

# Motivation of Freelance Employees in the Gig Economy in Turkey

Serpil ÇİĞDEM<sup>1</sup> 

## ABSTRACT

In the current industrial and organizational psychology literature, predominantly salaried, paid, permanent and full-time workers in a given workplace and in a given time period are represented. However, in recent years, it has been observed that new forms of self-employment have emerged on digital labor platforms and their numbers have increased gradually.

This article explores the push/pull motivations for working in the gig economy, drawing on previous research on entrepreneurial motivation, a field associated with self-employment. In this study, mixed method was used as data collection technique. In the quantitative stage of the research, a questionnaire was conducted with 117 people, and in the qualitative stage, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 people. Survey data in the SPSS 20.0 program, qualitative data were analyzed descriptively. As a result, it was understood that the most prominent motivation factors of freelancers are independence, success motivation and flexibility. The gig economy offers workers the opportunity to work flexibly by allowing them to organize their own work schedules and control their labor processes, as opposed to optimistic portrayals of a flexible economy. In addition, it is seen that freelancers feel free from friendship relations and feel excluded and isolated from other people.

**Keywords:** Gig Economy, Motivation, Freelance Work.

**JEL Classification Codes:** L14; L86; L26

## INTRODUCTION

While most of the research published in the industrial and organizational psychology literature consists of paid, salaried, core workforce, highly educated, highly skilled, professional workers and managers (Dobre, 2013; Ramlall, 2004), with the rise of the gig economy in recent years (De stefano, 2015), it is seen that publications on alternative work arrangements have started to take place in the literature.

In the last decade of the 20th century, alternative, non-traditional, contract, freelance, conditional, single-use, temporary, non-standard and telework have become increasingly common. Standard workers who go to the location of a company at certain hours with long career prospects are added to many non-standard workers who accept different jobs, connect to companies differently and make careers with a different appearance (Gonnelly and Gallagher, 2004). Labour markets are undergoing a dramatic transformation, with temporary jobs mediated by online platforms replacing standard employment (Kässi and Lehdonvirta, 2018). As the world of work changes, so do theories. Because existing theories run the risk of becoming much less practical as the world of work changes. Barley (2016) states that today bureaucracies are decreasing and organizations are transforming into new forms, and these new forms are not suitable to

be explained with old theories. Thus, while traditional theories are successful in understanding average general levels of employee motivation and interpersonal changes in different contexts, they fail to provide sufficient explanation for understanding the motivation process and change in a single individual. In the organizational context, it focuses on the behaviors that are at the center of the task of organizing (Ashford, Caza and Raid, 2018). Because psychological work experience theories have been developed by considering them in a different period. Many of them are based on the experience of traditional 1950s employees who travel to where their companies are located on a daily basis to fully meet their expectations to pursue a career at a specific time each day. However, an important working class of today is not included in this way of working (Ashford, George and Blatt, 2007). To develop individual-centered motivation theories in the gig economy, it is necessary to correctly analyze individual behaviors and experiences by explaining the structural conditions of such studies.

According to the English dictionary, freelancer is defined as a person who does not work for a fixed employer. Freelance work is accepted as a self-employed form (Fudge, 2003). This article focusing on the motivational factors of freelancers in the gig economy draws on previous research (see: Callahan, Shumpert and Mast, 2002; Sapienza, Korsgaard and Forbes, 2003; Burke, 2011;

<sup>1</sup> Asst. Prof., Sakarya University of Applied Sciences, Sakarya, Turkey, serpilcigdem@subu.edu.tr

Burtch, Garnahan and Greenwood, 2018; Clinton, Totterdell and Wood, 2006), a field associated with self-employment. Although the types of self-employment vary (Pedersini and Coletti, 2009), certain self-employment groups and specifically defined perspectives are positioned within the entrepreneurship paradigm (Szaban, 2018; Ohlsson, 2004; Parker, 2004). There is also an entrepreneurship literature where self-employed are not classified as workers, but rather as owner managers who are not employed because they are self-employed (Burke, 2011: 2; Bögenhold, Klinglmair and Kandutsch, 2017). It can take many forms from self-employed entrepreneurs and “one-person” business owners to consultants and contractors in industries. New technology is changing the nature of work in many industries, fueling the growth of the gig economy. The distinctive features of the gig economy are that there are many different ways of working and business models in the gig economy. What most have in common is that they rely on intermediary digital platforms or apps to connect the self-employed with the business. Gig economy companies often operate in industries that have historically been based on self-employed entrepreneurial workforces (Abraham, Haltiwanger, Sandusky and Spletzer, 2019; House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee, 2016).

The gig economy includes both jobs that are traded via platforms but delivered locally and therefore require the employee to be physically at the place where the job is performed, as well as jobs that are processed and delivered remotely via platforms. Local gig jobs include food delivery, courier, shipping and manual labor. In contrast, in remote gig work, the freelancer and the employer usually contract for a short-term job through digital platforms such as Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), Fiverr, Freelancer.com, and Upwork. These jobs consist of the remote provision of a wide variety of digital services, from data entry to software programming. (Huws, Spencer and Joyce, 2016; Lapanjuuri et al., 2018). In Turkey, there are also very successful local examples: For example, people can find many independent painters, repairmen, cleaners, plumbers, etc. on Armut.com. In addition to independent sellers who make a difference to large e-commerce companies by selling on GittiGidiyor, we should not forget the independent graphic designers who do business on Idemama.com. Bionluk.com is a community-driven libertarian work platform where talented freelancers meet with businesses and startups that suit them. All this is a strong economy of freelancers (Ahi, 2016). Freelance employees come together through various platforms and create a culture of solidarity among themselves. “Dünyada Mekan” is a solidarity space for white-collar freelancers in our country (<https://dunyadamekan.wordpress.com/>).

In entrepreneurship literature, freelancers are often categorized as a small, underperforming version of the entrepreneurial self-employed because in the modern dynamic economy, forms of work such as portfolio work, temporary and conditional employment contracts, self-employment and outsourcing are closely related to

freelance work (For example, see Handy (1984) but they tend to appear miniature in research (Üçbaşaran et al., 2001; Zahra, 2007 and Welter, 2011).

Typically, low-skilled freelancers are pushed into self-employment. It would not be wrong to say that they are forced into entrepreneurship under bad conditions. On the other hand, entrepreneurial opportunities for skilled workers are attractive and people are pulled to entrepreneurship (Mkubukeli and Cronje, 2018). While one group of researchers explains that people are forced into the gig economy due to unemployment or their inability to find suitable jobs for their qualifications (Dawson, Henley and Latreille, 2009; Nies and Pedersini, 2003), the other group argues that this is not true. Entrepreneurship is particularly attractive to the younger generation. Entrepreneurship is highly advantageous for individuals who value flexibility, entrepreneurship and control over the business (CIPD, 2017).

The research problem that forms the basis of this study explores which motivational factors are the most distinguishing for freelancers to work in the gig economy. Research on freelancing in the literature is usually based on a case study methodology in which semi-structured interviews with freelance employees are made (Karsson and Wranne, 2019). But in this article, mixed method research design was used as a data collection technique. It is aimed to provide a deeper and holistic perspective on the research question by using qualitative and quantitative techniques together (Baki and Gökçek, 2012: 2; Sandelowski, 2000: 246). This method has been chosen considering that only quantitative and qualitative methods will not be sufficient to reveal the professional reality of freelance work in Turkey. This method provides an opportunity to verify that the results are consistent by comparing the findings from both different methods. It provides the opportunity to see the illuminating aspect of both approaches by using qualitative and quantitative research methods (Bryman, 20: 9).

The article includes the findings of a survey conducted from online platforms with 117 freelancers working in the gig economy and the findings of face-to-face interviews with 12 freelancers. In the quantitative phase, the characteristics of freelancers and the most prominent motivational factors that attract/push to work in the gig economy were investigated. At the qualitative stage, semi-structured interviews were conducted with freelancers and their motivational experiences for working in the gig economy were analyzed in depth. Because self-employment is considered type of self-employment, previous research on the closely related field of entrepreneurial motivation contributed to the study.

As a result, it is understood that the most prominent motivation factors of freelance workers are freedom, success motivation and flexibility. On the other hand, it has been observed that working in isolation at home isolates the individual.

**Table 1.** Structural Dimensions of Difference

	Traditional Work	Gig Work
Financial instability and Job Insecurity	Low	High
Autonomy	Low	High
Uncertainty in Career Processes	Low	High
Work Transitions	Low	High
Physical Division and Relational Challenges	Low	High

**Source:** Ashford, S. J., Caza, B. B. and Reid, E. M. (2018). From surviving to thriving in the gig economy: A Research Agenda for Individuals in the New World of Work. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 38, p.27

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The nature of work is changing. Today, as technology and automation eliminate or change many jobs, the labor market is transforming in parallel (Worldbank, 2018). The recent rise of the gig economy has created a series of opportunities for freelancers to find short-term jobs, which they define as gigs, and for employers to find workers on demand (Kuhn, 2016). However, Spreitzer et al. (2017: 480) state that we should not expect temporary jobs in the gig economy to be experienced like other contract jobs.

The gig economy is a model that enables money exchange between freelancer and companies through digital labour platforms that facilitate the effective use of short-term and task-based payment method between service providers and customers. In the gig economy, freelancer serve multiple clients at varying hours from their home or co-working spaces, rather than working full-time in a single employer’s workplace (Kuhn, 2016).

The psychological experience of the work and the life experience of individuals are shaped differently in the gig economy. Ashford, Caza, and Reid (2018) discuss these structural differences from five angles. The first of these is the issue of financial instability and job insecurity. The second structural difference was handled on the basis of freedom and autonomy. Then, the differences in career processes were examined and the issue of job transitions and physical division/relational difficulties was discussed.

These five structural characteristics reflect the ultimate and important vital reality for gig economy workers as well. The issue of financial instability and job insecurity for workers in the gig economy already stems from the nature of freelancing (see: Burchell, Ladipo and Wilkinson, 2002). Because, in the nature of a typical freelance work, there are jobs that are carried out in discontinuous and intermittent periods instead of permanent and continuous jobs (Burke et al. 2008). The defining feature of freelance work is short-term contracts for which the employer is not responsible (Burke, 2011). Therefore, this is the most important feature of self-employment.

One of the other structural differences is the approach to the concepts of freedom and autonomy. In the studies reviewed in the literature, concepts such as autonomy,

independence, control over working conditions, and being your own boss are frequently used in defining freelance work (Stanworth and Stanworth, 1995; Clinton, Totterdell and Wood, 2006). On the other hand, in studies based on precariousness approach, it is emphasized that autonomy is only a showpiece, portfolio employees feel obliged to work in line with the instructions of customers / employers (Stanworth and Stanworth, 1995). In the study conducted by Hunter (2015), all freelance journalists have a similar view on autonomy and state that they do not have full autonomy in business processes. In addition, freelance journalists have stated that they will have to adjust or change their reports in any way when they have a special instruction from the funders.

There is no guarantee of long-term employment in a single organization in the gig economy. It is often based on short-term contracts which guarantee employment in temporary jobs or project-based but leave future jobs and relationships uncertain. Instead of being dependent on a particular employer, workers work for a variety of clients. There is a transition and mobility between jobs (Broughton et al., 2018).

While the gig economy enables a system that allows people to earn money from various interests (Lepanjuuri et al., 2018), it is also the source of the birth of a self-directed workforce (Arthur 1994). While working in multiple jobs becomes the “new normal” (Waldorf, 2016), many gig workers have multiple job identities rather than focusing on a single job or role.

And also; The transition from organizational work to gig work begins with an anxious period. Because career success needs to be redefined with the transition to portfolio career. Since all the different jobs done for different employers in the portfolio career add success to one’s career, it is necessary to develop professional networks and to create a safety net that will provide financial support (Clinton, Peter and Wood, 2006). Because during the portfolio career process, individuals work independently from an employer (Mallon, 1998), undertake different tasks and do jobs for different customers (Handy, 1994). Gig employees have to create a business activity portfolio for themselves and transfer their skills and knowledge to various individuals and organizations (Platman, 2004).

Finally, doing the job alone in the gig economy and working separately from those who work in this way physically cause the gig workers to feel like strangers (Kunda et al., 2002). As a workforce that is decentralized, lacking in regular human relations, and without permanent employment, gig economy workers experience a psychological experience in stark contrast to the optimistic portrayals of a resilient economy that empowers them to control their own destinies. They seem to suffer compared to traditional workers. Gig workers feel unfriendly, excluded, and isolated from other people (Glavin, Bierman and Schieman, 2019).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Entrepreneurial motivations are often defined as fitting into “push” or “pull” categories (Dawson and Henley, 2012, Amit and Muller, 1995, Ojiaku, Nkamnebe & Nwaizugbo, 2018). Push motivation is based on the individual’s choice by being forced or pushed due to the surrounding conditions. The pull motivation model focuses on the motivation sources that arise from the person’s environment and attract the person (Kirkwood, 2009). The pull side of the theory of motivation will attract and encourage entrepreneurial activity. Push motivation refers to the internal aspects and emotional characteristics of the individual. Pull motivation is related to external factors arising from the subjective perception of the situation (Nosková and Peráček, 2019).

The individual motivation plays a key role in recognizing and creating an opportunity. However, the expectations of individuals are the most important

factor that determines the entrepreneurial motivation factors (Prokopenko et al., 2020). When we examine the literature on entrepreneurial motivation, firstly, the desire for independence is cited as the number one motivating factor for most people to become an entrepreneur. Especially desire for independence is primarily classified as a pull factor (Hughes, 2003; Eijdenberg and Masurel, 2013; Shane, Locke and Collins, 2003; Naffziger, Hornsby and Kuratko, 1994; Marlow, 1997; Stephan, Hard and Drews, 2015). Entrepreneurial tendencies of individuals with motivation to be successful can be high. The need for achievement expresses a strong desire to do things better (Prokopenko et al., 2020). The literature particularly emphasizes the importance of internal control. That is, believing in one’s actions means giving less importance to chance. Entrepreneurs believe that their actions will have an impact on the final result (Gerry, Dan, Jerry, 2005).

Few studies have asked why individuals choose to be self-employed. The results of the research are based on the findings that individuals prefer self-employment voluntarily for reasons such as independence, job satisfaction and/or higher income expectation, and are pushed to be self-employed because there is no other attractive profession. The motivations behind the decision to become self-employed largely provide the opportunity to explore entrepreneurial opportunities.

The pull motivation factors in the studies on entrepreneurship motivation in the literature are shown in table 1.

**Table 1:** Pull Factors of Entrepreneurial Motivation

Drews, C., Stephan, U., Hart, M., & Mickiewicz, T. (2015). Understanding Motivations for Entrepreneurship: A Review of Recent Research Evidence (No. 212). Department for Business Innovation & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement, challenge &amp; learning</li> <li>• Independence &amp; autonomy</li> <li>• Income security &amp; financial success</li> <li>• Recognition &amp; status</li> <li>• Family &amp; Roles</li> <li>• Dissatisfaction</li> <li>• Community &amp; social motivations</li> </ul>
Shane, S., Locke, E. A., & Collins, C. J. (2003). Entrepreneurial motivation. <i>Human Resource Management Review</i> , 13(2), 257–279	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for achievement, I</li> <li>• locus of control</li> <li>• Desire for independence</li> <li>• egoistic passion</li> <li>• Drive</li> <li>• Goal Setting</li> <li>• self-efficacy</li> </ul>
Gódány, Z., Machová, R., Mura, L., & Zsigmond, T. (2021). Entrepreneurship motivation in the 21st century in terms of pull and push factors. <i>TEM J. Technol. Educ. Manag. Inform</i> , 10, 334-342.	<p>Greatest motivation factor is;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the desire for independence,</li> <li>• self-realization and,</li> <li>• utilization of own skills and abilities</li> </ul>
Krueger, N.F., Reilly, M.D., and Carsrud, A.L. (2000), Competing models of entrepreneurial intentions. <i>Journal of Business Venturing</i> 15: 411-432.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-expression,</li> <li>• Independence,</li> <li>• Status or material advantage.</li> </ul>

A Canadian survey shows that the majority of individuals prefer self-employment with the desire to work independently. Only a small minority have turned to self-employment due to barriers in the labor market. According to the Canadian Statistical Institute's 1995 Employment Regulations Survey (Statistics Canada, 1997: 35–6) which asked respondents 'the main reason' for self-employment the top three reasons for turning to work were the desire for independence (41.8% of answers), involvement in a family business (17.1% of answers), and lack of other suitable jobs (12.0%).

They conducted a study aimed at determining what are the most distinguishing motivational factors to work in the gig economy in the IT and Business consulting industry. The study shows that the most prominent motivational factors driving work in the gig economy are independence and development. And also; it has been found that monetary rewards are not motivating in themselves, but are a necessity for working. Motivational factors seem to arise from intrinsic motivations such as high need for achievement, desire for independence, internal locus of control and high self-efficacy (Karlsson and Wranne, 2019).

According to the findings obtained from the result of the survey conducted with 300 freelance journalists in Turkey by Çiğdem (2020:219) with 300 freelance journalists in Turkey, more than half of the participants state that they prefer to work freelance because it provides freedom and autonomy. Especially, 61% of them emphasize the entrepreneurial features and emphasized that freelancing provides the opportunity to turn opportunities into money.

The concept of freelance, by its nature, becomes widespread in parallel with the development of the idea of "enterprise". In fact, comments on the 'status' of freelance work are the product of social and individual comments (Cohen and Mallon, 1999:330). The increase in the tendency to evaluate the concepts such as "entrepreneurship" or "entrepreneurship" is accepted as a direct result of the dominance of contemporary discourse (Du Gay, Salaman and Rees, 1996: 268). Thus, while 'portfolio work' has positive connotations, 'temporary' is full of negative connotations. Therefore, comments on new work statuses such as 'freelance' also carry aspects of social identity (Storey, Salaman and Platman, 2005: 1034).

On the other hand, according to the 'push' hypothesis, the expected returns from entrepreneurship become more attractive as rising unemployment levels reduce the probability of finding paid employment and push people to become self-employed. As a matter of fact, self-employment can be seen as a kind of informal employment activity in many developing economies (Dawson, Henley and Latreille, 2009: 1).

Another literature in economics focuses on the importance of demographic factors in the background of self-employment decision. For example, the study by

Rees and Shah (1986) deals with whether the preference for freelance work is affected by the expected income difference between self-employment and employment. The article reveals that earnings have a positive effect on employees' choices towards self-employment. At the same time, it is seen that the variables of education and age are the determining factors in the choice of self-employment (Rees and Shah, 1986:95).

However, almost all cross-sectional studies reveal that positive factors are of paramount importance in self-employment motivation. Dawson, Henley, and Latreille (2009:28) found little direct evidence for 'forced' entrepreneurship in their research; The vast majority choose to freelance for positive reasons.

Research reveals that more skilled workers with higher levels of social capital are able to leverage entrepreneurial skills to create voluntary and desirable work arrangements (Spreitzer et al., 2017). On the other hand, we see that low-skilled workers are pushed into temporary work arrangements due to economic conditions or the inability to find a full-time job (Keith, Harms and Tay, 2019: 289).

I find these studies useful to understand the motivations of individuals to participate in the gig economy. Burke et al. (2008) state that typical self-employment jobs consist of discontinuous short-term rather than permanent jobs. This model also reflects the contingent nature of freelancing.

In recent years, new flexible working forms, under the guise of "entrepreneurship", have been embellished with the concepts of autonomy and freedom, making them attractive. Freelancing is one of them. In the studies examined in the literature, it is seen that concepts such as autonomy, independence, and control over working conditions are frequently emphasized as the factors that attract the individual to freelance work, while in some studies it is stated that the factor that pushes the individual to freelance work is unemployment (Mallon, 1998; Cohen and Mallon, 1999; Stanworth and Stanworth, 1995; Clinton, Totterdell and Wood, 2006).

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Questions and Method

This article seeks answers to the following research question:

*What are motivation factors that push/pull freelancers to work in the gig economy?*

The research is built on previous research on entrepreneurial motivation, a field closely related to self-employment. Since entrepreneurs and freelancers are seen as a form of self-employment, push and pull motivation factors serve as a model for understanding freelance work motivation factors.

Sequential explanatory mixed method design

was used as data collection technique in the study (Ivankova, Creswell and Stick, 2006). This method was chosen because it is considered that only the quantitative and qualitative methods are not enough to analyze the motivational factors and processes of gig economy employees in Turkey. This method provides the opportunity to verify the consistency of the results by comparing the findings of both different methods (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2009). In the quantitative stage, a situation analysis was made and a general data was obtained about the status of gig employees. In the qualitative phase to be carried out afterwards, interviews were conducted with semi-structured questions that give the participants the freedom to express their views and experiences. Qualitative data were collected to reproduce quantitative data and to obtain richer data within the framework of the findings obtained at the quantitative stage.

### Quantitative Data Stage

Survey method was used to collect data in the quantitative phase of the study. During the preparation of the questionnaire questions to be used for data collection within the scope of the research, the literature on gig economy and entrepreneurial motivation was examined in depth. At the same time, the data obtained by the author from previous studies on gig economy were re-analyzed, compiling the responses of the participants on motivation and contributing to the preparation of the questionnaire.

Since it was not possible to determine the main mass, the "Snowball Sampling" method, one of the unlikely sampling methods, was preferred to reach gig workers. Snowball Sampling is one of the frequently used methods when it is not possible to determine the main mass (Fellegi, 2010). The people interviewed with the snowball sampling became the source person for the next interviews (Yazıcıoğlu and Erdoğan, 2004). The snowball sampling method is extensively used where a population

is unknown. It also helps to enter environments where it is difficult for conventional approaches to be successful (Atkinson and Flint, 2001:2). Snowball sampling is useful, especially when a frame is not available or impossible to create. For example; when a research is desired on drug users in a region, it is not possible to find a list of drug users in that region. In this method, the sampling process starts with the random selection of an individual in the defined population. This determined individual is the first unit included in the sampling. It is investigated whether there is an individual that is known in the same universe definition as that individual. If available, that individual is reached. Thus, the second unit to be included in the sample is determined. This process is continued until an arbitrarily determined large sample is created (Özmen et al, 2019:16).

Snowball sampling method does not aim to generalize the results obtained from a particular sample to the population (Griffiths et al., 1993:16199). It is an appropriate approach for scattered and small groups (Ritchie, Lewis and Elam, 2006).

I explore two distinctions that may be helpful when examining workers in the gig economy: viewing gig work as one's primary income (or not) and viewing gig work as a job (or not). Such distinctions highlight the heterogeneous nature of the gig economy and can guide future theory and research on the gig economy.

With the snowball sampling method, new participants were reached through their acquaintances or their network. Various communities established for freelancers on social networks such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, etc. were followed, suitable people were examined and a questionnaire sample was sent to these people by contacting them. And also; A questionnaire link was also sent to the people contacted through the "Ofissizler Platform" established for freelance employees. Survey questions were turned into an online survey via google form and the prepared questionnaire was sent via e-mail.

**Table 2:** Characteristics of Participants

Code	Task	Interview Time	Gender / Age
G1	Web Designer	02/03/2020	Male / 37
G2	Project Manager	02/03/2020	Men / 21
G3	Author	27/02/2020	Male / 41
G4	Advisor	25/02/2020	Women / 38
G5	Graphiccer	19/02/2020	Male / 19
G6	Journalist	19/02/2020	Male / 25
G7	Translator	15/02/2020	Women / 36
G8	Software programmer	15/02/2020	Male / 26
G9	Photographer	15/02/2020	Male / 29
G10	Editor	07/02/2020	Women / 32
G11	Life Coach	07/02/2020	Women / 39
G12	Journalist	19/01/2020	Women/28

The survey process started in November 2019 and ended in March 2020. The collection of data with the survey was completed in 5 months. Questionnaires were applied to 117 people. SPSS package program was used in the analysis of the data obtained and the data were analyzed with frequency and percentage techniques.

### Qualitative Data Stage

The interviewed participants consist of people working freelance in various fields in the gig economy. In the interviews, a semi-structured interview approach was used in order to obtain sufficient data. The interview questions were formed based on the data obtained from the literature review and the quantitative phase. At the same time, the interviewees were given the opportunity to talk freely about their experience and thoughts. Some of the interviews that took place under favorable conditions were recorded to facilitate future analysis.

Descriptive analysis method was used to analyze the 12 interviews conducted by the researcher. In order to make the data set more visual, a framework for data analysis based on the research questions and the conceptual framework of the research was created. According to this framework, it was determined under themes which the data would be organized and presented. Each interview was read many times and the data were used as an excerpt under previously determined themes (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013). The data were coded conceptually, taking into account the themes created before the interviews. Then, themes based on the common points between the concepts were determined. The codes under the determined themes are explained and interpreted in relation to each other. In order to reveal the original thoughts of the participants on the subject, direct quotations were included.

## FINDINGS

This section includes data collection tools and quantitative and qualitative research results of data obtained from data sources.

### Quantitative Findings

In the quantitative stage, a situation analysis of the demographic characteristics and motivation factors of gig employees was made.

#### Demographic Features

The survey process was completed successfully with 117 participants. 53.8% of the participants are women and 46.2% are men. 82% of them are between the ages of 18-35, while 15.4% are between the ages of 36-45. The rate of participants over the age of 45 is 2.6%. 43.6% of the participants have a bachelor's degree, 40% have an associate degree, and 5.1% have a graduate degree. 11.3% of them have high school and below education level. 76.9% of them are single, 23.1% are married.

### Freelance Employment Situations

While 84.6% of the participants define themselves as freelancers, 3.7% do not see them as freelancers. 11.7% of them partially accept that they are freelancers. While 83.8% of the participants use digital labor platforms to find gig jobs, 16.2% stated that they do not use digital labor platforms. Bionluk.com is the most preferred platform among digital labor platforms (33.3%). In second place, freelancer.com is the most used platform with 29.6%. Participants can find jobs using different labor platforms at the same time. While 42% of the participants are engaged in graphic design, 17% are freelance photographers those who work as translators also have a ratio of 11%. While 33.3% of freelancers have been in the gig economy for less than 12 months, the rate of those working for 1-3 years is 43.6%. The rate of those who have 10 years or more freelance experience is low at 7.7%. Participants were asked where they work. 61.5% of the participants answered this question as "at home". While 15% marked the option where the job required, 12.8% stated that they worked in a cafe. Gig jobs can be done online or offline.

### Motivation Situations

First of all, 79.5% of the respondents stated that they were happy at working freelance, while 20.5% were indecisive. This result is consistent with the question of whether working in the gig economy is a choice or a necessity. Because it was determined that 74.4% of the participants voluntarily preferred to work gig, while 5.1% were found to work freelance out of necessity. 20.5% of them were undecided.

Participants were asked a question to measure what their motivation to enter the gig economy was. In this question, they were asked to mark the 3 strongest options among the reasons for preferring gig work. According to the answers given by the participants; Freedom (56.4%), flexible working program (51.3%), desire to learn and develop continuously (56.4%), motivation to be successful (38.2) factors have a significant share in the motivation to enter the gig economy. While it is understood that the high-income factor does not have a large share in entering the gig economy, it has been observed that unemployment, which is one of the driving motivation factors, has a very small effect. It was determined that attractive motivation factors rather than driving factors played an active role in the entry of the participants to the gig economy.

And also; participants were asked the question, "Do you really feel independent when doing gig jobs?". While 82.4% of the participants answered yes to this question, 14.7% stated that they were undecided. To the question of "would you quit freelance work if you found a permanent job", 60% of the participants answered no, 28.6% maybe. 11.4% stated that they would leave.

Finally, the participants were asked what their emotional and psychological difficulties they faced while working in the gig economy were. 30% of the participants stated that there is a lack of social interaction and the feeling of loneliness it creates. One of the difficulties faced by gig workers is uncertainty and the related feeling of stress (29.4%). Insecurity (26.5%) and the need for financial support (23%) are also the difficulties that the participants frequently experience.

### Qualitative Findings

In this section, the data obtained from the interviews were analyzed with the descriptive analysis technique.

İlk önce görüşmelerden kaydedilen veriler yazıya döküldü. Görüşme kaydedilmemişse, görüşme ile eş zamanlı olarak notlar alınmış ve görüşmeden hemen sonra notlar genişletilmiştir. Analiz, araştırmacının transkriptleri veya notları bağımsız olarak ve tekrar tekrar okumasıyla ve eşzamanlı olarak notlar alarak ve ilginç kelimeleri veya cümleleri vurgulayarak başladı. Veriler bundan böyle birlikte analiz edildi. Bundan sonra veriler, verilerin farklı kategorilere ayrıldığı tematik bir yaklaşım kullanılarak birlikte analiz edildi. Kategoriler analizle eşzamanlı ve tümevarımsal olarak üretildi, toplanan verilerden kategorilerin ve temaların ortaya çıkmasına izin verilirken, literatür taramasında tartışılan motivasyon faktörleri de göz önünde bulunduruldu. Her kategori için ilgi çekici alıntılar, sonuçların çıkarılmasını ve doğrulanmasını kolaylaştıran ayrı bir tabloda toplandı. Bu temalar, analizin yapılandırılmasına yardımcı oldu. Analizin tündengelim unsuru, literatür taramasında sunulan faktörleri inceleyen önceki araştırmalardan ilham alınarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Ayrıca, dürüst ve doğru konuşma teşviklerini artırmak için görüşmecilerin anonimliği sağlanmıştır.

They are discussed under two subtitles as push and pull motivation factors.

#### Pull Motivation Factors

The reasons for freelancing of the interviewees are explained mainly under the titles of autonomy and flexibility, desire for success and self-development, relationships with financial freedom, and networking.

#### Independence and Flexibility

The gig economy, in particular, provides flexibility to workers, giving them freedom in how to spend every hour and minute of the day. The gig workers interviewed were asked why they made this choice and to what extent it was a voluntary choice. In the interviews, all participants, without exception, emphasized the importance of independent work and frequently referred to the concepts of flexibility and freedom. It is in line with the entrepreneurial values and behaviors explained on entrepreneurial motivation by Shane, Locke and Collins (2003:270). For them, independence entails taking responsibility for using one's own judgment rather than

blindly following the claims of others. It also includes taking responsibility for one's own life rather than living on the efforts of others.

From the aspect of independence for interviewed gig workers; It is emphasized that the free and active lifestyle is adopted in business life and there is no obligation to wake up early in the morning and go to work, and one can decide which job, when, how and where to do it and the wage rate. Although the interviewees underline the concepts of flexibility and independence, they express this in different ways. While some interviewees (G6, G8, G11) underline that they do not have to do the job they do not want to do and that they choose the projects they will do, some (G1, G3G, G4) say that they set their working time and hours according to their own preferences. Some state that their decisions are effective in the whole process (G9, G12, G7). The statement made by one of the interviewees for independence summarizes all opinions:

*G9: "We can say that freelance work is a way of life for me. I don't see this as working. It is a part of my life and I manage it the way I want it. I do the job with love, not because I feel obliged. Because I manage the business and I work when I want, I don't work when I don't. This is more important than anything else. Even than money."*

One of the potential benefits of self-employment is being the boss of your own business. This offers individuals the opportunity to work independently. In corporate organizations, what job the worker will do, where, how and when he will do it depend on the instructions of certain managers. However, self-employment offers opportunities for individuals to create and organize their own study program and to set their own agendas. The work schedule is organized according to the decisions of the employees and the demands of the customers. The worker does not have to accept a job that he does not like if his conditions are suitable (Conen et al., 2016).

Often, freedom is cited as a reason to work in the gig economy. Because this is the main determinant of how the work is experienced. The interviewees consider themselves responsible for the eventual success or failure of all jobs and careers. Taking an active role in the entire process, from design to delivery, can create a sense of ownership.

On the other hand, being independent and autonomous does not always reflect a real situation. It appears that most gig employees have a dependent employment relationship that is hidden or misclassified. In the interviews, it was understood that some of the participants work more independently than many, but the fact that the majority of them are free and autonomous is merely an illusion. Depending on the circumstances, the instructions of customers/employers can have a significant impact on the business processes of gig employees. At the same time, although the participants indicate that they are not controlled by a manager, it is possible to create a digital control



mechanism for high-level monitoring and measurement of the work performed on digital platforms thanks to the many features of ICTs.

The interviewees stated that freelancing offers a free working environment in many ways, but they could not bypass the customer's demands and special instructions. (G7) explained the reason for this as, ".... Because they evaluate and score me in return for my work. This affects my next customer portfolio". And (G12) stated that, "We are scored by the client after completing the job. This is important for us. Because if it makes a negative score, it decreases my probability of getting work on the platforms. That's why the customer's wishes are very important."

In the gig economy, a particularly significant share of digital control appears to be in the form of 'algorithmic management' determined by platform-based rating and reputation systems. Algorithmic management is an extension of 'customer management' strategies that enable to position customers as an agent. In this system, customers, rather than managers, are people who should be satisfied, and their comments or ratings on digital platforms leave an impression of gig workers and become an element of pressure for them (Fuller and Smith, 1991).

Gig workers are scored by their clients after tasks are completed. Employees with the best scores and the most experience tend to get more jobs due to the algorithmic ranking of the customers in the search results because workers with high scores rank high in searches on platforms (Rosenblat and Stark, 2016). Digital platforms create opportunities to remotely control workers by establishing new monitoring systems. Because it is now possible to observe the labor process by establishing monitoring and control mechanisms. For example, the frequency of keyboard touches and mouse movements of the workers are monitored and snapshots are made from their screens (Rosenblat and Stark, 2016). Therefore, capitalism, faced with any threat, does not refrain from developing new forms of production and appropriate control mechanisms in order to survive.

*G2: "When you work freelance, you feel freedom at first. This was very attractive to me. But over time I realized that we were not completely free. First of all, we feel the pressure to prepare content suitable for their demands in order to find customers. While doing online business on digital platforms, we may have to work non-stop. Because the system follows you instantly. It takes a picture of the screen and it's hard to explain if you're not there at the moment. Because there is no person in front of you that you can tell your problem at that moment. "*

And also; from time to time, gig workers have to compromise themselves in order to agree on a project with customers on digital platforms. There has been a tremendous increase in the gig economy in recent years. The increase in the number of workers seeking work in digital labor platforms triggers competition. It is not easy for a gig worker to get projects that meet all his wishes.

The projects he wants may not arrive on time, or he may come while the gig worker has other projects on hand. In some cases, gig workers may have to undertake projects that are not suitable for their qualifications in order to support themselves and their families. Therefore, the freedom to make decisions about the projects a gig worker will work seems to be more of a perception than a practical reality. However, this can still be seen as a motivating factor.

As a result, we cannot deny that gig workers are in many ways more independent than corporate workers, although there are many obstacles that limit the free working environment of gig economy workers. Gig workers are up to their individual decisions on which digital platforms and what kind of projects they will work on. Although some control systems have been established regarding working hours, they determine the time they will sit in front of the computer. Although there is a partial adherence to customers' instructions and wishes, procedures and rules dictated by a single manager are not included in the gig economy. These features inherent in freelancing are the most important motivational factors for gig workers. Because having the opportunity to choose offers them an experience of freedom.

### **Desire for Success and Continuous Learning**

Gig economy is a dynamic market. It is extremely important for people to improve themselves and learn new things in order to find a job in the gig economy. Many gig workers seem to enjoy learning new things in order to keep abreast of new developments and decide on their own career path.

The entrepreneurial motivation theory explains that people who need high success are constantly looking for improvements and ways to do things better. Here, the person has a high motivation to be successful and an internal locus of control (Williams and Curtis, 2007). People with an internal locus of control believe that the results of their lives stem from their own efforts (Spillan and Brazier, 2003).

Interviewees (G2) and (G5) stated that they enjoyed doing research and learning new things. (G2) "...Because it is necessary to learn new techniques anyway. Everything is changing very quickly. When I get a project, I want to do it in the best way as possible. it is your label at the same time"; (G5), "...In this way I get easier projects in the market. Because I offer new techniques and it attracts the customer".

It can be said that gig workers also have an internal locus of control. They believe their future is determined by the choices they make. Someone with an internal locus of control sees himself the source of your failures and successes. Hence, he forces himself more and more to achieve success in life. The gig worker is motivated because he will be at the center of the praise that comes from a successful job.

It has been understood that one of the factors that motivate the interviewees is that they receive the reward of their success individually because the interviewees stated that while they were working in a full-time institution, her/his job was not seen. (G3) stated that "... *While my works were applauded, even my name did not pass. However, the good works I do by working freelance are written to my portfolio. Why should I let other people use this? If you do your job well, you are not looking for a job anyway. Customers find you*". Similarly (G6) and (G9) stated that they worked hard to do their best. Because, according to (G6) "*When there is good work, there are customers anyway. I also receive the awards for my work myself. This motivates me more. I want to do better and be the best in the market*".

Gig workers want to be proud of their work and to be recognized for their achievements. This is one of the most important factors that motivate them. They don't need someone to force them to be efficient and productive. So they have a strong need not only for financial gain but also for success. They set difficult goals for themselves and take the time to try it out. At the same time, they have a strong desire to achieve these goals and solve problems on their own, are enthusiastic, passionate, forward-looking and seek self-improvement.

These people with a high need for success are generally entrepreneurially motivated and have relatively high success rates (Littunen 2000). As a province, McClelland (1961) linked the need for success to entrepreneurial behavior. This need creates a strong desire to do things well or better than others. People who need success are likely to plan ahead, enjoy taking personal responsibility, and prefer fast and specific feedback about their actions (Barbara- Sánchez and Atienza-Sahuquillo, 2012). Therefore, we understand that gig employees also have entrepreneurial motivation. Almost all of the interviewees stated that they use their talents for themselves rather than for an institution. Often what drives their own development is in the business itself. Therefore, they stated that by doing the work as they want, they have opportunities to do better and that the motivation to do the best job creates a dynamic process. Because gig workers find that doing the same thing is boring, they experience the feeling of success at a higher level of undertaking challenging and variable projects.

### Financial Instruments

Financial freedom can be considered as one of the factors affecting people's motivation to enter the gig economy; However, it has been understood that this is not seen as an important motivation tool. Because all of the interviewees emphasized the flexibility and autonomy provided by gig work, while financial issues differed among the interviewees.

According to the literature, while financial motivation tools are secondary to the tendency of individuals to tend towards the gig economy, desire to succeed and

autonomy are the leading factors that motivate gig workers (Williams and Curtis, 2007). This is a result that also occurs within the scope of the present study. It is observed that women and young gig workers interviewed tend to work freelance in order to earn income. However, the reasons why these people also enter the gig economy lie behind the flexible working opportunities and free working environment provided by gig work.

G12: "*... my wife's earnings provide our livelihood. But I work freelance to earn additional income. I can work because the working hours are flexible. Otherwise I could not work. My daughter is 2 years old*"

G1: "*It is nice not to be dependent on a person's salary. I can do projects for various clients at the same time, and when one of them ends up I don't lose all my income. That's why you're less addicted. In fact, there is no addiction. This makes me feel better*".

Autonomy requires gig workers to perform the work, establish routines, and apply these routines when no one is held responsible for doing it (Ashford et al., 2007). This also means that he will bear the consequences of his choices. Thus, gig workers are solely responsible for their own short and long term economic survival. However, employees' exposure to high responsibility is not always beneficial for welfare (Schmitt, Hartog and Belschak, 2015). Gig workers' wage experiences; The type of job depends on a number of factors such as how experienced the experienced people are, how well their online profiles are developing, and whether they are dependent on this income as their main source of income. If the income that gig workers earn is only from such jobs, that is, people who have no other income than the income from gig jobs to survive are experiencing tension. However, gig workers have been found to be more comfortable if gig jobs are not the only resource workers have to rely on to survive. The effects of uncertainty are low, especially for those who have multiple sources of income, both online and offline. Because even though there is no money to come from a project in the gig economy, income from other jobs reduces anxiety.

And also; If the gig economy creates alternative working environments and income-generating opportunities for freelance workers, it seems that the wage earned in the gig economy is not satisfactory enough (Berg, et al., 2018). Most of the interviewees (G1, G2, G3, G7, G8, G9, G10, G12) stated that it would be difficult to make the payments required for living on time if they earn their main income from gig jobs. For example, (G3) stated that.. "*I make my whole life by working freelance. Sometimes I worry about whether I will be able to pay my bills. Because the payments for my work may not be on time. Or the client does not like the job and may not pay at all.* In particular, some interviewees (G8, G10, G5) emphasized that the income they earned by working freelance was not enough to plan their future.

G8: *"Wages are low in this market. I work for more than one client at the same time. But this does not mean that I earn a lot. Because I can not get my fee on time. Uncertainty sometimes causes me to do many things in my life on time."*

However, in the gig economy, this continuity and routine are fragmented. The routine has been replaced by unpredictability and uncertainty. This process, defined as flexibility, experiences the worker as insecurity. Therefore, he experiences tension (Çerkezoğlu and Göztepe, 2010). The indication of this tension and fear in the relationship experienced is precariousness and uncertainty.

G7: *"I cannot afford to live on income only from what I get from gig jobs. Either you will get a lot of projects - which is not easy - or you will also work on some jobs offline. I have to pay my bills on time. However, I do not have regular income from gig jobs."*

G2: *"I can't always find a project. There are too many people in this market now. The work we do has also become cheaper. So it's not easy to live with just gig jobs. I lived while I was single, but now I have a child. Sometimes I can't get a job for weeks. I'm investing time and money on internet connectivity, electricity, and more. I need to check if there is a job for me on digital platforms. I'm always online."*

In short, it is unclear for gig workers whether monetary elements are perceived as a motivation, or whether they are highly valued. Therefore, it may be misleading to say that financial freedom is a motivational tool by evaluating only these expressions. Although gig workers do not see the financial side as a motivational tool in itself, it is clear that money is still an important part of the job. Thus, we can say that money is a factor that workers value, but is not a motivation in itself. This is also in line with the entrepreneurial motivation literature where financial incentives are considered to be of secondary importance only (Amit et al., 2001).

### Relationships and Connections

Relationships shape individuals' work experiences. Interpersonal relationships in the workplace are particularly important for the well-being of employees (Haar et al., 2009). While workers who are working in traditional organizations probably have a stable set of relationships, gig workers build relationships fluently by forming a social network, including other gig workers with similar skills, potential customers, supporters, and employers (Petriglieri, Ashford and Wrzesniewski, 2018).

The changing nature of the gig economy, and unstable emotions it causes make it necessary to have the ability to create a social support system that can both meet the demand of the workplace and provide stable feelings of personal connection (Petriglieri, Ashford and Wrzesniewski, 2018). Interpersonal relationships in offices help employees manage their negative emotions and concerns. Office environments have interpersonal

or group-based relationships that enable employees to manage situations that trigger anxiety (Kahn, 2001). Because organizations are often the source of people's emotional work experiences. However, in the gig economy, it is not easy to manage these processes for home workers. First of all, having a specific work identity is problematic, especially for organizations with coded roles and for freelancers operating outside of established professions. Gig economy is a business world where "workplace" is no longer synonymous with office building or factory floor (Barley, 2016).

While the absence of an organization is seen as a major advantage for self-employment for gig workers, many overlook the benefits of organizational employment. Because the participants unconsciously drew attention to the lack of organizational orientation and support while explaining their gig work experiences. Some of the interviewees (G3, G11, G7, G9, G11) stated that not having someone to tell them what to do led to an increase in their stress levels. For example (G3) stated that *"... Sometimes I get confused about where to start. I want to get an opinion from someone about things. And (G11) stated that "... if I get the start wrong, I waste a lot of time. I feel the need to ask someone. Most of the time, I call my friends on the phone and get their opinions"*. Another interviewee explained her views on this issue as follows:

G7: *"Working at home has both good and bad sides. There are people in an office where I can exchange information and have a coffee after leaving the office. Working at home alone overwhelms me. There is no one you can get an opinion on. Or there is no one you can chat with between work. Sometimes I work in pajamas all day. I stay home for days."*

Physical distance between gig workers creates relational difficulties for workers as they often lack career counselors or role models and therefore miss opportunities for practical skills development (Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2011). And also; Because of its autonomy, temporality, and financial instability, workers in the gig economy can feel the feeling of loneliness more intensely by experiencing a deep sense of isolation. These conditions disrupt the formation and continuity of personal and family relationships (Rowlands and Handy, 2012). At the same time, these workers risk losing their sense of professional identity. Such employees may question their identities as they enter and leave different roles at home and work in isolation at home with homewear. This can lead to problems while managing their relationships.

G11: *"Sometimes I work without taking off my pajamas. I make my conversations on the phone. It is not easy to be a life coach in pajamas."*

G8: *"Sometimes I feel so lazy at home. Sometimes it feels like it's not very positive that his bed and job are in the same place. I can choose to postpone my work and sleep."*

*G5: "I don't have a colleague. Out-of-home relationships are also important. Employees in the office can establish different bonds with each other. After work, they sit down, have coffee and can discuss different topics."*

On the other hand, the gig economy also makes it possible to establish strong connections and become known in the market and create an effective portfolio. It is extremely important for all independent workers in the gig economy to expand their personal social network and build strong connections. Because in order to find a job in the gig economy, the gig worker himself has to manage the relations with the customers. Therefore, since strong relationships and connections established in the gig economy are important, gig workers have to make extra effort to stabilize their relationships by establishing direct relationships with customers. This is not only limited to the relationship between customers and the gig worker, but also includes relationships between various platforms, institutions, other gig workers. The frequency, quality and stability of relationships that gig workers establish with customers also affect their recognition in the market. In order to find new jobs, it is necessary to be in constant contact with prestigious and reputable customers / institutions and to ensure customer satisfaction. It is deemed necessary for the customer to be satisfied as it depends on his orientation. In the gig economy, individuals are on the scene and have to get ahead of other gig workers and gain prestigious customers in order to develop a positive brand image of themselves. Gig worker motivates himself to become an entrepreneur. Acting like a micro cosmic business; It should develop a strategy, market itself, develop "products", position itself as a brand, and understand the market for itself. Individuals develop self-discipline to support their personal strategies (Knights and Morgan, 1991).

Almost all of the interviewees emphasized that the people they work with are references for their future work.

*G10: "The people I do business with are a reference for my future work. Their comments about me will make me permanent in this market. I do business with the awareness of this."*

*G5: "Every client I work with has sent someone else to me. Work comes to you for your effort anyway.."*

*In addition, it is seen that the interviewees also make special efforts to ensure the stability of business relations in the sector.*

*G10: "... Managing relationships also takes a lot of effort"*

*G7: "Sometimes the effort I put to satisfying customers outweighs the effort I put into the business. The stronger and more stable relationships you build in this market, the more money you will earn. It does not mean that I sit at home, just do business. You have to make your social networks strong"*

In the gig economy, the constant change of jobs, and therefore customers, adds dynamism to the relational processes of gig workers, while they are aware of being observed by others because they are in front of the stage. That's why gig workers often feel pressured to create their own brands.

Gig workers need to quickly and effectively manage relationships with customers, ensure continuity of relationships, and make an effort to build new relationships. Most of the interviewees emphasized the necessity of networking both through online platforms and by participating in various activities taking place in offline environments. He also stated that they follow the developments in the sector in order to continuously add new people to their networks and maintain their existing relationships, and that they are in contact with the authorities working in their fields.

### **Push Motivation Factors**

Push factors in entrepreneurial motivation are seen as "necessity" factors. It is negative motivations that push a person to work for their own account. Unemployment is the key factor driving individuals to prepare an entrepreneurial career (Cobb-Clark, 2015). Self-employment has become an economic policy that increases employment, which is supported by governments, especially as women, elderly and young people are more involved in the labor market (Startienė, Remeikienė and Dumčiuvienė, 2010). Hessels et al. (2008) defined this type of entrepreneurship as "compulsory entrepreneurship", while Thurik et al. (2008) uses the term "refugee entrepreneurship".

### **Unemployment**

While only three of the interviewees (G4, G11, G12) consider unemployment as one of their reasons to enter the gig economy, it is seen that the majority voluntarily enter the gig economy. Interviewees stated that it is more motivating to take care of themselves rather than working in jobs that are not suitable for their qualifications in the market. And also, many of them prefer to work as a freelancer to work in a job they do not want. Some interviewees (G3, G5, G7, G8) stated that they were confident in their qualifications and they could find a permanent job if they wanted, but they didn't want to waste their energy doing jobs they didn't like. So freelancing work in society is seen as equivalent to unemployment by some segments. However, the interviewees do not agree with this view (G2, G6, G9). For example, (G9) stated that *"when they ask what I do, I say I'm working freelance. So they say I am unemployed. I say no, I have my own business. I do not accept the definition of unemployed"*.

The lack of employment opportunities and career prospects is one of the most important factors for a person to turn to self-employment. At the point where a person becomes unemployed, the options are to find another job or work for his own account. On the other hand,

when the worker feels unhappy with the current job, company, position or job role, they tend to control their lives on their own (Cromie and Hayes 1991). Although the interviewees refer to the issue of unemployment at certain points, they argue that freelance work is a new way of working. They are willing to work full time if they find a satisfactory job; but they reject job opportunities that offer them a work environment that is below their potential.

## CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

This article has focused on freelancer in the gig economy, and purpose has been to obtain an understanding of motivational factors of gig workers. Survey was conducted with 117 freelancers and they were asked what are the reasons that push/pull freelance work. When we look at the demographic characteristics of the sample group, we see that women (53.8) are predominantly in the 18-35 age range (82%). 43.6% of the participants have a bachelor's degree, 40% have an associate degree, 76.9% are single and 84.6% define themselves as freelancers. Therefore, the participants constitute a young and educated sample group that adopts the freelance working culture. 79.5% of the respondents stated that they were happy at working freelance. This result is consistent with the question of whether working in the gig economy is a choice or a necessity. It was determined that 74.4% of the participants voluntarily preferred to work gig. Freedom (56.4%), flexible working program (51.3%), desire to learn and develop continuously (56.4%), motivation to be successful (38.2) factors have a significant share in the motivation to enter the gig economy.

In the qualitative phase of the research, although there are apparently differences in motivation among individual participants, motivational factors such as "desire to succeed, desire to be one's own boss and avoidance of control were mentioned by most of the participants.

Freedom and flexibility motivation factors correspond to the gig economy employees to choose their job and manage their working time individually. Gig workers do not have a supervisor that gives instructions on how to do the job. Therefore, the self-motivation tendency of the gig worker coincides with the entrepreneurial motivation, since no one else will be responsible for the actions of a self-employed person. According to the results obtained from the interviews, although gig workers emphasize their independence in many issues, it has been observed that there are some factors that limit the independence of gig workers. In particular, the evaluations made by customers on digital platforms for gig workers and the online control mechanisms that make workers dependent on the screen for online work are factors that prevent their independence from being completely under control. However, the fact that the gig worker is in a decisive position on work preferences proves the existence of a sense of independence. It is difficult to deny the importance of this for gig workers.

Because independence in choosing projects highly affects the perception that they work independently.

The motivation for success and development meet the need to learn new things, constantly improve skills and take on challenges. Lifelong learning is necessary not only in entrepreneurial activities, but also in all activities in the rapidly changing world. The ability to plan and organize is one of the key elements for workers to be successful in the gig economy.

The motivation to network and build relationships is an important part of being a gig worker and is often a mandatory need. All of the participants drew attention to the importance of establishing stable relationships in doing business in the gig economy. Because the quality of the work done by the gig worker and customer satisfaction affect the quality and continuity of the next jobs. In addition, it is observed that gig workers are isolated and lonely due to the fact that gig work is performed alone on the computer. Therefore, gig workers need to make a special effort outside of work to establish connections and establish solid relationships. However, it is difficult to determine if gig workers are motivated on their own. Different variables are involved in the process.

The financial situation has been found to be a requirement for work, not motivation per se. Motivation factors stemmed from natural motivations such as the high need for success and the desire for independence.

The interviewees only mentioned the unemployment situation as the "push factor". Unemployment is one of the major factors driving workers into the gig economy. Participants indicate that there are alternative job opportunities; however, he stated that he did not satisfy them. Therefore, they pointed out that freelance work is more motivating than working in such jobs.

The gig economy has grown and insecure work has indeed become the new normal. This represents a major power shift in favor of employers in terms of reducing labor costs through flexibility. The arguments that are part of a precariat defined by precarious work are substantial. Since this study deals with freelance work by making use of the entrepreneurship literature, the dimension of insecurity is not given much space.

## LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

Due to the characteristics of the gig economy and freelance work, the research has some limitations. Freelancing is a form of self-employment that inherently contains the characteristics of freedom and insecurity. Studies that deal with the subject of freelance work in terms of employment relations generally emphasize that freelance workers are exposed to negative conditions while those that deal with entrepreneurship approach see them as entrepreneurs. In this study, while we analyze the motivation factors of freelancers, the entrepreneurial motivation literature was used. Since the sample of this research consists of well-educated and qualified

freelancers, we can say that individuals see freelancing as an opportunity rather than a necessity and participate in the gig economy voluntarily. Most of the interviewees generally emphasize the attractive aspects of freelancing, such as being independent. Entrepreneurship is becoming attractive among freelancers worldwide. Therefore, when the motivation factors of freelancers are analyzed based on the entrepreneurship motivation theory, it can be said that the sample group serves the purpose of the research correctly. The findings seems to be consistent with the entrepreneurial motivation literature. Research on the gig economy is rather limited. Therefore, a starting point is needed as research on the motivational factors of freelancers is also limited. While the entrepreneur and the self-employed enter the field of self-employment with many similarities, the entrepreneurial motivation literature has been recognized as a suitable start for research in the field of motivation in the gig economy. But the gig economy is growing and insecurity is becoming the new normal. This represents a major power shift in favor of employers in terms of reducing labor costs through flexibility. The arguments that are part of a precariat defined by precarious work are substantial. However, since this study prioritizes the entrepreneurial aspect of freelance work, it does not include the insecurity dimension.

Another limiting factor is sample size. It is quite difficult to reach such employees as they are not registered anywhere and are self-employed. A much larger sample could have further strengthened the findings, but this was not possible due to time constraints. In-depth research from different perspectives is needed to develop in this field. I hope this research inspires further research. I believe this article is only the first but important step towards a new research trajectory focused on the entrepreneurial motivations of freelancers.

## REFERENCES

- Abraham, K. G., Haltiwanger, J., Sandusky, K., & Spletzer, J. (2019). The Rise of the Gig Economy: Fact or Fiction?. In *AEA Papers and Proceedings* (Vol. 109, pp. 357-61).
- Ahi, G. (2016). Gig Ekonomisi - I, Digital Age: <https://digitalage.com.tr/makale/gig-ekonomisi-i/> (E.T. 07.05.2022)
- Amit, R., & Muller, E. (1995). "Push" and "Pull" Entrepreneurship. *Journal of Small Business & Entrepreneurship*, 12(4), 64-80.
- Amit, R., MacCrimmon, K., Zietsma, C. & Oesch, J. M. (2001), "Does Money Matter? Wealth Attainment as the Motive for Initiating Growth-orientated Technology Businesses", *Journal of Business Venturing*, Vol. 16 No. 2, 119-43
- Arthur, M. B. (1994). The Boundaryless Career: A New Perspective for Organizational Inquiry. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 15(4), 295-306.
- Ashford, S.J., George, E. & Blatt, R. (2007). Old Assumptions, New Work. *Academy of Management Annals*, 1(1), 65-117. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/078559807>
- Ashford, S. J., Caza, B. B. & Reid, E. M. (2018). From Surviving to Thriving in the Gig Economy: A Research Agenda for Individuals in the New World of Work. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 38, 23-41.
- Atkinson, R., & Flint, J. (2001). Accessing Hidden and Hard-to-Reach Populations: Snowball Research Strategies. *Social Research Update*, 33(1), 1-4.
- Baki, A., & Gökçek, T. (2012). "Karma Yöntem Araştırmalarına Genel Bir Bakış", *Elektronik Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 11(42), 1-21.
- Barba-Sánchez, V., & Atienza-Sahuquillo, C. (2012). Entrepreneurial Behavior: Impact of Motivation Factors on Decision to Create a New Venture. *Investigaciones Europeas de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa*, 18(2), 132-138.
- Barley, S. R. (2016). 60th Anniversary Essay: Ruminations on How We Became a Mystery House and How We Might Get Out. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 61(1), 1-8. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0001839215624886>
- Bögenhold, D., Klinglmair, R., & Kandutsch, F. (2017). Solo-Self-Employment, Human Capital and Hybrid Labour in the Gig Economy. *Форсаüm*, 11(4 (eng)), 23-32.
- Broughton, A., Gloster, R., Marvell, R., Green, M., Langley, J., & Martin, A. (2018). The Experiences of Individuals in the Gig Economy. *Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)*.
- Bryman, A. (2007). Barriers to Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(1), 8-22. <http://doi.org/10.1177/2345678906290531>
- Burchell, B., Ladipo, D. & Wilkinson, F. (Eds.). (2002). Job Insecurity and Work Intensification (pp. 53-80). London: Routledge.
- Burke, A. (2011). The Entrepreneurship Enabling Role of Freelancers: Theory with Evidence from the Construction Industry. *International Review of Entrepreneurship*, 9(3), 28.
- Burtch, G., Carnahan, S., Greenwood, B. N. (2018). "Can You Gig It? An Empirical Examination Of The Gig Economy And Entrepreneurial Activity", *Management Science*.
- Burke, A. E., Fitzroy, F. R. & Nolan, M. A. (2008). What Makes a Die-Hard Entrepreneur? Beyond the "Employee or Entrepreneur" Dichotomy. *Small Bus Econ*, 31, 93-115. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-007-9086-6>
- Callahan, M., Shumpert, N. & Mast, M. (2002). Self-employment, Choice and Self-determination. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 17(2), 75-85.
- Çiğdem, S., & Erdoğan, E. (2020). Türkiye'de Freelance Gazetecilerin Çalışma Koşulları. *Sosyoekonomi*, 28(46), 243-269.
- CIPD (2017). To Gig or Not to Gig? Stories from the Modern Economy. Survey Report. [https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/to-gig-or-not-to-gig\\_2017-stories-from-the-modern-economy\\_tcm18-18955.pdf](https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/to-gig-or-not-to-gig_2017-stories-from-the-modern-economy_tcm18-18955.pdf)
- Clinton, M., Totterdell, P. & Wood, S. (2006). A Grounded Theory of Portfolio Working Experiencing the Smallest of Small Businesses. *International Small Business Journal*, 24(2), 179-203. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0266242606061843>
- Cobb-Clark, D. A. (2015). Locus of Control and the Labor Market. *IZA Journal of Labor Economics*, 4(1), 3.
- Conen, W., Schippers, J. & Schulze Buschoff, K. (2016). Self-employed without Personnel Between Freedom and Insecurity. *WSI-Institute of Economic and Social Research*. <http://doi.org/10.1177/09500172004042772>
- Cromie, A. & Hayes, J. (1991). Business Ownership as a Means of Overcoming Job Dissatisfaction, *Personnel Review*, 20(1), 19-24.
- Çerkezoğlu, A. & Göztepe, Ö. (2010) "Sınıfını Arayan Siyasetten Siyasetini Arayan Sınıf: Güvencesizler", (ed. Gökhan Bulut) *TEKEL Direnişinin İşçinde Gelenekselden Yeniye İşçi Sınıfı Hareketi*, Ankara: Notabene Yayınları

- Dawson, C., Henley, A. & Latreille, P. (2009). Why Do Individuals Choose Self-Employment? (No. No.3974). Bonn.
- Dawson, C., & Henley, A. (2012). "Push" Versus "Pull" Entrepreneurship: an Ambiguous Distinction?. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*.
- De Stefano, V. (2015). The Rise of the Just-in-time Workforce: On-demand Work, Crowdwork, and Labor Protection in the Gig Economy. *Comp. Lab. L. and Pol'y J.*, 37, 471.
- Dobre, O. I. (2013). Employee Motivation and Organizational Performance. *Review of Applied Socio-Economic Research*, 5(1).
- Du Gay, P., Salaman, G., Rees, B. (1996). "The Conduct Of Management And The Management Of Conduct: Contemporary Managerial Discourse And The Constitution Of The 'Competent' Manager", *Journal of Management Studies*, 33(3), 263-282.
- Eijdenberg, E. L., & Masurel, E. (2013). Entrepreneurial Motivation in a Least Developed Country: Push Factors and Pull Factors Among MSEs in Uganda. *Journal of Enterprising Culture*, 21(01), 19-43.
- Fellegi, I. (2010). Survey Methods and Practices. Statistics Canada. <http://doi.org/12-587-X>
- Fudge, J. (2003). Labour Protection for Self-employed Workers. *Just Labour*, 3, 36-44.
- Fuller L. & Smith V. (1991) Consumers' Reports: Management by Customers in a Changing Economy. *Work, Employment and Society* 5(1): 1-16
- Gerry, S., Dan, B., & Jerry, S. (2005). The Motivation to Become an Entrepreneur. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research*, 11(1), 42-57.
- Glavin, P., Bierman, A & Schieman, S. (2019). Workers in the Gig Economy Feel Lonely and Powerless, <http://theconversation.com/workers-in-the-gig-economy-feel-lonely-and-powerless-127188>
- Gonnelly, G. E. & Gallagher, D. G. (2004). Emerging Trends in Contingent Work Research. *Journal of Management*, 30, 959-983
- Handy, C. (1984), *The Future of Work : A Guide to a Changing Society*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Haar, J., Schmitz, A., Di Fabio, A. & Daellenbach, U. (2019). The Role of Relationships at Work and Happiness: A Moderated Moderated Mediation Study of New Zealand Managers. *Sustainability*, 11(12), 3443.
- Hessels, J., Van Gelderen, M. & Thurik, A.R. (2008), Entrepreneurial Aspirations, Motivations and Their Drivers", *Small Business Economics*, Vol. 31 No. 3, 323-39.
- House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee (2016). Self-Employment and the Gig Economy, Thirteenth Report of Session 2016-17.
- Hughes, K. D. (2003). Pushed or pulled? Women's Entry into Self-Employment and Small Business Ownership. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 10(4), 433-454.
- Hunter, A. (2015). Crowdfunding Independent and Freelance Journalism: Negotiating Journalistic Norms of Autonomy and Objectivity. *New Media and Society*, 17(2), 272-288. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1461444814558915>.
- Huws, U., Spencer, N., & Joyce, S. (2016). Crowd Work in Europe: Preliminary Results from a Survey in the UK, Sweden, Germany, Austria and the Netherlands. Foundation for European Progressive Studies.
- Ivankova, N. V., Creswell, J. W. & Stick, S. L. (2006). Using Mixed-Methods Sequential Explanatory Design: From Theory to Practice. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 3-20. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05282260>
- Karlsson K. and Wranne J. (2019) Motivation in the Gig Economy A Case Study of Gig Workers in the IT and Business Consulting Industry, Degree Project In The Field Of Technology Industrial Engineering And Management And The Main Field Of Study Industrial Management, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Kässi, O. & Lehdonvirta, V. (2018). Online Labour Index: Measuring the Online Gig Economy for Policy and Research. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 137, 241-248.
- Keith, M. G., Harms, P., & Tay, L. (2019). Mechanical Turk and the Gig Economy: Exploring Differences Between Gig Workers. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*.
- Kirkwood, J. (2009), Motivational Factors in a Push-Pull Theory of Entrepreneurship", *Gender in Management*, Vol. 24 No. 5, pp. 346-364. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17542410910968805>
- Knights, D. & Morgan, G. (1991). Corporate Strategy, Organisations, and Subjectivity: A Critique. *Journal of Management Studies*, 1991, 12, 251-73.
- Kuhn, K. M. (2016). The Rise of the "Gig Economy" and Implications for Understanding Work and Workers. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. <http://doi.org/10.1017/iop.2015.129>
- Littunen, H. (2000). Entrepreneurship and the Characteristics of the Entrepreneurial Personality. University of Jyväskylä, School of Business and Economics Centre for Economic Research. Research Paper
- Leech, N. L. & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2009). A Typology of Mixed Methods Research Designs. *Quality and Quantity*, 43(2), 265-275. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-007-9105-3>



- Lepanjuuri, K., Wishart, R. & Cornick, P. (2018). The Characteristics of Those in the Gig Economy. Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/687553/The\\_characteristics\\_of\\_those\\_in\\_the\\_gig\\_economy.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/687553/The_characteristics_of_those_in_the_gig_economy.pdf)
- Mallon, M. (1998). From Public Sector Employees to Portfolio Workers: Pioneers of New Careers? In *Experiencing Human Resource Management* (pp.169–186). 1 Oliver's Yard, 55 City Road, London EC1Y 1SP United Kingdom: SAGE Publications Ltd. <http://doi.org/10.4135/9781446280263.n10>
- Marlow, S. (1997), "Self-Employed Women – New Opportunities, Old Challenges?"; *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, Vol. 9, pp. 199-210.
- Mcclelland, D.C. (1961). *The Achieving Society*. Princeton: Van Nostrans Reinhold.
- Mkubukeli, Z. & Cronje, J.C. (2018). Pull and Push Elements of Entrepreneurship in South Africa: A Small-Scale Mining Perspective. *Journal of Entrepreneurship & Organization Management*, 7(3), 1-7.
- Naffziger, D. W., Hornsby, J. S., & Kuratko, D. F. (1994). A Proposed Research Model of Entrepreneurial Motivation. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 18(3), 29-42.
- Nies, G. & Pedersini, R. (2003). Report: Freelance Journalists in the European Media Industry. Brussels.
- Nosková, M., & Peráček, T. (2019). Termination of employment in the Slovak Republic as a key issue of HR Management. *Central European Journal of Labour Law and Personnel Management*, 2(2), 44-59.
- Ohlsson, H. (2004). Introduction: Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship. *Swedish Economic Policy Review*, 11(2), 3-13.
- Ojiaku, O. C., Nkamnebe, A. D., & Nwaizugbo, I. C. (2018). Determinants of Entrepreneurial Intentions Among Young Graduates: Perspectives of Push-Pull-Mooring Model. *Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research*, 8(1), 1-17.
- Opait, G., Damian, D., & Capatina, A. (2019). Freelancer as an Entrepreneur: a Choice as Career Development.
- Özmen et. all, (2019). İstatistik II, T.c. Anadolu üniversitesi Yayını No: 2806 Açıköğretim Fakültesi Yayını No: 1764, Eskişehir.
- Parker, S. (2004), *The Economics of Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK
- Pedersini, R., & Coletto, D. (2009). *Self-Employed Workers: Industrial Relations And Working Conditions*.
- Petriglieri, G., Ashford, S. J. & Wrzesniewski, A. (2018). Agony and Ecstasy in the Gig Economy: Cultivating Holding Environments for Precarious and Personalized Work Identities. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 64(1), 124-170. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0001839218759646>
- Prokopenko, O., Osadchenko, I., Braslavskaya, O., Malyshevskaya, I., Pichkur, M., & Tyshchenko, V. (2020). Competence Approach in Future Specialist Skills Development. *International Journal of Management*, 11(4), 645-656.
- Ramlall, S. (2004). A Review of Employee Motivation Theories and Their Implications for Employee Retention Within Organizations. *Journal of American academy of Business*, 5(1/2), 52-63
- Rees, H., & Shah, A. (1986). "An Empirical Analysis Of Self- Employment In The UK", *Journal Of Applied Econometrics*, 1(1), 95-108.
- Ritchie, J. Lewis, J. ve Elam, G. (2006). *Designing and Selecting Samples* ( Ed. J. Ritchie ve J. Lewis). *Qualitative Research Practise A Guide For Social Science Students And Researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Rosenblat A. & Stark L. (2016) Algorithmic Labor and Information Asymmetries: A Case Study of Uber's Drivers. *International Journal of Communication* 10: 3758–3784.
- Sandelowski, M. (2000). "Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Sampling, Data Collection, and Analysis Techniques in Mixed-Method Studies", *Research in Nursing & Health*, 23(3), 246–255.
- Sapienza, H. J., Korsgaard, M. A. & Forbes, D. P. (2003). The Self-determination Motive and Entrepreneurs' Choice of Financing. In *Cognitive Approaches to Entrepreneurship Research*. Emerald Group Publishing Limited
- Schmitt, A., Den Hartog, D. N. & Belschak, F. D. (2015). Is outcome Responsibility at Work Emotionally Exhausting? Investigating Employee Proactivity as a Moderator. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 20(4), 491–500. <http:// dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0039011>
- Shane, S., Locke, E. A. & Collins, C. J. (2003). Entrepreneurial Motivation. *Human Resource Management Review*, 13(2), 257–279.
- Spillan, J. E. & Brazier, R. (2003). External and Internal Locus of Control's Influence on Women Entrepreneurs: An Exploratory Study. *OMEA-MBAA 2003 Proceedings*, 61-70.
- Spreitzer, G.M., Cameron, L. and Garrett, L. (2017), "Alternative work arrangements: two images of the new world of work", *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 473-499.

- Stanworth, C. & Stanworth, J. (1995). The Self-Employed Without Employees-Autonomous or Atypical? *Industrial Relations Journal*, 26(3), 221–229. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2338.1995.tb00739.x>
- Startienė, G., Remeikienė, R. & Dumčiuvienė, D. (2010). Concept of self-Employment. *Economic and Management*, 15, 262–274.
- Statistics Canada (1997) Labour Force Update: The Self-Employed, Ottawa: Statistics Canada.
- Storey, J., Salaman, G., & Platman, K. (2005). "Living With Enterprise In An Enterprise Economy: Freelance And Contract Workers In The Media", *Human Relations*, 58(8), 1033-1054.
- Stephan, U., Hart, M., & Drews, C. C. (2015). Understanding Motivations for Entrepreneurship: A Review of Recent Research Evidence.
- Szaban, J. (2018). Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship: A Theoretical Approach. *Central European Management Journal*, 26(2), 89-120.
- Waldorf, G. (2016). Why Working Multiple Jobs will be the New Normal. *Entrepreneur*, July 12. [www.entrepreneur.com/article/278769](http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/278769).
- Williams, J. & Curtis, T. (2007). *CIM Coursebook 06/07 Marketing Management in Practice*. Routledge
- World Bank. (2018). *World Development Report 2019: The Changing Nature of Work*. The World Bank.
- Zahra, S. A., Korri, J. S., & Yu, J. (2005). Cognition and International Entrepreneurship: Implications for Research on International Opportunity Recognition and Exploitation. *International Business Review*, 14(2), 129-146. DOI: 10.1016/j.ibusrev.2004.04.005.