

2021 Summer Research Program

Project title:	Migration, unemployment, and worker participation in the gig economy: A literature review
Project duration, hours of engagement & delivery mode	10 weeks
Description:	<p>Increasing scholarly attention has been attracted in the areas of 'gig', 'sharing' or on-demand economy, particularly how intermediary platforms build, connect and reconstruct the social relations among labourers, consumers and companies. Previous studies on platform economy reveal intricate nuances of platform-worker interaction as well as workers' coping mechanisms and resistance strategies. However, few studies have examined the algorithmic labour aspects in the gig economy. New platforms like UberEats, Deliveroo and DoorDash utilise digital surveillance to measure and control workers through their smartphones. Despite algorithms have become a popular topic of research, little is known about how these are experienced by workers, particularly migrant workers and how effective they are at overcoming the indeterminacy of the labour process at work. Although there are no comparative public data on the total number of gig workers, existing research reveals that migrant workers provide a large share of the labour power in the platform economy. To date, platform mediated gig research has not paid much attention to the role of migrant labour, their understanding of algorithmic labour and its governance at the intersection of labour market regulation, social welfare and immigration policy and how this gap impacts migrant gig workers social and economic life. This project aims to explore these questions reviewing the existing literature on migrant workers' access to the platform economy, generally, and in the food delivery space such as Deliveroo, UberEats, DoorDash, Menulog, specifically.</p> <p>This project involves conducting a literature review, extracting data, analysing results, and drafting a manuscript for peer-review-publication.</p>
Expected outcomes and deliverables:	<p>Expected outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scholar will gain skills in conducting systematic literature review, desktop review and gap analysis of existing literature on migrant workers' access to food delivery platforms, food delivery platform governance, and labour market regulation; - Data analysis, reporting and writing skills; and - Networking and knowledge building opportunities through attending relevant seminars and workshops. <p>Expected deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A draft manuscript for potential publication that will develop a conceptual framework of everyday governance that the migrant food delivery workers develop to cope with precarious employment and non-citizenship status; and - Submit a pitch to the conversation outlining current evidence on migrant gig workers' survival modes while navigating the platform space.
Suitable for:	This project is open to applications from undergraduate and postgraduate students with interests in the research topic. Knowledge of the subject matter and experience with conducting systematic literature searches is preferable.
Primary Supervisor:	Dr Lutfun Nahar Lata
Further info:	Students can contact Dr Lutfun Nahar Lata to discuss their application, but this is not mandatory.