

Characteristics of digitally organised work for assessing OSH

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Introduction

- Too little is known about the effects of work through digital labour platforms and digital organising on OSH
- In order to assess OSH in relation to digital organising of work, we need to understand some basic characteristics of digital organising - platform work (PW) and algorithmic management (AM)

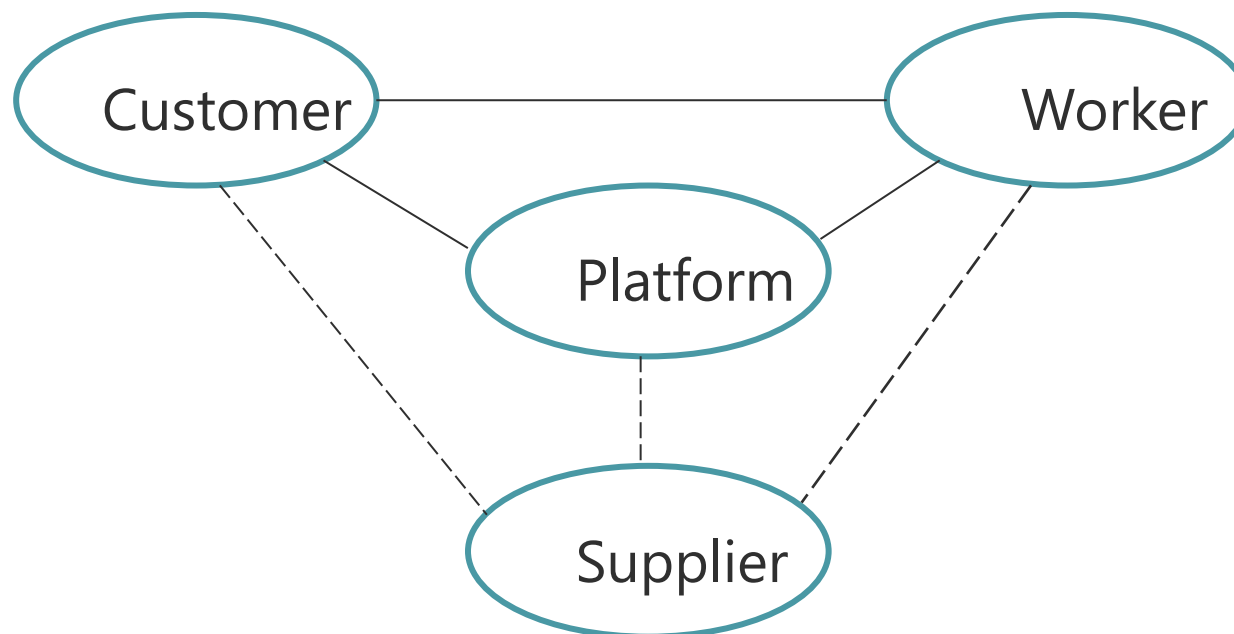
- Agenda:
 - Five central characteristics with their possible OSH consequences
 - The unbundling of the job and directions for solutions
 - Conclusion

Characteristics from the point of platform work

1. Complexity of the labour platform ecosystem
2. Competition
3. Visibility as an outcome of digitization, digitalization and digital platforms.
4. Complexity and length of the task.
5. The technological (mostly digital) system mediating work, information and communication.

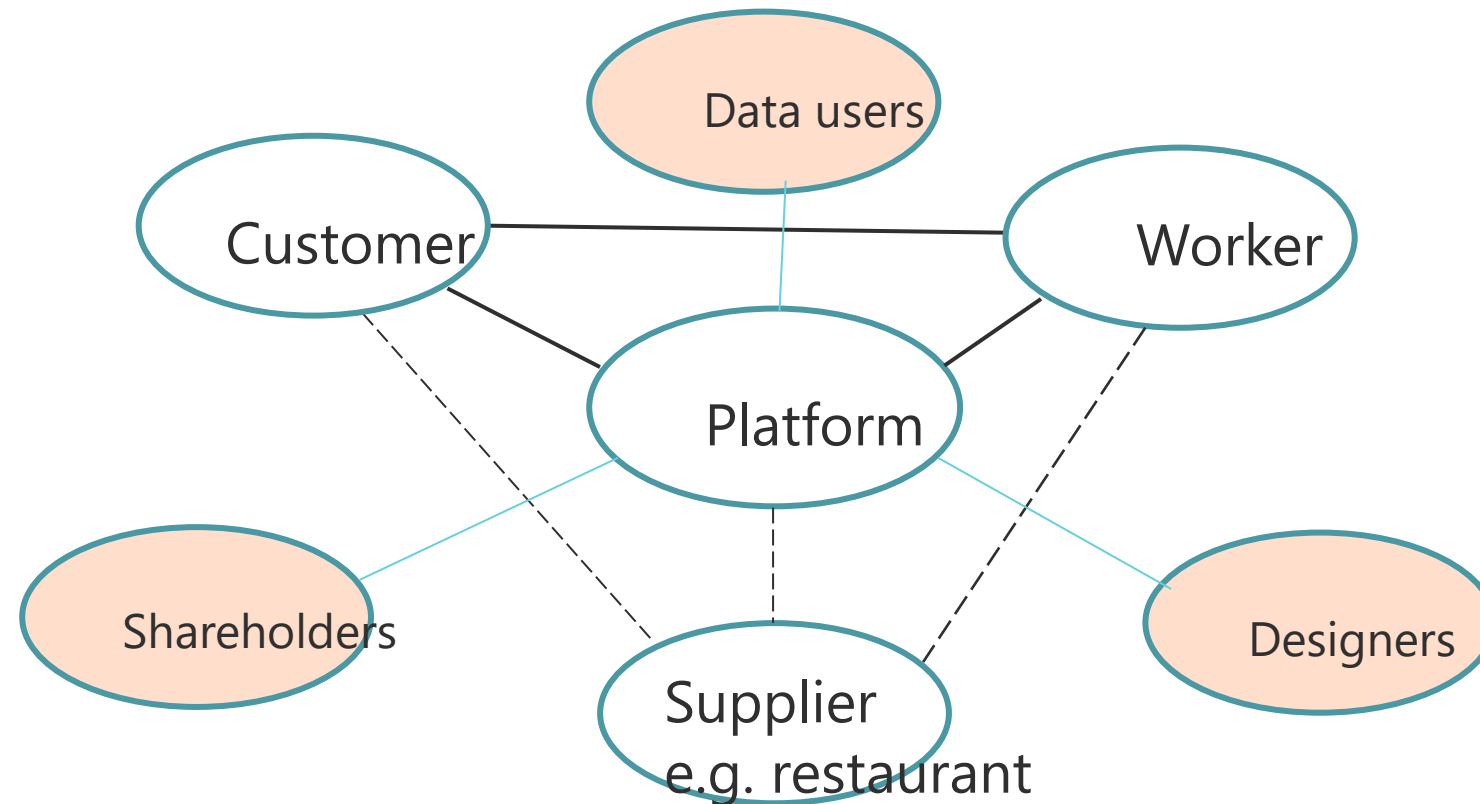
1 Complexity of the labour (platform) ecosystem.

- Technological advances mean that the distribution of tasks and occupational structure change. In platform work, there are at least three parties involved: the worker, the platform, and the client/requester.
- -> **OSH responsibilities can be shared between actors**



In platform work, there is not always an employer!

- Increased need for **workers' agency (activeness), isolation**



(Duggan et al., 2021 modified)

2 Competition

- In temporary gig work through platforms, workers (especially the self-employed) face **competition** between workers
- Platforms manage competition in many ways (Seppänen et al., 2022)
- Advantage: competition pushes towards **developing oneself?**
- Disadvantage: **unpredictability and stress**, especially when the worker is dependent on platform/gig income (Seppänen et al., 2018; Schor, 2020)

3 Visibility as an outcome of digitization, digitalization and digital platforms.

- On labour platforms, algorithmic visibility enables building **digital trust** (Sundararajan, 2016)
- Workers may benefit from visibility (learning, better design of own work)
- Rating and ranking of platform users is opaque: **uncertainty, stress**, but also **more power** (clients and tasks) for some

4 Complexity and length of the task

- Routine tasks: If many people are available for work, workers become easily fungible (van Doorn, 2017)
 - **stress, uncertainty and isolation, “dead end” jobs**
- Complex and long tasks enable workers **learn** more than simple short tasks

5 The technological (mostly digital) system mediating work, information and communication

The digital system:

- Changes the nature of interaction between actors or employees and employer -> **isolation**
- Standardizes and often accelerates work processes
- May increase hazards and risks e.g. by increased **haste and stress**
- May also be a **source for OSH solutions**

OSH Services for workers in the gig economy

- But how?

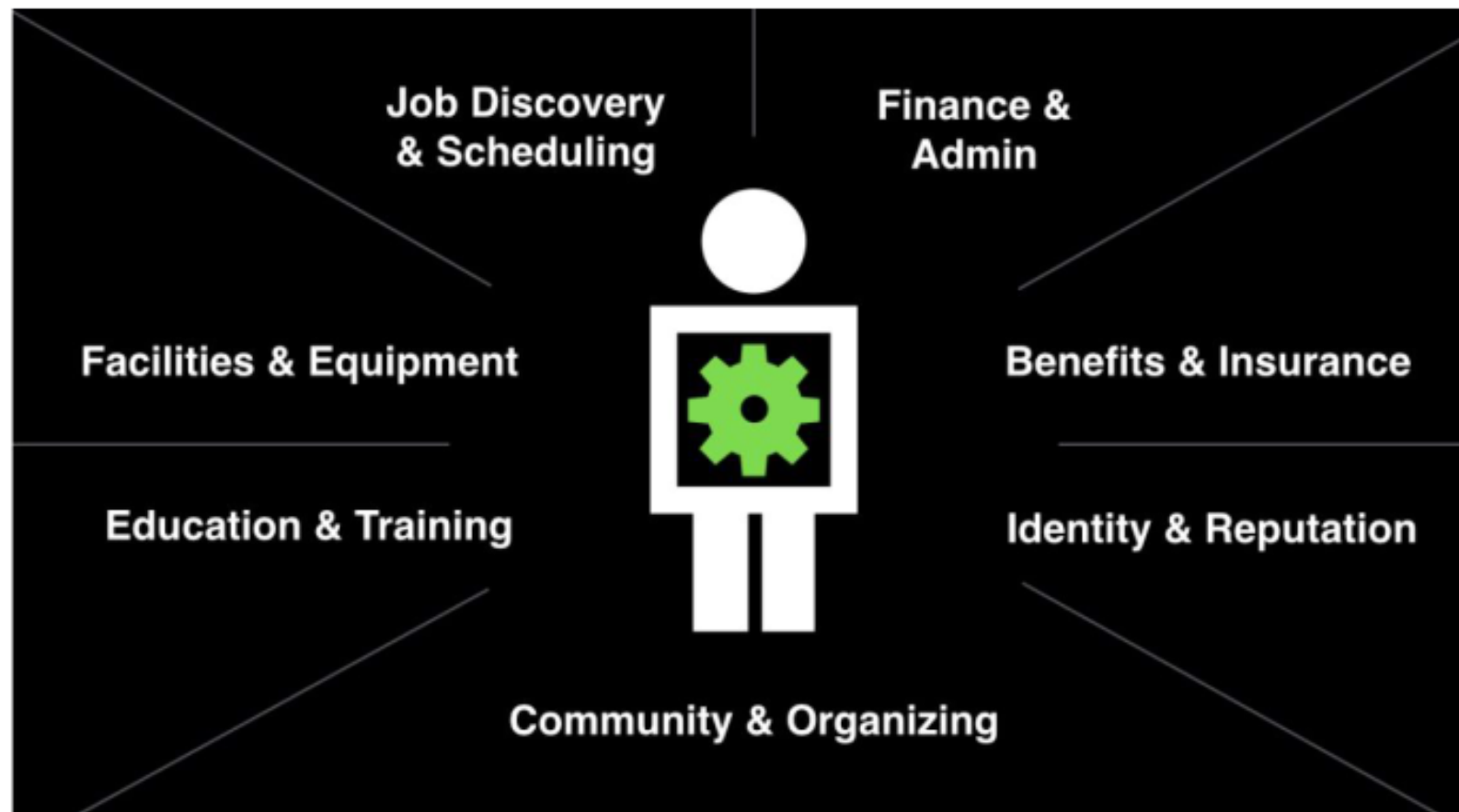
1 Designing fair labour platforms (Borromeo et al., 2017)

2 Founding enterprises To serve gig workers' needs (Grossman & Woyke, 2016)

3 Through policy and regulation (de Stefano)

4 Self-organization of workers (Borromeo et al., 2016; de Stefano, 2016)

The Unbundling of the Job



Conclusion

- Labour platforms (Immonen, in press) and forms of digital organising are very diverse
- OSH risks and hazards need to be assessed in each case, and understanding of digital organising (PW and AM) is needed.

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