

Need Fulfilment and Progression of Online Freelancing Career with the moderating effect of Entrepreneurial Orientation

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ABSTRACT

Online freelancers have the potential to earn foreign currency while working from home. However, they are an understudied segment of the labour force in Sri Lanka. In this study, the effect of need fulfillment and entrepreneurial orientation on the progression of the freelancing career was studied, based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. No sampling frame was available as the freelancing population in Sri Lanka is not defined. Hence, convenient and snowball sampling techniques were used. Responses were obtained through a questionnaire distributed in freelancers' social media communities. There, the effect of freelancers' satisfaction with the level of need fulfillment on their willingness to progress as a freelancer and the moderating effect of individual entrepreneurial orientation on that relationship was analyzed. Further, Maslow's finding that the fulfillment of lower-level needs affects the fulfillment of higher-level needs was checked. A pyramid score was calculated to determine overall satisfaction of needs. Within the sample, only 51% showed a hierarchy in fulfilling needs. Ordinal logistic regression and correlation tests were used in the analysis. Results indicated that there is a significant relationship between satisfaction with need fulfillment and willingness to progress in the freelance career for both the freelancers who follow the hierarchical order and the entire sample (without taking the hierarchy into account). When taken individually, none of the five need types (physiological, security, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization needs) had a significant effect on the willingness to progress in the freelancing career. In any case, entrepreneurial orientation had no moderating effect on the relationship between freelancers' need fulfillment and willingness to progress as freelancers. Moreover, the more each lower-level need is satisfied, the more the next higher-level need is satisfied. The results indicate that the freelancers are a diversified group, and they do not necessarily follow a hierarchy in fulfilling their needs. The study concluded that overall satisfaction with need fulfillment significantly influences freelancers' career progression. Although individual needs don't impact career progress, fulfilling lower-level needs positively affects higher-level needs, contradicting Maslow's hierarchy. Additionally, entrepreneurial orientation doesn't significantly affect the relationship between need satisfaction and career advancement among freelancers.

Keywords: Career Progression, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Motivation, Online freelancers