
Crafting Visibility and Solidarity: Professional and Collective Digital Identity as Everyday Resistance on Micro-tasking Platforms

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Abstract

Research Objective

This paper investigates how micro-task platform workers construct and mobilize their professional digital identity to influence sourcing decisions, navigate platform control, and foster forms of solidarity. In contexts where workers are largely invisible to clients and algorithmic decision-making prevails, we explore how identity work operates as a subtle but meaningful form of resistance. We specifically ask: How do workers portray themselves in ways that shape visibility, signal credibility, and build collective ties under conditions of isolation and precarity? Collective digital identity is the shared identity that emerges from the interactions and collaborations of groups within digital spaces. We draw on professional identity theory and collective identity literature to theorize digital identity as a contested space where visibility, legitimacy, and solidarity are co-produced.

Methodology

We draw on a mixed-method study of Egyptian microworkers combining over 600 survey responses (collected as paid tasks on the platforms Microworkers and Clickworker in 2024) and a set of focus groups conducted in the first quarter of 2025. The survey captured socio-demographic data, digital skills, income, and professional networks, including a position generator measuring access to tech-related occupations. The focus groups explored subjective experiences of digital identity, online representation, algorithmic visibility, and informal peer interactions. We combine these sources to analyze how workers narrate their expertise, modify their profiles, and seek support from peers to enhance visibility and recognition. It also captures their online resistance actions.

Main Findings

We find that microworkers engage in deliberate digital identity construction-editing profiles, signaling soft skills, and aligning with algorithmic preferences-not only to access tasks, but also to resist marginalization. Workers with stronger digital resources and richer social

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ties (especially to tech professions) often act as hubs of informal support, helping others solve task-related issues and navigate opaque platform rules. These interactions contribute to emerging collective identity narratives, which we conceptualize as a form of identity-based resistance-resistance enacted not through protest but through presence, mutual aid, and curated visibility.

Contribution to Understanding Worker Organizing and Resistance

By highlighting how microworkers use digital identity as a tool for algorithmic visibility and peer support, we reveal new, underexplored pathways of resistance and organizing. This paper contributes to the INDL-8 agenda by showing how identity practices-often overlooked-can foster relational infrastructures for mutual aid and collective empowerment, even in hyper-fragmented digital labor markets.

Keywords: micro, tasking platforms, professional digital identity, collective identity, algorithmic visibility, digital labor resistance, worker solidarity, crowdsourcing, informal organizing, platform work, Egypt