

Effect of Need Fulfilment and Entrepreneurial Orientation on the Progression of Freelancing Career

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Online freelancers have the potential to earn foreign currencies while working from home. However, they are an understudied segment of the labour force in Sri Lanka. In this study, the effects of need fulfilment and entrepreneurial orientation on the progression of the freelancing career were 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 social media communities dedicated to freelancers. There, the effect of freelancers' satisfaction with the level of need fulfilment on their willingness to progress as a freelancer and the moderating effect of individual entrepreneurial orientation on that relationship were analysed. Further, Maslow's finding that the fulfilment of lower-level needs affects the fulfilment of higher-level needs was checked here. A pyramid score was calculated to obtain 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 fulfilment 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 fulfilment 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 the needs.

Keywords: Career progression, Entrepreneurial orientation, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Motivation, Online freelancers

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