 0.528 | 0.041 | 0.564 | 12.878 | 0.000 |
| Earnings Satisfaction | 0.219 | 0.038 | 0.248 | 5.763 | 0.000 |
| Platform Support | 0.183 | 0.044 | 0.176 | 4.159 | 0.000 |

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to ascertain the degree of Work-Life Balance, Earnings Satisfaction, and Platform Support effects on the Employee Satisfaction of the gig workers. According to Table 2 the model summary, the R value is 0.748 that shows that there is strong positive relationship between the predictor variables and Employee Satisfaction. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is equal to 0.559 meaning that a combination of Work-Life Balance, Earnings Satisfaction and Platform Support explains 55.9 percent of the He-Satisfaction variation in Employee Satisfaction. The fact that the Adjusted R^2 is 0.557 also serves as evidence of the strength of the model since the predictors used in the analysis are counted. This indicates that the independent variables used are significant to construct the employee satisfaction level of gig workers in the quick commerce industry. The results of ANOVA in Table 3 determine the significance of the whole regression model. The calculated F-value, 161.432, was found to be statistically significant at 1 percent level ($p = 0.000$). The value of the F-statistic serves as an indication that the regression equation fits the data well, and the predictor variables as a group of factors have a strong influence on the Employee Satisfaction. Thus, the regression model can be used to predict employee happiness among gig workers and it confirms that the independent variables incorporated in the study are relevant to explain the variation in the dependent variable.

The regression coefficients, as depicted in Table 4, offer a clue on the single contribution of the individual predictor variables. Work-Life Balance was the strongest predictor of Employee Satisfaction, and the standardized beta coefficient (β) was 0.564, and the t-value of 12.878 was significant ($p < 0.001$). This result shows that enhanced work-life balance increases the amount of satisfaction among gig workers significantly. This finding indicates the need to stay healthy in balancing between work and life, especially in the fast commerce industry where employees have to

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deal with tight schedules and time-based delivery functions.

The second strongest predictor was Earnings Satisfaction with a significant t-value of 5.763 ($p < 0.001$), and a beta coefficient (B) of 0.248. This implies that better-compensated employees who exhibit satisfaction in what they earn, types of incentives and compensation systems have high tendencies of having more job satisfaction. As income is likely to be one of the motivators in many gig workers, proper and just payment is a key factor in developing positive attitudes towards work and improving overall satisfaction.

Platform Support, in a similar fashion showed significant positive correlation with Employee Satisfaction with a beta coefficient () of 0.176 and a t-value of 4.159 ($p < 0.001$). The results suggest that support mechanisms offered by the platform such as the communication systems, grievance management, technological and operational guidance are all positively related to the level of satisfaction among the workers. Platform Support is a significant predictor of employee satisfaction in the gig economy even though it does not have as strong an impact as Work-Life Balance and Earnings Satisfaction.

On the whole, the regression model shows that the three predictor variables significantly contribute to Employee Satisfaction in gig workers in the quick commerce industry of Central Kerala. The greatest impact of them is Work-Life Balance, then Earnings Satisfaction, and Platform Support. The results highlight the importance of swift commerce sites that are attentive to the well-being of their workers, offer reasonable remuneration and support networks so that they can improve employee contentment and create a more sustainable labour pool.

OBJECTIVE 3

Mediation Analysis

Hypothesized Model

Work-Life Balance → Employee Satisfaction → Retention Intention

**Table 5
Direct Effects**

| Path | β | S.E | t-value | p-value |
|---|---------|-------|---------|---------|
| Work-Life Balance → Employee Satisfaction | 0.643 | 0.047 | 13.681 | 0.000 |
| Employee Satisfaction → Retention Intention | 0.591 | 0.052 | 11.365 | 0.000 |
| Work-Life Balance → Retention Intention | 0.224 | 0.049 | 4.571 | 0.000 |

**Table 6
Indirect Effect**

| Mediating Path | Indirect Effect (β) | Boot SE | 95% CI Lower | 95% CI Upper | Result |
|---|-----------------------------|---------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| Work-Life Balance → Employee Satisfaction → Retention Intention | 0.380 | 0.039 | 0.304 | 0.459 | Significant |

**Table 7
Total Effects**

| Path | Total Effect (β) | S.E | p-value |
|---|--------------------------|-------|---------|
| Work-Life Balance → Retention Intention | 0.604 | 0.044 | 0.000 |

**Table 8
Mediation Effect Summary**

| Relationship | Direct Effect | Indirect Effect | Total Effect | Mediation Type |
|---|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Work-Life Balance → Retention Intention | 0.224 | 0.380 | 0.604 | Partial Mediation |

To test the hypothesis that there is mediated effect between Work-Life Balance and Retention Intention through Employee Satisfaction a mediation analysis has been undertaken using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The hypotheses of the proposed model were such, that Work-Life Balance would have both a direct and indirect effect on Retention Intention via Employee Satisfaction.

The direct effects shown in table 5 indicate that all the hypothesized paths are positive and significant. The line between Work-Life Balance and Employee Satisfaction resulted with the standardized coefficient () of 0.643 and t-value of 13.681 ($p < 0.001$), which means that gig workers who have an improved balance between their professional and personal life are more likely to report high level of employee satisfaction. This observation implies that well managed working and non-working duties play an important role towards positive job-related attitudes among employees in quick commerce industry.

In the same way, the correlation between Employee Satisfaction and Retention Intention showed a coefficient () of 0.591 with a t-value of 11.365 ($p < 0.001$) which shows satisfied employees have higher chances of remaining associated with the platform. The result highlights the importance of employee satisfaction as a key determinant of workforce retention within the gig economy. Employees with positive feelings about their jobs

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are more likely to be committed to their companies and are unlikely to look out to other job prospects.

A positive and significant relationship between the Work-Life Balance and Retention Intention also emerged ($\beta = 0.224$, $t = 4.571$, $p = 0.001$). This implies that work-life balance acts independently in regard to the intentions that workers have to stay with their existing platform. Thus, retention intentions are more likely to be shown by workers who have a more balanced work and life environment even without factoring in employee satisfaction.

The mediation of the Employee Satisfaction can also be supported by the analysis of indirect effects presented in Table 6. Work-Life Balance had an indirect impact on Retention Intention with Employee Satisfaction of 0.380, bootstrap standard error of 0.039. The 95 percent interval was 0.304-0.459, and since there is no range of 0 in the interval, the direct effect is found to be statistically significant. This conclusion confirms that Employee Satisfaction is a significant means by which Work-Life Balance can affect Retention Intention among gig workers.

The total effect analysis shown in Table 7 indicates that the overall impact of Work-Life Balance on Retention Intention is 0.604 ($p < 0.001$). This massive difference is the indication that employees, who have a good balance between work and home, are much more probable to stay connected with their fast trade sites. The overall effect is the sum of the direct effect of Work-Life Balance and indirect effect of Work-Life Balance via Employee Satisfaction.

The mediation summary given in Table 8 shows that both direct effect (0.224) and indirect effect (0.380) are significant. The mediation is a partial mediation since the direct correlation between Work-Life Balance and Retention Intention continues to be significant when the Employee Satisfaction has been incorporated as a mediator variable. It means that the Employee Satisfaction factors off a significant part of the association among Work-Life Balance and Retention Intention, as well as Work-Life Balance independently influences retention behaviour.

The goodness of fit of the mediation model was evaluated by the quantity of goodness-of-fit indices as indicated in Table 9. The 2.184 value of χ^2/df is less than the recommended value of 3, which showed a good model fit. The GFI (0.942), AGFI (0.918), NFI (0.935), CFI (0.967), and TLI (0.958) values all exceed the recommended benchmark of 0.90, demonstrating strong model fit. Moreover, the RMSEA value amounts to 0.056 and the SRMR value is 0.041, which is smaller than the recommended percentage of 0.08, which again proves the sufficiency of the model.

Comprehensively, the mediation analysis offers considerable empirical data on the fact that the Employee Satisfaction is a substantial mediating

factor to employees in the correlation between a balance of work and life and retention intention in the quick commerce market of Central Kerala. These results positively indicate that organizations aiming to increase their employee retention rates should work on both improving employee satisfaction and balance. Quick commerce platforms can also lead to increased levels of satisfaction and finally enhance worker retention by establishing favourable work environments, whereby the workers are able to work and manage both professional and personal duties.

Findings of the Study Based on Objectives

Objective 1:

- Examples include the fact that the correlation analysis showed that there exists a strong positive relationship between Employee Satisfaction and Retention Intention ($r = 0.718$, $p < 0.01$).
- The association was also statistically significant implying the relationship was not through a chance occurrence.
- Gig workers who expressed numerous levels of satisfaction with their employment had stronger desires to remain linked to their respective quick commerce application.
- The results show that Employee Satisfaction is a significant factor that predicts workforce retention in the quick commerce industry.
- Increased job satisfaction will help mitigate turnover intentions of workers in the platform.

Objective 2:

- The regression model was found to be statistically significant ($F = 161.432$, $p < 0.001$) indicating that the model fits well to predict Employee Satisfaction.
- The independent variables—overall, they accounted for 55.9 percent of the difference in the Employee Satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.559$).
- Work-Life Balance was found to be the most appropriate predictor of Employee Satisfaction (0.564, $p < 0.001$).
- Earnings Satisfaction: There was a significant negative relationship, with an Earnings Satisfaction coefficient ($\beta = 0.248$) of < 0.001 with Employee Satisfaction.
- Platform Support positively and significantly influenced Employee Satisfaction (0.176, $p < 0.001$).
- The results show that positive changes in work-life balance, equitable income, and conducive platform techniques have the potential to significantly increase employee satisfaction among gig workers.
- Work-Life Balance was found to have the greatest impact among the predictor

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variables, in enhancing employee satisfaction.

Objective 3:

- Work-Life Balance significantly positively influenced Employee Satisfaction ($r = 0.643, p < 0.001$).
- Retention Intention was greatly affected by the Employee Satisfaction ($r = 0.591, p = 0.001$).
- Work-Life Balance positively influenced Retention Intention ($\beta = 0.224, p < 0.001$) also.
- 2) Work-Life Balance had an indirect influence on Retention Intention via Employee Satisfaction ($r = 0.380$).
- The indirect effect had a confidence interval that did not cover 0, indicating that the indirect effect is present.
- Work-Life Balance was also observed to correlate with Retention Intention via Employee Satisfaction to some extent.
- Work-Life Balance significantly and significantly impacted Retention Intention (2).
- The mediation model indicated a good model fit, and all the measures of fitness were within the recommended levels ($\chi^2/df = 2.184, GPI = 0.942, CFI = 0.967, RMSEA = 0.056$).
- Findings) The conclusion is that work-life balance improves employee satisfaction, and consequently there is the higher intention of workers to stay with the quick commerce platforms.

CONCLUSION

The swift production of such a quick commerce industry has changed the nature of employment by providing vast numbers of people with the opportunity to become gig workers who are instrumental in the provision of efficient last-mile delivery services. Although the industry has its advantages of offering flexibility, autonomy and income-generating potentials, it has its share of problems associated with work pressure, odd hours, and retaining of the workforce. It is against this context that the current study investigated the correlation between the Employee Satisfaction, Work-Life Balance and Retention Intention of gig workers in the quick commerce sector in Central Kerala.

The results of the research show that Retention Intention can be greatly determined by Employee Satisfaction among gig workers. Employees who feel contented about work have a greater disposition to maintain their membership to speedy trades sites. The paper also concludes that Work-Life Balance has a critical role to play when it comes to employee satisfaction. Gig employees who can successfully

combine the responsibilities they have at work with personal responsibilities are more likely to report greater satisfaction and well-being. Also, Earnings Satisfaction and Platform Support were revealed to have a positive impact on employee satisfaction, which highlighted the significance of equitable pay and organizational practices that conducive the workforce experiences.

The mediation analysis gives a more in-depth observation on how the Work-Life Balance is mediating Retention Intention. Results indicate that the relationship between Work-Life Balance and retention is partially mediated by Employee Satisfaction, which means that a significant part of the positive influence of the TWS on retention is mediated by the levels of satisfaction. Meanwhile, Work-Life Balance has an immediate effect on the intentions of the workers to stick to the platform. These results emphasize the interdependence of the staff attitudes and the actions under the gig economy.

The article adds to the amount of literature on the topic of platform-based employment by presenting empirical data on the newly adopted quick commerce industry in Central Kerala. It builds on existing knowledge by exploring Employee Satisfaction, Work-Life Balance and Retention Intention simultaneously in the same conceptual framework. The results emphasize the necessity of fast business models to go beyond performance and operational efficiency and invest more in employee welfare, fair pay, and conducive working conditions. In practical terms, the research recommends that platform managers ought to explore new policies that embrace healthy work life balance, open incentive plans, and mechanisms of supporting employees. These programs can enhance job satisfaction, retention intentions and lead to workforce sustainability in the long-term. The research findings can also be used by policymakers and labour regulators to seek measures to improve work and social protection experienced by gig workers.

Finally, to be an effective and lasting industry, the quick commerce industry requires not merely technological innovation and speed in delivery but also the welfare and dedication of the gig workers who will make the industry successful. More employee satisfaction and an attained work-life balance can lead to better workforce retention rates, better services, and a more robust and sustainable gig economy in Central Kerala, and the wider world by promoting higher levels of employee satisfaction and sustainable work-life balance.

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