

THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

Departmental Research Seminar



Exclusion for Public Safety or Inclusion for Gig Employment Opportunity: Redefining the Tension with a Trilogy of Guardians By

Prof. Arun Rai
Georgia State University

Date : 19 Jul 2023 (WED)
Time : 10 – 11:30 am
Venue : M802 & online via Zoom

Abstract

Gig platforms seek to create income opportunities, particularly for socially and economically marginalized people who find it challenging to engage in regular employment. Alongside this empowerment, safety concerns over unregulated gig drivers arise, which leads to the introduction of background check laws (BCLs) implemented with different stringency. Drawing on criminology theories, we conceptualize a trilogy of guardians—the government, platforms and community, in safeguarding ridesharing safety. Empirically, we document the shifting of crimes into non-TNC domains as an unintended consequence of the exclusion-based solution (i.e., BCLs by the government) and find deterrence-based digital solutions (i.e., in-app safety features by platforms) can substitute for BCLs. Moreover, we show that resources in local contexts provided by the community inhibit the negative impacts of exclusion (i.e., through legal income sources) and enable the effectiveness of deterrence (i.e., through data-protection policies and policing). Our findings surface how a holistic social justice assessment requires evaluating unintended social welfare risks of excluding marginalized individuals from gig employment opportunities, and how leveraging synergies between policy design, gig platform-initiated digital solutions, and community resources can effectively address the tension of mitigating public safety risks while maintaining inclusiveness in gig employment.

Prof. Arun Rai is Regents' Professor of the University System of Georgia, holds the Howard S. Starks Distinguished Chair, and is the director of the Center for Digital Innovation at the Robinson College of Business at Georgia State University. His research has focused on the development and deployment of information systems to drive innovation and create value. His work has contributed to understanding the digital transformation of organizations and supply chains; governance of IT investments and platform ecosystems; and deployment of digital innovations to empower individuals and address thorny societal problems including poverty, health disparities, infant mortality, and digital inequality. He served as the editor-in-chief of the *MIS Quarterly* from 2016-2020 and has served in editorial roles for other leading outlets including *ISR*, *JMIS*, *J AIS* and *Management Science*. His contributions have been recognized through the Fellow Award, the Impact Award, and the LEO Award for Lifetime Exceptional Achievement from the Association for Information Systems and through the Distinguished Fellow Award, the Inaugural President's Service Award, and the Practical Impacts Award from the INFORMS Information Systems Society.

All interested are welcome.



THE HONG KONG
POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
香港理工大學

Department of
**MANAGEMENT
& MARKETING**
管理及市場學系