The Hidden Cost of Convenience: Implications of Ten-Minute Delivery Expectations on Gig Workers' Safety, Mental Health, and Skill Development.

Dr. Shabana Gufran Khan[1*], Aditya Sumit Arippara[2], Delna Jimmy Kerawalla[3]

[1*]SVKM's Mithibai College of Arts, Chauhan Institute of Science & Amrutben Jivanlal College of Commerce and Economics (Empowered Autonomous), shabana.khan@mithibai.ac.in
[2](Students)SVKM's Mithibai College of Arts, Chauhan Institute of Science & Amrutben Jivanlal College of Commerce and Economics (Empowered Autonomous)
[3](Students)SVKM's Mithibai College of Arts, Chauhan Institute of Science & Amrutben Jivanlal College of Commerce and Economics (Empowered Autonomous)

Abstract
The promise of receiving groceries and daily essentials has reshaped urban consumption by making 10-minute delivery a new standard and a new norm of convenience. Although the model provides convenience to the customers and a competitive edge to the platforms, it does not pay much attention to the mental and physical health of gig workers. The research revealed the hidden cost imposed by such systems by surveying and interviewing delivery drivers in Mumbai. The results have shown that the majority of drivers feel moderate to extreme pressure to meet deadlines, which motivates them to speed and commit traffic offenses. As a result, 1 out of 4 riders have experienced accidents or close calls, and it means that tight delivery schedules pose a high risk of accidents. Despite the existence of the platforms, most staff are not well educated on the benefits they have in case of accidents or emergencies, which makes them vulnerable. There are also mental health issues, including high levels of stress and physical symptoms, including headache and physical pain. In addition, their interaction with customers makes the situation worse, as they have to deal with daily rudeness and being threatened and a general lack of appreciation. To make matters worse, the gig workers receive inconsistent and insufficient break times which leads to exhaustion and accidents. The research indicates that gaps in safety education are urgent and that there is a need to institute systematic educational and policy based interventions that will guarantee the welfare of the workers as well as their employability. The results, in general, reveal that the 10-minute delivery model is more concerned with the speed rather than the wellbeing of the workers, which results in unsafe and mentally draining working conditions.

Keywords: 10-minute delivery stress, Human cost of convenience, Gig worker welfare, Ethical sustainability in Quick-commerce.

Introduction

In the urban areas, the consumption pattern of the residents has changed drastically, and this was mainly caused by the quick platforms that promise to deliver groceries, medicines, meals, and other daily essentials in just ten minutes or less. What started as a competitive tactic of the companies in the gig-economy has now transformed into a new standard of "instant convenience," which has changed consumer expectations regarding speed, availability, and fulfilment. The whole system is being driven by highly optimized logistics powered by algorithms, business models based on venture capital and an urban lifestyle that is more and more focused on instant satisfaction. By delivering almost instantaneously, companies now have a competitive advantage by differentiating their products and services to a greater extent, thus forcing others to shorten delivery timeframes and set new productivity standards that seemed impossible before. The ultra-fast or "quick" delivery that is usually advertised as being within 10 minutes has quickly changed the whole picture of urban logistics, consumer expectations, and the working conditions of millions of platform couriers and riders. While the consumers and investors are happy with the convenience and the economics of scale, the evidence reveals that the hyper-speed model is actually putting the biggest toll on gig workers' bodies, minds, social protection and public safety and urban sustainability. Although there is an increasing risk related to this model, not much focus has been put on the role of skill development, safety education, and formal training & development of gig workers who work under extreme time pressure. The lack of sustainable skills development initiatives does not only increase the number of accidents but also the employment retention of workers and their mental health problems. The paper reveals the concealed expenses of convenience by looking at the quick commerce model from the ethical point of view and exploring the impacts of 10-minute expectations of delivery on the safety and mental well-being of gig workers. The study calls for an urgent review of the human cost underlying the

present trend of urban consumption.

Chapter 2: Research Objectives

1. To measure the 10-minute delivery timeframes impact on physical safety that includes road risks, traffic violations, accident rates, and exposure to hazardous working conditions.
2. To research the consequences of the psychological and mental health of gig workers which may include stress, anxiety, fatigue, job insecurity, and emotional burnout.
3. To determine the perception of the worker regarding speed-based incentives, customer expectations, and pressure from the platform's algorithms in the context of ultra-fast delivery.
4. To investigate the socio-economic vulnerabilities (low income, unstable earnings, lack of social protection) that make gig workers more susceptible to the harmful effects of rapid-delivery models.
5. To propose more ethical, sustainable and worker friendly methods of delivery by incorporating safety education, and organized training programs, it is necessary to make sure that the convenience of the consumers is balanced with decent working conditions and strong safety standards.

2.1: Hypothesis of the study

H_{01} - There is no significant pressure felt by gig workers due to 10-minute delivery expectations.

H_{11} - 10-minute delivery expectations significantly increase pressure on gig workers to drive fast and take unsafe risks.

H_{02} - Time pressure and workload intensity do not have a significant contribution to stress, anxiety, and fatigue among gig workers.

H_{12} - Time pressure and workload intensity significantly contribute to stress, anxiety, and fatigue among gig workers.

H_{03} - There is no significant impact of negative customer behaviour such as rudeness, verbal threats or unfair ratings on the emotional well-being of gig workers.

H_{13} - Negative customer behaviour such as rudeness, verbal threats or unfair rating has a significant impact on the emotional well-being of gig workers.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

1) Nikhil M Babu, April 2022: The author highlights that the rise of the 10-minute delivery apps creates intense pressure on riders, pushing many riders to drive rashly which usually results in accidents which sometimes go unreported. Despite the low earnings from every order along with the long shifts, the delivery riders are expected to deliver within time in order to meet company and the customers expectations. While these platforms claim a good working environment and low accident rates, workers report shrinking pay. This situation raises an important question whether human lives are valued less than instant delivery.

2) A blog by OlaGate, March 2022: The blog criticised its 10-minute delivery idea as a marketing strategy which stresses the riders to the point that they drive rashly and work under unsafe conditions. It claimed that a consumer demand of immediate convenience maintains a system that endangers the lives of workers and demands a transition to safer and more localized options of delivery.

3) Shreshtha Verma, April 2025: The author mentioned that delivery promises of ultra-fast delivery are, such as 10-15 minute windows are extremely stressful physically and mentally, and many gig workers admitted to driving safely and being too tired. She mentioned that although such models can enhance the volume of orders, longer timeframes, like 60-minute ones, can enable safer and more profitable work of riders.

4) Varsha Bansal, February 2022: Emphasized that the push for 10-minute delivery is creating unsafe, high-pressure conditions for gig workers who face accidents, penalties, and constant stress just to meet unrealistic timelines. Quick Commerce focuses on speed delivery over the workers safety as these companies are backed by heavy VC funding. If this model continues to remain unchecked we risk normalizing a system where more emphasis is given to our convenience over the wellbeing of the delivery riders which could be disastrous in the long run.

5) National Library of Medicine, March 2023: Sheds light on the constant time pressure and overload that has a negative impact on the delivery riders often giving them mental fatigue and stress. This increased stress results in the delivery driver driving dangerously and making poor choices which then ultimately leads to accidents.

6) Qingyu Wang and Brendan Churchill, May 2024: Explains that the delivery drivers feel undervalued and that they are constantly exposed to danger, and they think that the situations that are putting them in danger are simply part of the job. The platform demands quick deliveries which often overshadows their safety and wellbeing. The workers are put in a tight spot where they have earning on one end and their safety on the other.

3.1: Research Gap

Lack of India-specific empirical data on 10-minute delivery risks - The prevailing studies discuss safety in general terms but very few scientific studies exist providing exact numbers and studying in detail the specific context of Indian gig workers operating under ultra-fast delivery timeframes in terms of accident rates, traffic violations, and physical injuries.

Underexplored socio-economic vulnerabilities of gig workers - Numerous research papers indicate the income uncertainty of delivery riders. However, there is not enough research that considers the role of low wages in the matter that riders accept

unreasonably risky delivery timings. On top of that, they are not insured, do not have access to social security, and other benefits so that they are in a highly vulnerable position regarding their physical and mental health.

Absence of comparative analysis between ultra-fast delivery and standard delivery models - The majority of literature deals exclusively with instant delivery. There is a lack of studies where such rapid deliveries are compared with longer delivery windows (30–60 minutes) in terms of how the shrinking and tight deliveries have an impact on safety and psychological harms in particular.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

Type of Research:

The current research paper uses a descriptive research design. This kind of study is appropriate to comprehend and explain the employment terms, risks of injuries, psychological issues, and skill acquisition gaps among the gig employees who have to work in the model of 10-minute delivery.

Population of the Study: The sample of the research is gig delivery workers working on ultra-fast delivery platforms like Blinkit, Swiggy Instamart, Zepto, and the like quick-commerce services that are implemented in Mumbai city.

Method of Sampling:

The research employs the convenience sampling methodology that enables the researcher to select respondents considering their availability and their willingness to cooperate. This approach was followed because of time limitations and the challenge of accessing gig employees because of their irregular working hours.

Sample Size:

The research sample is 104 gig delivery workers and it was found to be enough to discuss various experiences connected with safety, pressure, mental stress, and skill development in ultra-fast delivery conditions.

Method of Data Collection:

The study used both primary and secondary data.

Primary data were gathered using a structured questionnaire that was given to the gig workers and supplemented with informal personal interviews to get a better understanding of the lived experiences of the respondents.

Secondary data was collected through the use of research articles, scholarly journals, news articles, and reliable sources on the internet as per the topics of gig work, occupational safety, mental health and quick-commerce solutions.

Procedure of Hypothesis Testing:

The Chi Square method was used to test the connection between the variables like pressure of delivery time, the stress level, customer behaviour and safety results. The data is also presented with the help of pie charts and graphs so that it is easy to understand and comprehend.

4.1 Significance of the Study

Significance to Gig Workers

This Study highlights the Physical and the Mental strains a worker endures due to unrealistic delivery deadlines. By documenting their experiences it can act as an evidence that can support better working conditions, fair remuneration and safer practices.

Significance to Delivery Platforms

The findings will assist the quick commerce companies in knowing what impact the existing operational practices have on the physical and mental health of workers and emphasize the necessity of the structured training, safety education, and skill development to create a more ethical and worker-friendly environment.

Significance to Consumers and Society

This study will help the consumers reflect on how their need for instant gratification leads to the gig workers risking their safety and wellbeing. This will encourage a more responsible consumer behaviour which will lead to a more ethical ecosystem.

Significance to Policymakers and Labour Regulators

This study identifies the gaps in the current labour laws, safety regulation and platform accountability. This will act as a foundation for policymakers to frame laws and regulations in such a way that it is a fair and a morally ethical ecosystem.

4.2: Limitations of study

Geographical Limitation

The study focuses mainly on gig workers within the Mumbai Metropolitan city, which may limit the generalisability of results to other cities or rural regions.

Sample Size Constraints

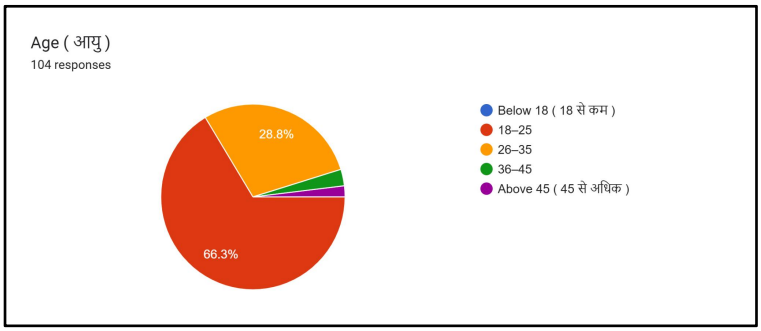
Due to time and accessibility limitations, the number of gig workers surveyed and interviewed may not fully represent the entire population of delivery riders in India.

Differences in Individual Coping Styles

Gig workers differ in experience, personality, and coping strategies, making it difficult to generalise the psychological impact across all workers.

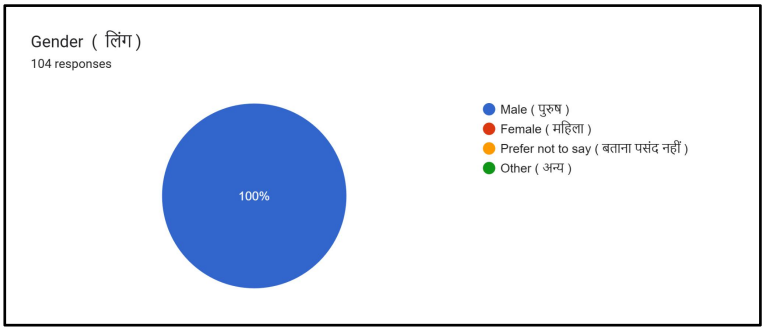
Chapter 5: Data Analysis & Interpretations

Age Distribution



Analysis:
Majority of the Respondents were 18-25 years old (66.3%), followed by 26-35 years (28.8%)
Only a small share belongs to the 36 - 45 age group (3.8%) and above 45 (1%)
Interpretation:
The 10-minute delivery workforce is predominantly young, reflecting the physically demanding and time pressured nature of the job.

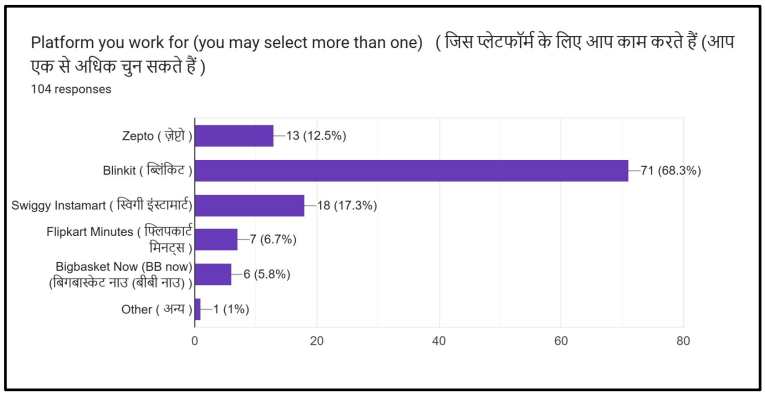
Gender



Analysis:
100% of the respondents were male

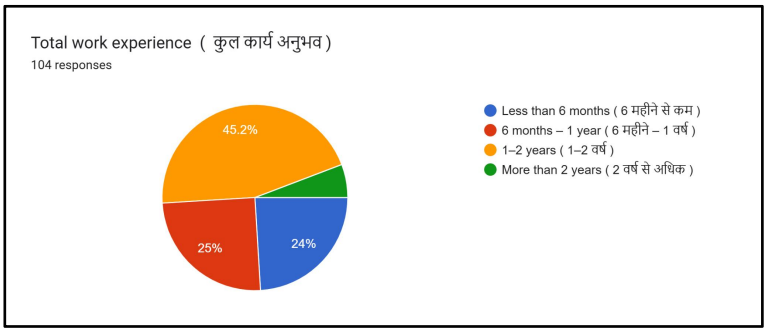
Interpretation:
Gig Delivery work in India continues to be male-dominated, likely due to long working hours, safety issues and high physical exertion.

Platform



Analysis:
Majority of the respondents were from Blinkit (68.3%) then followed by Swiggy Instamart (17.3%) and Zepto (12.5%). The remaining respondents were from Flipkart Minutes, BigBasket Now, and other platforms.
Interpretation:
Blinkit is the largest employer in the ultra-fast delivery segment in this sample.

Work Experience



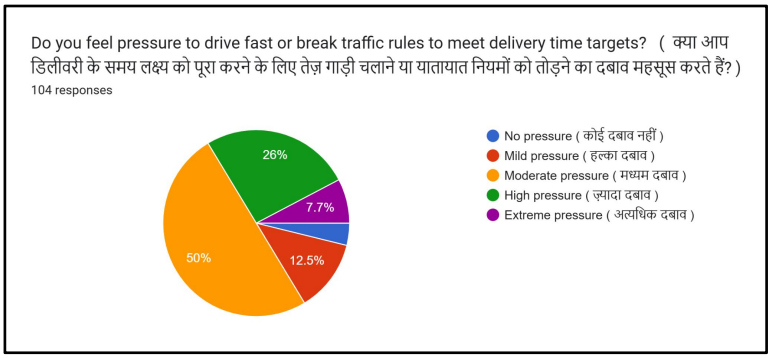
Analysis:

The figures reveal that 45.2 percent of the respondents have been in the workforce less than 2 years with 24 percent having less than 6 months of tenure and 25 percent having 6 months-1 year experience, which depict a moderate experience among the majority of workers.

Interpretation:

This indicates that the majority of gig workers have worked in ultra-fast delivery jobs long enough to be familiar with safety and mental health issues, and that the small percentage of long-term workers indicates the strenuous and unsustainable nature of the work.

Pressure to drive fast or break traffic rules



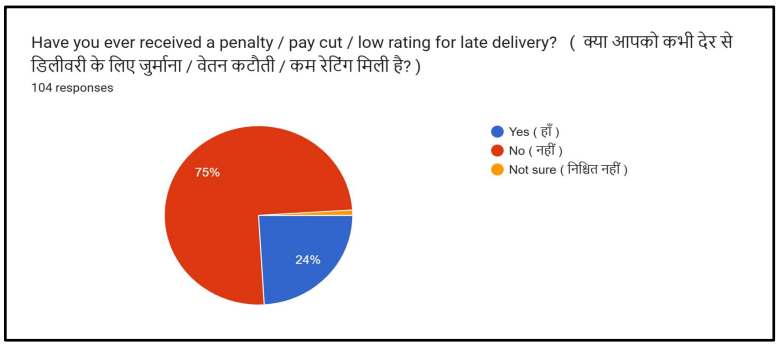
Analysis:

The chart shows that half the respondents (50%) experience Moderate pressure to drive fast or ignore traffic rules, while an additional 26% face High Pressure and 7.7% feel Extreme pressure. Meanwhile, 12.5% feel mild pressure and only 3.8% report no pressure at all.

Interpretation:

This indicates that time-bound delivery expectations create a strong push for unsafe riding behaviour. Overall 83.7% of the drivers experience more than Mild Pressure, showing that most riders feel compelled to rush in order to meet such demands.

Penalties



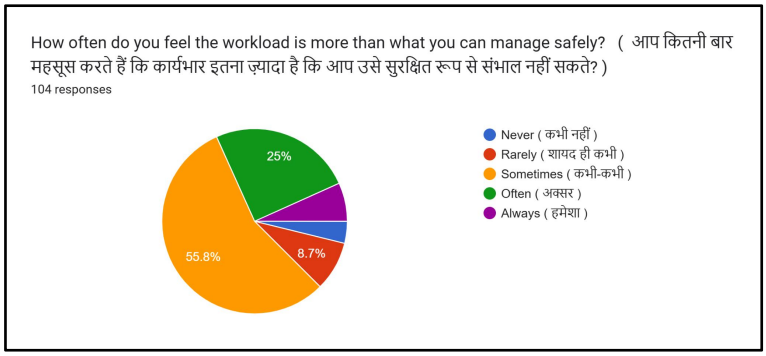
Analysis:

The chart reveals that 24% of respondents have received some type of penalty, pay cut or low rating for late delivery, whereas 75% have not experienced such consequences, and a small segment (1%) is unsure.

Interpretation:

Although the majority of riders have not faced direct penalties, nearly one-fourth have said that punitive measures exist and contribute to their anxiety. The possibility of receiving penalties increases due to risky speeding behavior in order to meet the deadlines.

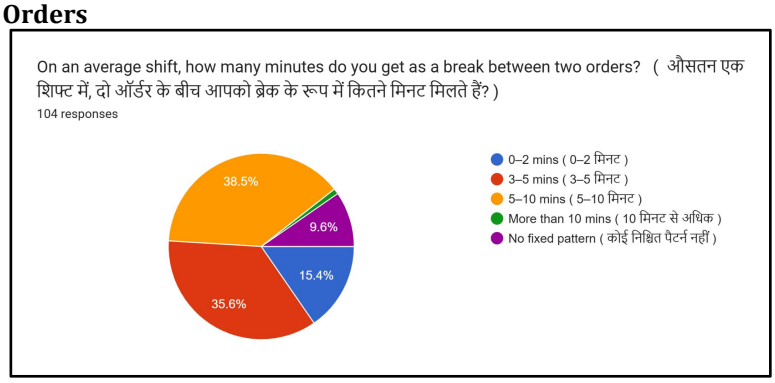
Workload



Analysis:
According to the data shown in the chart, 25% of the riders often face extensive workload that exceeds what they can manage safely, while 55.8% feel this sometime and 6.7% feel it always. Only a small fraction of 8.7% feel it rarely and 2.9% never experience it.

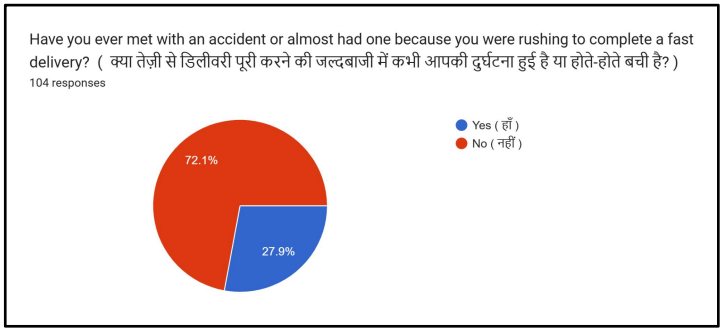
Interpretation:
This shows that the majority of workers experience excessive workload pressure, indicating that the number of orders and speed expectations are beyond safe limits. Such workload pressures increase fatigue amongst the riders, and it also reduces the workers ability to perform their duties safely.

Break Time Between Orders



Analysis:
The chart indicates that 9.6% of the respondents have no fixed break pattern between orders. Additionally, 15.4% get as little as 0-2 minutes while 35.6% recieve only 3-5 minutes, highlighting the limited break period as riders prioritize completing more orders in less time to increase their earnings. The largest portion, 38.5% get 5-10 minutes, and only 1% receive more than 10 minutes of break time between orders.
Interpretation:
This indicates that the majority of gig workers do not get adequate breaks throughout their shifts. Without scheduled rest periods workers become fatigued, less attentive, and more prone to accidents.

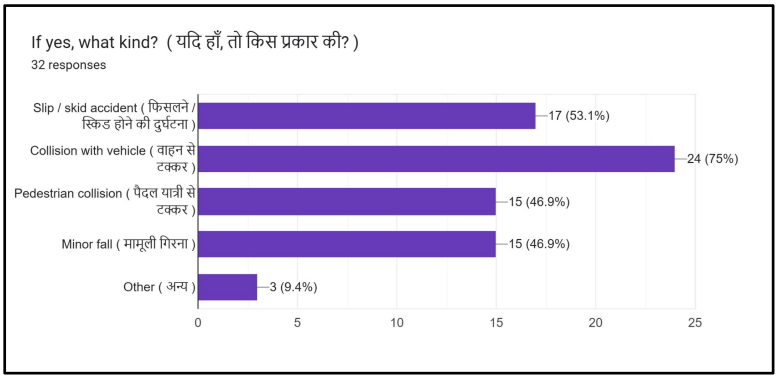
Accident or Near-Miss



Analysis:
The graph indicates that 27.9% of riders have been in an accident or almost been in an accident while rushing for a fast delivery. 72.1% of riders have never met with an accident.

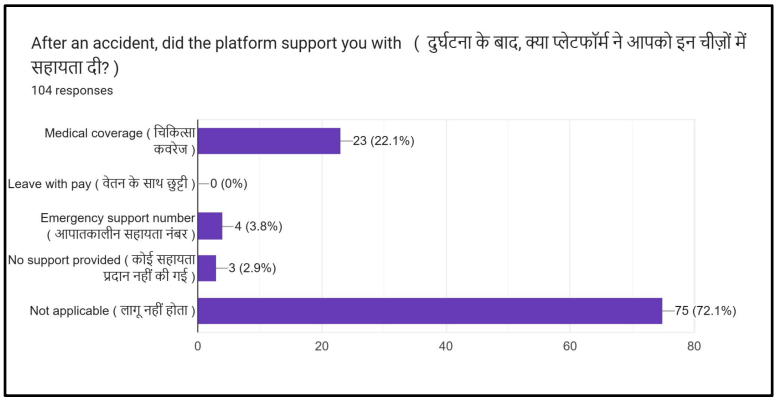
Interpretation:
More than 1 out of 4 riders have experienced crashes or close calls. Speedy delivery times create significant danger on the road. While most incidents likely go unreported, the sheer volume of riders experiencing similar incidents suggests there are serious safety issues within quick commerce.

Types of Accidents Experienced



Analysis:
Among those who reported accidents, 75% experienced accidents with vehicles, 53.1% had slip/skid incidents and 46.9% reported both pedestrian and minor falls. A small number experienced other types of incidents.
Interpretation:
Findings suggest that speeding places workers at extreme risk for roadway injury especially due to vehicle collisions. Additionally, data shows many riders experience more than one type of incident demonstrating risk involved with delivery work.

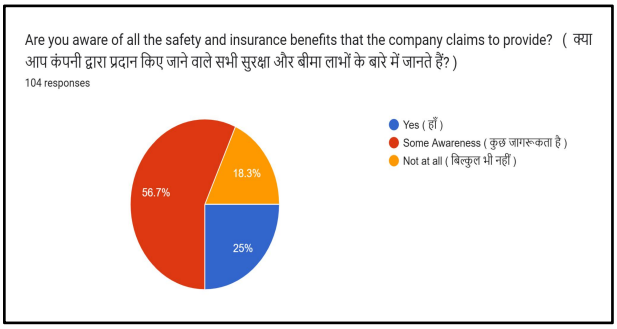
Platform Support After an Accident



Analysis:
The chart shows that 2.1% of riders were provided with medical coverage following an accident, 3.8% were provided with an emergency support number and 2.9% received no support at all. The majority 72.15, indicated the question was not applicable to them.

Interpretation:
Platform support seems inconsistent and limited. Only a small proportion of those in need received any meaningful help, indicating weak safety nets.

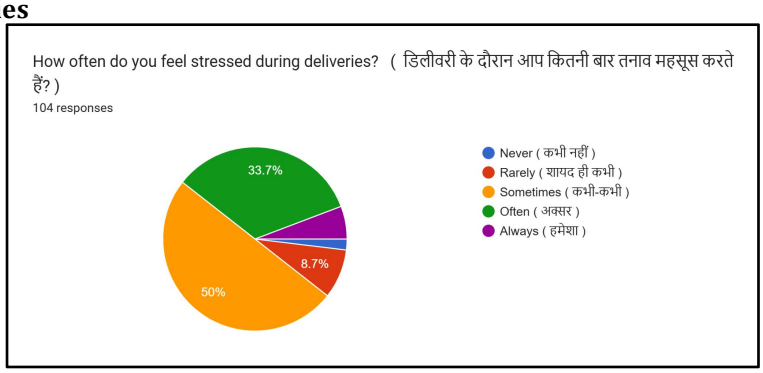
Awareness of Safety and Insurance Benefits



Analysis:
The data shows that 25% of respondents are aware of all the safety benefits provided, 56.7% are partially aware, and 18.3% have no awareness at all.

Interpretation:
This implies that safety policies are not communicated well by platforms or that riders are not aware of the same. A considerable number of workers lack full knowledge of the benefits that are offered to them and this makes them more vulnerable in case of an accident or emergency. This also indicates the necessity of elementary safety training and more effective communication of training to make workers more informed.

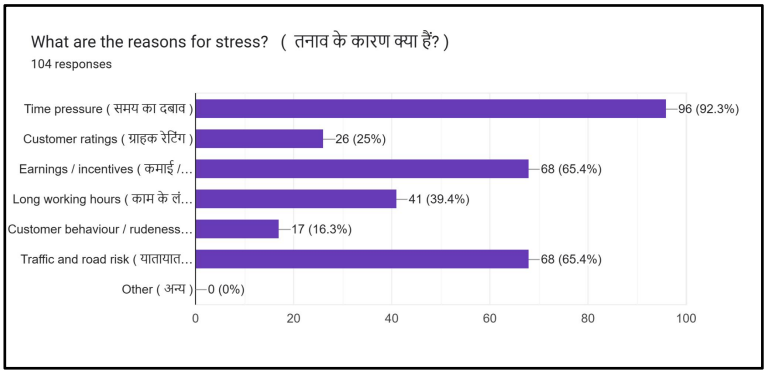
Stress During Deliveries



Analysis:
The chart reveals that 33.7% of riders often feel stressed during deliveries, 50% feel stressed sometimes and 8.7% feel stressed rarely. Only 5.8% always feel stressed, and 1.9% never experience stress.

Interpretation:
Stress is widespread among delivery workers, with the majority experiencing it frequently. This highlights the psychological burden faced by the riders which is created by fast delivery expectations.

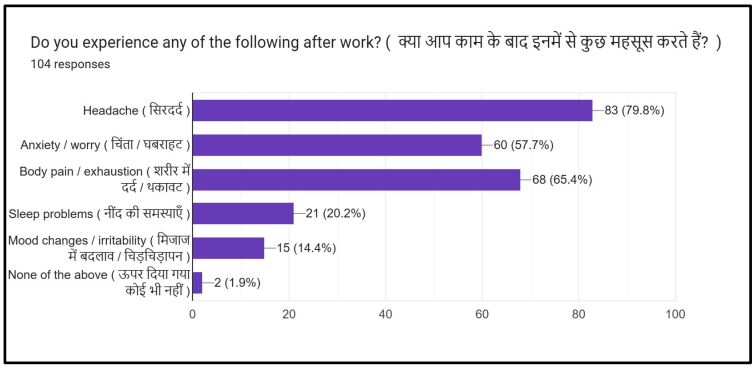
Reasons for Stress



Analysis:
The largest portion of respondents (92.3%) cite time pressure as the main cause of stress. Earning pressure and traffic risks are both reported by 65.4%, long working hours by 39.4%, customer ratings by 25% and customer rudeness by 16.3%.

Interpretation:
Time Pressure is the main stressor, confirming the effect of 10 minute delivery expectations. The stress is compounded by financial insecurity, road risks and customer related issues, showing that the riders face multiple simultaneous pressures.

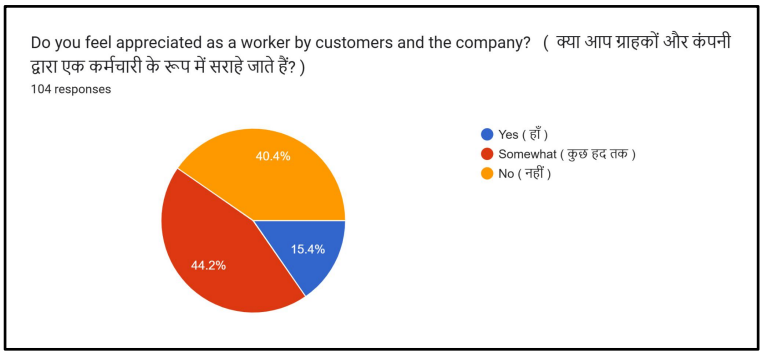
Symptoms of Stress after Work



Analysis:
79.8% of respondents reported headaches, 65.4% body pain or exhaustion, 57.7% anxiety, and 20.2% sleep problems. Only 1.9% said they had not experienced such symptoms.

Interpretation:
These results demonstrate significant physical and mental strain caused by the job. High rates of headache, pain and anxiety indicate burnout and poor overall well-being among gig workers.

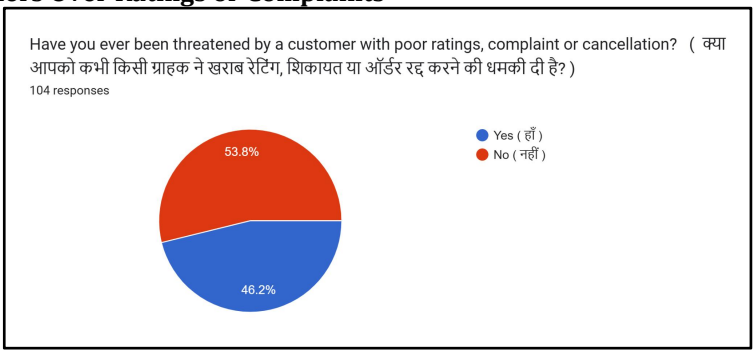
Feeling Appreciated as a Worker



Analysis:
Only 15.4% feel appreciated, 44.2% feel somewhat appreciated and 40.4% do not feel appreciated at all.

Interpretation:
A large portion of workers feel undervalued, which greatly impacts morale and job satisfaction. Lack of recognition for their hard work contributes to emotional fatigue.

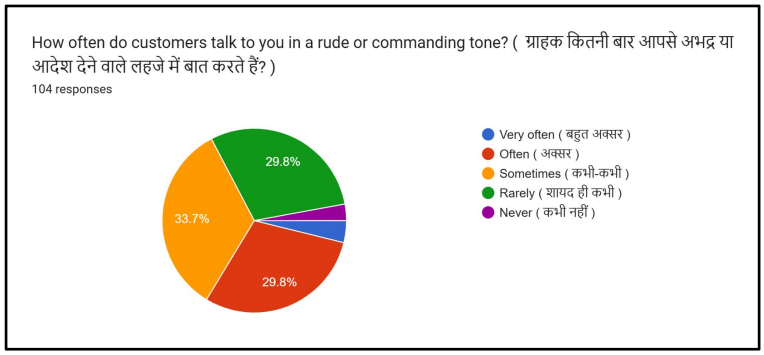
Threatened by Customers Over Ratings or Complaints



Analysis:
46.2% of workers report being threatened by customers regarding ratings, complaints or cancellation, while 53.8% have not.

Interpretation:
Nearly half of the workers face coercive behaviour from customers, which adds to stress and pressure to fulfil deliveries quickly, even at the cost of safety.

Rude or Commanding Tone from Customers



Analysis:
29.8% experience rude behaviour often, 33.7% sometimes, 29.8% rarely, 3.8% very often and only 2.9% never.
Interpretation:
Customer disrespect is common with more than 60% experiencing rudeness regularly. Such behaviour contributes to emotional strain and reduces the sense of dignity and respect.

Chapter 6. Hypothesis Testing
Objective 1: To study the level of delivery pressure experienced by delivery partners in meeting delivery time targets.

Null Hypothesis (H_{01})
There is no significant pressure felt by gig workers due to 10-minute delivery expectations.
Alternate Hypothesis (H_{11})
10-minute delivery expectations significantly increase pressure on gig workers to drive fast and take unsafe risks.
Question
Do you feel pressure to drive fast or break traffic rules to meet delivery time targets?

Statistical Test Used
To test the above null hypothesis, the Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test is used. The results are as follows:

Table 6.1 Test Statistics

Particulars	Value
No of Participants	104
Chi-Square	73.02
Df	4
P-Value	0.001

Interpretation
The chi-square test revealed a statistically significant result ($x^2 = 73.02$, df = 4, $p < 0.001$). Since the p-value (0.001) is less than the level of significance (0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that the majority of the workers face moderate to high pressure due to the 10 minute delivery deadline.

Objective 2
To examine whether workload intensity contributes significantly to stress, anxiety, and fatigue among gig workers.
Null Hypothesis (H_{02})
Time pressure and workload intensity do not have a significant contribution to stress, anxiety, and fatigue among gig workers.
Alternate Hypothesis (H_{12})

Time pressure and workload intensity significantly contribute to stress, anxiety, and fatigue among gig workers.
Question
How often do you feel the workload is more than what you can manage safely?

Statistical Test Used
To test the above null hypothesis, the Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test is used. The results are as follows:

Table 6.2 Test Statistics

Particulars	Value
No of Participants	104
Chi-Square	97.30
Df	4
P-Value	0.001

Interpretation
The chi-square test result is statistically significant (x^2 = 97.30, df = 4, p < 0.001). Since the p-value is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that workload intensity contributes significantly to stress, anxiety, and fatigue among gig workers.A majority of the gig workers reported experiencing this situation sometimes or often, suggesting that excessive workload is a common issue faced by the delivery partners.

Objective 3
To examine the impact of negative customer behaviour, particularly rude or commanding tone, on the emotional well-being of gig workers.

Null Hypothesis (H_{03})
There is no significant impact of negative customer behaviour such as rudeness, verbal threats or unfair ratings on the emotional well-being of gig workers.

Alternate Hypothesis (H_{13})
Negative customer behaviour such as rudeness, verbal threats or unfair rating has a significant impact on the emotional well-being of gig workers.
Question
How often do customers talk to you in a rude or commanding tone?

Statistical Test Used
To test the above null hypothesis, the Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test is used. The results are as follows:

Table 6.3 Test Statistics

Particulars	Value
No of Participants	104
Chi-Square	48.49
Df	4
P-Value	0.001

Interpretation
The chi-square test is statistically significant (χ^2 = 48.49, df = 4, p < 0.001). Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that negative customer behaviour, particularly rude or commanding tone,has a severe impact on the emotional state of gig workers. Most of the respondents said that they occasionally or frequently encountered such behaviour.

Chapter 7. Findings of the Study
The ten-minute delivery model is a rigid model that exploits physical, emotional and psychological resources of gig workers to a great extent. Male employees aged 18- 25 years are the largest percentage of the workforce, and this is the major factor making the sector work so successfully. Nevertheless, in many cases, the most economically vulnerable workers have to deliver packages as a source of fast money.

The delivery schedule is suffering massively. Almost 84 percent of the delivery workers say according to a survey that they are put under moderate or even

extreme pressure to deliver fast, which in most instances makes them over speed or even violate traffic laws. At the same time, this pressure is caused by the expectations of customers and algorithms of the platforms. Even though the majority of the riders can avoid penalties, a quarter of them lose either by being rated down or simply by losing their money, which, on the contrary, only motivates them to use unsafe behaviors on the streets.

One of the difficulties in the delivery sector is workload stress. The workload that has been assigned to them is overwhelming such that most riders (87.5%) assert that it makes it unsafe to work. The delays between orders are zero or discontinuous, some riders are to have 0-2 minutes, others 3-5 minutes and most of them lack an established break. It is a fatigue that leads to physical stress and unawareness in the process of riding aggravated by the fact that there is no appropriate training or capacity development that can make someone withstand the stress causing environment.

The riders still face a high risk of road accidents. Nearly 28 percent of the riders have had and even more witnessed accidents or near accidents in an attempt to beat the delivery targets. Such accidents involve crashing into vehicles and pedestrians, and small falls. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the number of medical supports among riders who had accidents offered by the platforms is rather high, there is a lack of awareness about such advantages. Only slightly over half of the workers are fully aware of the health and insurance cover and 18.3% are not aware at all.

The most questionable ones are mental health issues. Almost all workers report the stress, some are constantly stressed, some are frequently stressed and the majority occasionally stressed. The key stressors include time pressure, the risky state of the traffic and unpredictable income.

The other general grievance is on the general lack of care towards workers. A low percentage of riders are under the feeling that they are valued, with most having the feeling that they are partially appreciated or not appreciated by all. This highlights an imbalance between the hard work they have and the reward that they have.

This is usually aggravated during interactions with customers. Almost fifty percent of the riders report that the complaints, the low ratings, or the cancellations of the orders have been threatened to them. Meanwhile, the rudeness or at least the impoliteness and commands of customers during their working hours are applied to a large number of riders, which only increases the stress levels of the latter.

This paper shows that the 10-minute delivery system has prioritized speed and efficiency instead of health, safety, and dignity of gig workers. The employees are overworked, have no free time, are under pressure continuously, and most likely are mistreated, and the question of the sustainability of such a model long-term and the health conditions of the employees who drive it is the big question

Chapter 8. Recommendations & Conclusion

8.1. Recommendations:

Relax the 10-minute delivery target

In order to prevent unsafe driving, stress, and accidents, platforms should gradually move towards longer and more flexible delivery windows such as 15-20 minutes. This small change can eventually lead to a safer environment for workers without significantly affecting the satisfaction of the customers.

Improve safety training and awareness

Some of the things that companies should do is provide the riders with the appropriate road safety programs, proper knowledge about post-accident procedures and ensuring that both the Insurance and Medical coverage is fully explained to them. Many workers are still not aware of their existing benefits, and this gap can be filled by clear communication.

Introduce minimum break standards

The companies should schedule riders to take short but predetermined breaks between orders. It will help not only to reduce fatigue but also to improve the alertness level of the rider on the road and thus reduce the dangers of continuous, back-to-back deliveries.

Implement customer behaviour guidelines

Platforms must take very serious actions and, in no case, allow customers to hold abusive conversations. Along with those mentioned, pop-up reminders, penalties for repeated misconduct, and fair complaint reviews can help the riders relieve some of the emotional pressure.

Provide mental health and emotional support

Counselling access, stress-management sessions, and regular check-ups could be provided by the companies as support for the riders who are constantly under the pressure of stress, anxiety, and fatigue because of the nature of the work.

Financial and social protection should be reinforced: Corporations must grant their workers stable wages, well-defined incentives, accident insurance, and emergency support. A very small constant coverage can greatly contribute to improving one's welfare.

Make the incentive structures safer

Incentives must primarily favour consistency, reliability and safety and only then delivery speed.

This can lead to less aggressive driving and more responsible driving overall.

Support from the policy level should be encouraged

Regulators need to come up with safety guides, the giving of breaks, and the payment of minimum wages, especially in the case of ultrafast delivery, as part of the overall clarifications regarding gig work.

Create a fair and responsible delivery model

The main aim of the platforms should be to create a model that suits both the consumers and the workers in terms of convenience and fairness, respectively. By relying on ethical speeds of delivery, good planning inside dark stores, and safe systems of incentives, a more sustainable ecosystem for gig workers can be created.

Chapter 8.2: Conclusion

This research uncovers the hidden unseen human cost associated with the convenience of the 10 minute delivery services, exposing a system that gives priority to speed at the cost of the workers physical and mental wellbeing, dignity and welfare. The evidence through this research indicates that the gig workers are always under pressure due to the unrealistic deadlines, competing with traffic and carrying heavy loads and being subjected to continuous stress. Many riders have encountered accidents or close calls, suffer from headache, body pain, etc and yet they get very little support from the platform they work for. In addition, their interaction with customers makes the situation worse, as they have to deal with daily rudeness, being threatened, harassed and a general lack of appreciation and acknowledgement.

Despite being the ones who make quick commerce possible and efficient, these gig workers are not only paid irregularly, but they have insufficient time to rest between orders. This research underlines the urgent need to reconsider and re-evaluate the sustainability and the morality of the ultra-fast delivery model. It is important for us as customers to understand that a shift towards safer deadlines, better support systems and an overall sustainable model is not just a mere suggestion but a necessity. It is crucial to understand that the convenience we enjoy should not come at the cost of the lives of other humans.

In the end any delivery ecosystem that wants to be truly progressive and successful must first take care of the people who make this happen, the gig workers. It's not merely a policy suggestion to keep their physical safety, mental wellbeing and their rights protected but rather a moral obligation shared by the platforms that employ them, the government and the society.

References:

1. The Hindu Staff Reporter. (2022, March day). Rash driving, fall in income, more pressure: Behind the scenes of 10-minute delivery. The Hindu. https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/rash-driving-fall-in-income-more-pressure-behind-the-scenes-of-10-minute-delivery/article65309591.ece
2. OlaGate Admin. (2022, March 6). How is the safety and life of the delivery boy risked by a 10-minute or instant delivery? OlaGate. https://blog.olagate.com/neighborhood/how-is-the-safety-and-life-of-the-delivery-boy-risked-by-a-10-minute-or-instant-delivery/
3. Verma, S. (2025, April 22). Is 10-minute delivery overworking gig workers? Here's what startups need to know. Tice.news. https://www.tice.news/enticing-angle/is-10-minute-delivery-overworking-gig-workers-heres-what-startups-need-to-know-8989440
4. Bansal, V. (2022, February 23). As Indians expect groceries in 10 mins, delivery agents struggle. Al Jazeera. https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2022/2/23/as-indians-expect-groceries-in-10-mins-delivery-agents-struggle
5. Chen, C.-F. (2023). Investigating the effects of job stress on the distraction and risky driving behaviors of food delivery motorcycle riders. Safety and Health at Work, 14(2), 207–214. https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10300600/
6. Wang, Q., & Churchill, B. (2025). Risky business: How food-delivery platform riders understand and manage safety at work. Journal of Sociology. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1177/14407833241246571
7. My Startup Life. (2024, August 26). Gig delivery riders' earnings and demand surge for quick commerce platforms. https://mystartuplife.in/index.php/2024/08/26/gig-delivery-riders-earnings-and-demand-surge-for-quick-commerce-platforms/