

Crowd Work – A New Age Employment Opportunity

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Abstract— Crowd work, also known as crowdsourcing, has emerged as a disruptive force in the labor market. It involves sourcing work from a large pool of individuals, often over the internet which is referred as digital labour platform, and has gained popularity due to its potential to reduce costs, increase speed, job autonomy, and improve quality of work. Though Crowd work creates lots of job opportunities, still a lack of regulatory framework is setting back people to evolve as a crowd worker. This paper provides a comprehensive review of the literature on crowd work, examining its history, key concepts, and current state of research. The paper also identifies opportunities, challenges, and implications for the future of work.

Keywords— Crowd work, digital labour platforms, job autonomy, regulatory framework.

INTRODUCTION

Crowd work refers to the process of outsourcing tasks or projects to a large group of people through an online platform. (Durward et al., 2020) Crowd work, also known as crowd sourcing, is a new age employment opportunity that has been made possible by the widespread use of the internet and digital technologies. It involves outsourcing tasks or projects to a large group of people, often using an online platform. Crowd work has become increasingly popular in recent years, with many businesses turning to this model as a cost-effective way to complete tasks and projects.

This practice has become increasingly popular in recent years, with platforms such as Amazon Mechanical Turk and Upwork providing opportunities for workers around the world to earn money by completing a wide variety of tasks (Rani & Furrer, 2021) (Rani & Furrer, 2021).

History of Crowdsourcing:

Crowdworking began in the form of clickworking in the year 2000, when NASA was looking for a means to locate and describe craters on Mars. Because this work required no scientific knowledge, NASA turned to the general population for assistance. People volunteered, and while they were not compensated for their efforts, they set the framework for future crowdworking. Invalid source specified. Prior to the mid-twentieth-century introduction of programmable data-processing electronic devices, the term "computer" was often used to designate a person paid to perform mind-bogglingly repetitive calculations. Human computers have largely been forgotten, and (Kittur et al., 2013) determined to restore them to their rightful place in history. It is frequently suggested that crowd labour now is the same as piece work in the past (Alkhatib et al., 2017). Invalid

source specified. The concept of crowdsourcing can be traced back to the early 18th century, when the British government offered a prize to anyone who could come up with a solution for determining longitude at sea. However, the term "crowdsourcing" was not coined until 2006 by Jeff Howe in an article for Wired magazine. Since then, the popularity of crowdsourcing has increased rapidly, and it has become an important part of many industries, including journalism, marketing, and software development. (Kittur et al., 2013)

Types of Crowd Work:

There are several different types of crowd work, including microtasking, crowdfunding, and open innovation. Microtasking involves breaking down a larger task into smaller, simpler tasks that can be completed quickly and easily by individuals in the crowd. Crowdfunding involves raising funds for a project or product by soliciting contributions from a large number of people (Durward et al., 2016). Open innovation involves using the crowd to generate new ideas and solutions for a particular problem.

Opportunities and Benefits:

Crowd work offers several opportunities and benefits for both workers and businesses. For workers, crowd work offers flexible schedules, the ability to work from anywhere, and the opportunity to gain new skills and experiences. For businesses, crowd work offers cost savings, access to a large pool of talent, and the ability to scale up or down quickly. Digital labor platform provides employment opportunity to the physically disabled people and people who cannot commute to the work and want to make decent earnings, thus it has

potential of reducing unemployment in the economy. (Williams et al., 2021)

Challenges and Risks:

Despite its benefits, crowd work also presents several challenges and risks. These include issues related to quality control, privacy and security, and the ethical treatment of workers. In addition, crowd work can lead to job insecurity, as workers are often engaged on a project-by-project basis and may not have access to traditional employment benefits such as healthcare and retirement savings. On the other hand, several factors can deter people from participating. For instance, the existence of potential risks, such as extra costs, the absence of relevant laws, delivery delay, and unclear distribution of responsibilities inhibit crowd workers' continued involvement. Similarly, crowd workers can get discouraged by problems such as financial instability, lack of social protection, isolation, and pressure, blurred boundaries between work and private life, fierce competition, and uncertainty caused by short-term schedules. (Huang et al., 2020)

Crowd work in India:

There are several opportunities for crowd workers in India (India's Booming Gig and Platform Economy, n.d.). The crowdworking industry in India has been growing rapidly in recent years, and there are many online platforms that offer various types of work to individuals. (Dey et al., 2022) Here are some of the opportunities for crowd workers in India:

- **Microtasks:** One of the most popular forms of crowdworking is microtasking. This involves completing small tasks such as data entry, image tagging, and content moderation. There are several platforms such as Amazon Mechanical Turk, Microworkers, and Clickworker that offer microtasking opportunities to Indian workers. (Caza et al., 2022)
- **Freelancing:** Freelancing has become a popular option for many individuals in India, especially those who have specific skills such as writing, design, and programming. There are several platforms such as Upwork, Freelancer, and Fiverr that allow freelancers to connect with clients and find work. (Jäger et al., 2019)
- **Transcription:** Another popular form of crowdworking in India is transcription. Many companies and individuals require audio or video content to be transcribed into text. There are several platforms such as Rev, Scribie, and TranscribeMe

that offer transcription work to Indian workers. (Berg, 2016)

- **Online tutoring:** With the rise of online education, there has been an increase in demand for online tutors. Many platforms such as Chegg, TutorMe, and Vedantu offer tutoring opportunities to Indian workers who have expertise in various subjects. (Bruckman et al., 2013)
- **Social media management:** Many businesses require social media management to promote their products and services. There are several platforms such as Social Media Manager, Appen, and Lionbridge that offer social media management opportunities to Indian workers. (Springfeldt, n.d.)

Overall, there are many opportunities for crowd workers in India. As technology continues to advance, we can expect to see even more opportunities for Indian workers in the crowdworking industry.

Present era, medium-skilled jobs make up about 47% of gig labour, high-skilled jobs around 22%, and low-skilled employment about 31%. According to a report by the International Labour Organization (ILO), India has the largest number of online workers in the world, with an estimated 15 million workers engaged in various forms of online work. A study by the Oxford Internet Institute found that 52% of crowd workers in India are male, while 48% are female. The same study found that 54% of Indian crowd workers are between the ages of 18 and 29, while 35% are between the ages of 30 and 39. The ILO report also found that the most common types of online work for Indian crowd workers are data entry, content creation, and web development. (Gironde & Carbonnier, n.d.)

Implications of Crowd Work:

The rise of crowd work has significant implications for both workers and businesses. For workers, crowd work provides a new way to earn money and may offer opportunities that would not be available otherwise. However, it is important to ensure that workers are receiving fair compensation and that their rights are protected. For businesses, crowd work provides a cost-effective way to complete tasks and projects. However, it is important to consider the ethical implications of outsourcing work to a large number of people who may not be receiving fair compensation or benefits.

The Future of Crowd Work:

Crowd labour is projected to become a more common career option as the adoption of digital technologies

rises. To make sure that this approach is ethical and fair for all parties, nevertheless, is crucial. A regulatory framework may include enacting minimum wage laws or other worker rights, as well as making sure that employers are giving employees clear instructions and feedback. One of the challenges for platform labour, which still has room to be regularised for effective deployment, is the absence of a regulatory framework.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, is a new age employment opportunity that provides flexible work options for workers and cost-effective solutions for business. Crowd work is a growing trend that has both advantages and disadvantages. While it provides opportunities for workers and businesses, it is important to ensure that workers are receiving fair compensation and that their rights are protected. As crowd work continues to evolve, it is important to consider its potential implications and to work towards creating a fair and ethical system for all parties involved.

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