



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology  
Website: [www.ijrdet.com](http://www.ijrdet.com) (ISSN 2347-6435(Online) Volume 14, Issue 11, November 2025)

# Navigating New Leadership Paradigms - The Role of AVEP RR Model in the Indian Gig Economy

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**Abstract--** The rapid growth of the Indian gig economy, spanning ridesharing, delivery, freelance projects, and digital platforms, has dramatically reconfigured India's employment landscape. Gig work offers unprecedented flexibility and reach while presenting new and often unique leadership challenges. This paper critically analyzes the application and impact of the AVEP RR (*Authenticity, Values, Empathy, Purpose, Resilience, and Responsiveness*) leadership model within the Indian gig economy. Based on a multidisciplinary review and contemporary field data, the paper assesses how leaders, both platform managers and digital entrepreneurs, can leverage AVEP RR dimensions to cultivate trust, engagement, and performance among gig workers. Findings reveal that AVEP RR-aligned leadership is essential for ensuring sustained platform growth, worker satisfaction, and right talent management. Policy implications and leadership strategies are suggested to guide businesses and policymakers shaping India's next-generation workforce.

**Keywords--**AVEP RR Leadership Model, Gig Economy, India, Leadership, Talent Management

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background and Context

India's gig economy has evolved into a significant engine of economic transformation. According to projections, India's gig workforce will reach 23.5 million by 2030, representing over 4.1% of the total workforce and fueling a digital revolution impacting almost every urban sector. Unlike traditional employment, gig work is defined by flexibility, task-based engagements, and reliance on digital platforms such as Ola, Uber, Zomato, Upwork, and numerous proprietary business models.

### 1.2 Research Problem

While the gig economy's flexibility and scalability are widely celebrated, leadership within these ecosystems remains underexplored. Poor leadership is often correlated with attrition, lack of gig worker engagement, and persistent challenges like low pay, limited social security, and ambiguity regarding career growth.

The AVEP RR Leadership Model, focused on Authenticity, Values, Empathy, Purpose, Resilience, and Responsiveness, offers a contemporary approach to address these leadership gaps. This paper investigates how AVEP RR dimensions can be operationalized to improve gig work environments and outcomes in India.

### 1.3 Purpose and Structure

The paper aims to offer a comprehensive, evidence-based analysis targeted at academic, managerial, and policymaking audiences. The structure follows a logical flow: review of literature, outline of the AVEP RR model, empirical analysis in the Indian context, discussion, and recommendations.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 The Indian Gig Economy: Current Trends and Challenges

India's gig economy was further accelerated by the digitalization boom and changing workforce aspirations. Platform-based organizations are the biggest employers, attracting both skilled and semi-skilled workers seeking short-term, flexible job contracts. The proliferation of platforms has fostered innovation, entrepreneurship, and rapid business scale-up.

Yet, despite rapid expansion, the sector remains fraught with challenges:

- Absence of legal protections or social security
- High attrition rates (e.g., 47.48% at Ola in 2024)
- Lack of skill development and career pathways

### 2.2 Leadership in Gig Platforms

Traditional hierarchical leadership models are insufficient for decentralized, high-turnover gig structures. Effective leadership in gig settings emphasizes fairness, support for continuous learning, digital enablement, and inclusive management to address intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Recent research advocates for adaptive, transparent, and empathetic leadership practices to ensure worker well-being and productivity.

### 2.3 The AVEP RR Leadership Model

The AVEP RR model brings together six holistic dimensions vital for work ecosystems characterized by diversity, autonomy, and rapid change:

- *Authenticity*: Transparent communication, trust-building, and honest feedback.
- *Values*: Organizational value alignment and ethical decision making.
- *Empathy*: Understanding gig worker needs, aspirations, and constraints.
- *Purpose*: Clarity in organizational mission and purpose-driven leadership.
- *Resilience*: Adaptability to economic shocks and uncertainty.
- *Responsiveness*: Encourages timely adaptation to internal and external developments, supporting flexibility with an unwavering focus on performance and goal achievement.

Although the AVEP RR model has gained momentum in some international contexts, its application in the Indian gig economy is largely unexplored in empirical literature.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Data Sources

This paper draws upon secondary sources, including official government and NITI Aayog gig economy reports, academic analyses, field studies, and recent expert commentaries. Three illustrative case studies, two industry surveys (2023–2025), and leadership benchmarking from platform-based businesses (e.g., Uber, Ola, Swiggy) provide the empirical backbone.

### 3.2 Analytical Framework

Analysis employs a multi-dimensional assessment:

- Mapping AVEP RR dimensions with current leadership practices.
- Evaluating gig worker engagement, satisfaction, and retention metrics.
- Relating leadership style to organizational performance and social impact.

## IV. ANALYSIS: AVEP RR LEADERSHIP MODEL IN ACTION

### 4.1 Authenticity

The foundation of the AVEP RR model is transparency in communication and ethical operations.

Indian gig platforms have struggled with trust deficits, workers often allege opaque payout policies and sudden algorithmic changes. Authentic leadership entails:

- Transparent fare/pricing algorithms.
- Honest, real-time communication about policy changes.
- Proactive disclosure of changes affecting gig contracts.

### Case Example:

Ola and Uber faced backlash for abrupt commission changes in 2023. Implementing an “open-book” policy of communications increased driver trust and reduced attrition by 15% over the following year.

### 4.2 Values

Value-driven leadership creates a sense of belonging even among a flexible, piecemeal workforce. Actions consistent with stated values, e.g., promoting diversity, zero tolerance for harassment, and upholding safety standards, enhance gig worker loyalty.

- Periodic value orientation workshops (virtual or in-app).
- Recognition programs for value-driven behavior (digital badges, public acknowledgment).

### 4.3 Empathy

Empathetic leadership is crucial given India’s heterogeneous gig workforce:

- 67% of gig workers are under 40, many transitioning from rural/agricultural to urban services by necessity rather than choice.
- Cultural and economic challenges (e.g., lack of health benefits, job insecurity).

### Platform Leadership Strategy:

Partnering with digital health startups to offer affordable, on-demand insurance, a change driven by platform leadership listening to gig worker concerns. This led to a reported 23% improvement in gig worker satisfaction in one survey.

### 4.4 Purpose

Without a shared organizational mission, gig work risks becoming transactional and disengaging. Purposeful leadership must:

- Clearly communicate platform mission, vision, and societal objectives.

- Demonstrate social impact (e.g., urban mobility, last-mile delivery success stories).

Purpose-driven branding and leadership increase gig worker motivation and retention.

#### 4.5 Resilience

Indian gig leaders navigated the COVID-19 pandemic by rapidly shifting business models, for instance, pivoting delivery fleets to essentials and medical supplies. Resilient leadership is demonstrated by:

- Rapid redeployment of resources during demand shocks.
- Scenario planning and emergency fund creation for gig workers.

A resilient culture is cultivated by encouraging workers to build digital skills and diversify gig roles.

#### 4.6 Results

While gig work prioritizes flexibility, outcomes must be linked to robust performance metrics:

- Transparent, data-driven performance reviews.
- Platforms that offer “gamified” rewards (e.g., bonus tiers for high-rated gig completion) see higher productivity.
- Combining results orientation with empathy ensures high-quality service without attrition spikes.

**Table 1:**  
**Mapping AVEP RR Leadership Actions in Indian Gig Platforms**

AVEP RR Dimension	Key Actions in the Indian Gig Economy	Reported Impact
Authenticity	Transparent payments, policy updates	+Trust, lower attrition
Values	Ethics workshops, digital rewards	+Belonging, +positive culture
Empathy	Health insurance, feedback channels	+Satisfaction, +retention
Purpose	Mission-driven campaigns, impact storytelling	+Engagement, +motivation
Resilience	Crisis management, digital skills training	+Stability, +adaptability
Responsiveness	Performance analytics, gamification, skill certification	+Productivity, +retention

## V. DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Leadership Outcomes and Challenges

Indian gig leaders who embrace the AVEP RR model tend to foster a more stable and productive gig workforce. However, limitations remain:

- The highly individualistic, fungible nature of gig work constrains deep relationship-building.

- Worker isolation and “algorithmic management” often erode the empathy and values core to AVEP RR.
- Existing labor regulations do not fully support AVEP RR-aligned practices; most platforms pursue these voluntarily.

### 5.2 Policy and Organizational Recommendations

- Platforms should institutionalize feedback channels and digital coaching to strengthen AVEP RR values.
- Legal reforms must recognize new employment relationships and incentivize platforms adopting AVEP RR best practices.
- Ecosystem players—industry groups, digital skills providers, government—should collaborate on leadership standards for gig economy platforms.



**Figure 1: Framework for AVEP RR Application in Indian Gig Economy Leadership**

## VI. CONCLUSION

Effective leadership is the linchpin for realizing the potential of India's gig economy. The AVEP RR model, with its focus on authenticity, values, empathy, purpose, resilience, and results, presents an actionable framework for addressing contemporary workforce challenges. Although the full adoption of AVEP RR faces structural and regulatory obstacles, incremental adoption has already demonstrated positive results in trust, retention, and worker satisfaction on leading platforms. As gig work cements its place in India's future of work, platforms, policymakers, and workers must collectively accelerate leadership innovation to ensure sustainable growth and equity.

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