

Platformization and Informality: Pathways of Change, Alteration, and Transformation

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Abstrak

In this edited volume, scholars from Mumbai, Bengaluru, Jakarta, Cape Town, Sao Paulo and other cities of the global South explore the complex relationship between platformization and informality through a different lens. Drawing on extensive theoretical, quantitative and qualitative scholarship, they provide both a useful overview and insights into the lived realities of gig work for platforms covering a range of skills, working conditions, and forms of algorithmic management. Platform work has attracted considerable attention from scholars in the global North, who have tended to view it as a form of casualisation of work that was previously regulated. But what about the global South, where most employment, especially that of women and migrant workers was historically already informal?

Beyond a focus on livelihoods, employment, and work, the authors show how labour platforms take on powers that bring about broader impacts, including those affecting identity and personal wellbeing. They also illustrate the impact of platformization on the governance of affected sectors by public agencies, thus affecting political power, and how public data infrastructures contribute to further platformization. The purpose of this pioneering work is to lay bare these interactions to then rebuild our understanding of platformization and its social, political, cultural and economic impacts. Its insights are attentive to gender and ethnic differences, as well as geographical ones.