

Gig Economy and the Labour Law of Sri Lanka: A Proposal for a Safety Net for Workers

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Gig economy is sometimes referred to as the sharing economy which is a market based on a fixed-term contract or paid per project or online marketplace. Workers ranging from traditional independent contractors to freelancers or part timers who work selected hours in a day, are the stakeholders of a gig economy. Uber, Lyft and Pickme are the most frequently used platforms that drives the gig economy in Sri Lanka. This novel penetration has overturned the behaviour of the labour market that demands for amends in the legal framework. Although gig economy has its merits the labour law in Sri Lanka does not protect the adverse effects of it. Therefore, it is required to address the problem on how Sri Lankan labour law framework be reformed to cater the demands of the gig economy in way that protects the workers in it. Black letter approach in law, international and comparative research methodology and the systematic literature review are the main methodologies adopted in this research. Primary sources would be the Constitution, enactments, case laws and international standards while books, conference proceedings, peer-reviewed journal articles would be secondary sources. It is analysed how the workers of the gig economy be considered as employees/ independent contractors within the legal framework and how the law needs reformation based on the international experience. The recommendations are followed by the analysis on how the law and policy needs to be changed in order to maintain a safety net for workers who engage in the gig economy. Recommendations are specially focused on the contract of employment, welfare, compensation and health and safety mechanisms with regard to workers of gig economy.

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