

The Economic Impact of Freelancing: An Emerging Source of Employment to the Educated Unemployed in Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: In this era of technological revolution, freelancing has opened new doors of possibilities. In Bangladesh, this sector is becoming very popular day by day. This study aims to determine the impact of freelancing on the educated unemployed in Bangladesh.

Methodology: The results are discussed based on data from 128 individual freelancers across several districts of Bangladesh. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire. ANCOVA multiple regression analysis was used to statistically analyze the research results using the statistical software EViews and this quantitative result adds significant value to the study.

Findings: The study has identified the main determinants of freelance income in Bangladesh. In this study, the key determinants of freelance earnings are types of freelancers, cost of freelancing, experience and hours of spend. This research also highlights the problems faced by freelancers in Bangladesh and explores ways to encourage more people to take up freelancing as a profession in the future.

Practical Implications: The study focuses on real economic factors and the important economic concept of ‘unemployment’. Besides, the study highlights freelancing as an emerging source of earning in Bangladesh.

Value/Originality: This research will be beneficial to the freelancers of Bangladesh as well as educated unemployed individuals who are searching for new jobs. Besides, this paper will help the government to generate new policies to reduce unemployment in Bangladesh.

Limitations: The research also has some limitations. This study attempts to find ways to encourage more people to take up freelancing as a profession so that they can contribute to reducing unemployment in Bangladesh. Future researchers can expand on this topic and find various ways to reduce unemployment in Bangladesh.

1. Introduction

Bangladesh is a developing country with a large number of educated unemployed young people. In the age of technological revolution, besides traditional working methods, there are also many earning sources on online platforms. People can earn money from abroad by sitting at home, and the source of this kind of online earning is called freelancing. Freelancing is an online contract where a freelancer can earn independently on a per-job or per-task basis, typically for short-term work (Investopedia, 2023).

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Freelancers are not limited to 9 am to 5 pm office hours, a specific organization, a stable working load, or a fixed income (Rahman & Rahman, 2017). The word '*freelance*' first emerged in the early 19th century. It was introduced by Sir Walter Scott in his novel '*Ivanhoe*' in 1819. In his novel he defined medieval mercenaries as "*free lances*" – knights who were not obligated to serve a single lord. Alternatively, they offered their combat skills to the highest bidder (Auwerx, LinkedIn, 2025). The concept of freelancing emerged a few years ago but has spread rapidly ever since (Alam et al, 2021). The first freelancing platform 'GURU' was launched by SOFT moonlight.com, in 1998. The freelancing sector comprises various jobs, including computer programming, mobile app development, research and editing, consulting, content development, web design, data entry, search engine optimization (SEO), logo design, and so on (Islam & Islam, 2023). In terms of popularity, many digital marketplaces have been established including Elance.com, 99designs, Toptal, PeoplePerHour, iWriter, Odesk.com, GetAFreelancer.com, Freelancer.com, Upwork.com, and Fiverr (nddtrrust.gov.bd, 2021). Upwork is one of the world's largest online workplaces for professional freelancers (Romke & Sayed, 2018). The top employer countries in the freelancing domain are- the USA, UK, Canada, Australia, India, and Germany (Alam et al. 2021). In Bangladesh freelancing started around mid-2000s, but its popularity increased after 2010. Since, 2015, the freelancing sector has continued to expand. Many young men and women have chosen freelancing as a career. This paper implies the current situation of freelancing in Bangladesh and the problem faces by Bangladeshi freelancers.

1.1 Rationality of the study

The development of an economy relies on the skilled labor force of that economy. This study indicates a most important part of modern economy- '*freelancing*'. Even in the last decade, it was seen that a large portion of village workers used to go to the middle east countries as laborers. Remittance was the main source of foreign earning. It is observed that even now, most of the workers who go to these countries are unskilled. But gradually, not only people from rural areas, but individuals from all parts of Bangladesh are getting involved in the freelancing. Hence, the study of freelancing is becoming a major area of interest. This paper studies the potential of freelancing in the context of Bangladesh. People can earn foreign currency without going abroad. To start career as a freelancer, one needs to be skilled. That is, the labor force who engaged in freelancing is often more effective than those who earn remittances by working abroad. This study discusses the necessity of having specific skills to become a freelancer. As there are few studies on freelancing, this study will add value to the existing literature in this field.

2. Literature Review

With technological advancements, various new workplaces are emerging. Apart from the traditional job market, the online labor market has become very popular now. Freelancing is one of the most possible sectors in the online job market. Nowadays, besides the developed countries, it also becomes very popular in many developing countries like Bangladesh. A quantitative study by Islam & Islam (2023) titled '*Socio-Economic Impact of Freelancing: Evidence from Bangladesh*' presented the impacts of freelancing on the socio-economic development of Bangladesh. This paper identified the determinants of socio-economic development from the perspective of freelancing. It discussed the role of freelancing in the alleviation of poverty. This paper also tried to find out the problems faced by freelancers in Bangladesh. The researchers used a structural questionnaire and collected primary data from 200 random samples from 7 districts of Bangladesh including Mymensingh, Sherpur, Netrokona, Gazipur, Jamalpur, Dhaka, and Tangail. Stephany et al. (2021) published a paper titled '*Online Labor Index 2020: New Ways to Measure the World's Remote Freelancing Market*', which measured the world's freelancing market by using a scale called Online Labor Index 2020 (OLI). Though this (OLI) scale was launched in 2016 and developed in cooperation with the ILO (International Labor Organization). The OLI 2020 is an updated version with 4 new features. This paper states that rather than large English-language platforms, as the online freelancing market becomes more mature, regional markets are also emerging to satisfy the demand and supply of online freelance workers. The researchers used a chain-linking method without

impeding previous time series data. A study by Dwivedi et al (2023) titled “*Online Earning and Its Impact on The Economy Concerning YouTube, Social Media, Blogging, and Freelancing*” stated that being unemployed has opened up a new opportunity to explore making money from online. Online earning has been around for a long time but hasn’t reached its full potential. During the COVID-19 pandemic, working from home became essential for businesses and economies worldwide. There was fear among the freelancers due to the lower demand, but they were hopeful for increase in demand after the pandemic. Freelancers are capable of preserving and extending their work schedules and resisting client colonization of their non-working time (Kitching & Iskandarova, 2019). Flexible forms of employment allow individuals to work as efficiently as possible, unlock their labor potential, and achieve greater job satisfaction (Abdreissova & Baitenizov, 2024). Freelancing represents the manifestation of freedom, independence, creativity, and non-standardization in labor activity (Grimov, 2016). A qualitative study by Brunner (2023) titled ‘*Exploring Solutions to Reduce Unemployment via Creative Freelancing in South Africa: Lessons from the UK*’ tried to explore the innovative strategies to tackle the crisis through the creative freelancing sector in the economy of South Africa which has the highest unemployment globally. This study has drawn invaluable lessons from the UK’s successful creative freelancing sector. It presented differences in the economic trends between South Africa and the UK. According to this study, the potential freelancing sector in the UK is more mature compared to South Africa. Rahman & Rahman (2017) showed in their paper that the income of freelancers varies based on education levels, time spent, and experience. The average monthly income of all freelancers is BDT 58000, according to this study, and 1.71 million unemployed (BBS, Labor Force Survey, 2013) could add at least BDT 696000 per year. This paper also discussed the problems faced by new and experienced freelancers. IT freelancing sector achieved proper attention from the policymakers since this sector earns a lot of remittance and income (Alam et al, 2021). Instead of expanding the reach of ICT-enabled service work for income generation, the existing BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) labor force benefits most from the new economic opportunities (Beerepoot & Oprins, 2022). Freelancers use AI to increase productivity, provide more efficient work and maintain their competitiveness. However, there are concerns that automation will cause job losses. To keep up with this trend, freelancers must upskill in areas such as programming and data analysis that complement automation (Muthuvani & Samuel, 2024). In economic geography, freelancing is theorized in two interrelated ways- (i) freelancing is a part of the economy in relation to platform economies and gig labor and (ii) it is a type of work where people are self-employed or work as independent contractors. That is, freelancers work but they are not employees (Worth & Karaagac, 2021). Freelancers are highly satisfied with their leisure time than other own-account workers, employers, and wage workers (Zwan et al, 2020). The rise in freelancing reduces the carbon footprint linked to traditional employment, highlighting the economy’s ability to stabilize jobs and encourage environmentally friendly behavior (Masood & Naqvi, 2024).

To become a freelancer, one needs to learn certain skills and the graduate degree is not so important. Freelancing has come as a relief against the corruption of Bangladesh's job sector (Romke & Sayed, 2018). In this study, the researchers collected 45 freelancers’ data from Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barishal, Magura, Feni, Noakhali, Rangamati, and Rangpur. They also use secondary data from articles, journals, and papers. The researchers of the study answered based on the responses of respondents about the question that freelancing reduces unemployment. A study by Sirakaya (2023) titled “*Psychological and Economic Dimensions of Gig Economy and Freelancing: Challenges and Opportunities in Modern Working Models*” explained the economic opportunities and risks of both gig economy and freelancing. Quick entry into the job market, lower costs, and access to a larger customer base are considered as economic opportunities in this paper. Financial uncertainties and lack of social protections including health insurance and retirement plans are stated as risks.

A large portion of online freelancers come from India and this trend is increasing. In 2021, one-third of all freelancers come from India. Despite differences from country to country, approximately 39% of female workers make up the online labor supply (Stephany et al, 2021). A quantitative study by Ahsan et al (2022) titled “*Impact of Online Freelancing on Economic Growth of Developing Countries Like Pakistan*” determined the link between freelancing and economic growth in Pakistan. According to this paper, freelancing reduces the frustration of young graduates who are seeking for jobs in Pakistan. A descriptive study by Alam et al (2021) titled “*IT Freelancing in Bangladesh: Assessment of Present Status and Future Needs*” describes the present status and future needs of IT Freelancing in Bangladesh. This study included the freelancers of our country who have been working during the last 3 to 7 years and continuing till now. The paper found that there are almost 73.1% of freelancers, who are working on a part-time basis and almost 33% of freelancers want to be IT entrepreneurs. According to this paper, 34.6% of respondents will continue freelancing as long as they earn enough money. Freelancing is such a field, where anyone can work without any political interference (Ahsan et al, 2022). Freelancers contribute to business growth and net job creation for core employees, but a significant positive impact emerges only when they make up around 11% of the workforce (Burke & Cowling, 2020). Although freelancing offers the opportunity to work in the international market, it is intensifying wage asymmetries (Popiel, 2017). Freelancers are essential to the creative industries and must be considered in future political decision-making (Mould et al, 2013).

This literature review implies the works done about freelancing several times and methods in the world. But as a developing country in Bangladesh, the work is too little. In many papers, they tried to describe the socio-economic impact of freelancing. This paper will try to overcome the gaps in the research on freelancing. In this study, the researchers will try to find out the impact of freelancing on the educated unemployed in Bangladesh. As a developing country with a large number of educated unemployed, this study will discuss whether freelancing is a blessing for us in reducing unemployment. The main determinants that affect freelancing earnings will be determined statistically in this analysis. This paper will attempt to cover several districts of Bangladesh from which many freelancers work. Besides, the problems faced by Bangladeshi freelancers as they compete on the global freelancing platforms will also be considered in this study. This study will contribute to policy evaluation by considering the current state of the freelance sector in Bangladesh.

3. Objectives

The study wants to find out the economic impacts of freelancing on the educated unemployed in Bangladesh. To find the answer, the researchers select some objectives. The objectives are:

- To find out the impacts of freelancing on the educated unemployed
- To detect the determinants that affect the income of freelancing
- To identify the problems faced by the freelancers of Bangladesh
- To find ways so that the freelancers of Bangladesh take freelancing as a profession

4. Methodology

The study is quantitative and descriptive in nature. The study used primary data and the data were collected through a survey on the basis of simple random sampling method. A structured questionnaire was made for the collection of data. The study collected random primary data from Barishal, Pirojpur, Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna, Chittagong, Patuakhali, Netrokona, Cumilla, Bagerhat, Gopalganj, Meherpur, Joypurhat, Rangpur districts. The data was collected in two ways. One is the telephone method and another is sending questionnaires via messenger to the freelancers.

The Yamane formula is a simplified method for determining sample size, especially useful when dealing with finite populations. In this study, Yamane sampling formula has been used to determine the sample size.

The Yamane formula (Yamane, 1967) is showed below-

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N*e^2} \quad (1)$$

Where,

n = Number of samples

N = Total number of freelancers

e = margin of error

Considering 5% level of significant, a sample of size 128 have been selected for the study. The collected data have been clarified, organized, and analyzed using MS Excel 2016. The demographic analysis of these 128 freelancers has been discussed in graphical and tabulation forms. The study ran ANCOVA, multiple-regression analysis by using EViews 2012. An ANCOVA (Analysis of Covariance) model describes a dependent variable as a function of both quantitative and qualitative variables (Gujrati, 2004). As this study includes both quantitative and qualitative variables, the ANCOVA model has been used.

4.1 Pilot Survey

A pilot survey was conducted after collecting 20 random samples of the freelancers. ANCOVA regression was run in the EViews. In the pilot survey, the researcher faced some numerical problems and then solved them properly. The pilot survey was very beneficial for this study.

5. Demographic Analysis

5.1 Age

In this study, the researchers tried to determine the average age group of freelancers in our country. Table 1 shows the survey results. From the table, we can see that a large portion of the freelancers in our country belong to the age group 26-35 years, which is 55.5%. The second large portion of the age group is 16-25 years, almost 39% of freelancers come from this age group. Almost 4.7% of freelancers belong to the age group 36-45. Only 0.8% of freelancers belong to the 46-55 age group. We find only one freelancer belongs to the age group 46-55. In this study, we can see that the freelancers in our country are mainly belonging to the age range of 16-45 years. No freelancers have been found in the age group 56-65.

From this observation, we can conclude that freelancing is popular among the young generation. As it is an emerging source of earning, the people whose age are above 45 years, are not connected with the freelancing sector. Although anyone can work as a freelancer, no matter in which age group he belongs. Age is not a barrier in this case. There is no retirement issue.

Table 1. *Age of Freelancers*

Age	Frequency	Percentage
16-25	50	39.0
26-35	71	55.5
36-45	6	4.7
46-55	1	0.8
56-65	0	0
Total	128	100.0

Source: Authors Survey

5.2 Gender

As an emerging source of earning, freelancing is becoming very popular among the young generation. Men and women both are interested in freelancing. From this study, we find that the participation of men in the freelancing sector is greater than women. Table 2 shows the survey results. The participation of men in the freelancing sector is 82.8%. Whereas, the participation of females is 17.2%, and this percentage is increasing day by day. Various training center creates opportunities, women get training and start earning from this sector.

Table 2. *Gender*

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	106	82.8
Female	22	17.2
Total	128	100.0

Source: Survey

5.3 Freelancing Sector

There are many sectors in the freelancing marketplace. Data entry, web design and development, digital marketing, graphics design, content writing, video editing, 3D animation, social media management, and so on. This research considers mainly data entry, web design and development, digital marketing, and graphics design. These are the main sectors of freelancing where Bangladeshi freelancers work most. The results are described in Table 3.

Table 3. *Sectors of Freelancing*

Freelancing Sectors	Frequency	Percentage
Data Entry	6	4.7
Graphics Design	42	32.8
Web Design & Development	29	22.7
Digital Marketing	24	18.8
Others	27	21.0
Total	128	100.0

Source: Survey

A large portion of freelancers in Bangladesh work as graphics designers. About 32.8 % of total freelancers work in the graphics design sector. The web design and development sector occupied the second position. In this sector, almost 22.7% of freelancers work in Bangladesh. About 18.8% of freelancers work in the digital marketing sector. A few numbers of freelancers work in the data entry sector. The reason behind this is the low payment in this sector. On the other hand, 21% of freelancers in Bangladesh work in other sectors including 3D animation, video editing, content writing, and so on.

6. Results and Discussion

This study tried to meet the objectives. The multiple regression model ANCOVA is used in this study. The result is based on the 128 random freelancers. The ANCOVA multiple regression model is-

$$Income_i = \beta_1 + \beta_2 Gendr_i + \beta_3 Pro_i + \beta_4 Tr_i + \beta_5 Typ_i + \beta_6 Cost_i + \beta_7 Exp_i + \beta_8 Timesp_i + \beta_9 Edu_i + u_i \quad (2)$$

Where,

$Income_i$ = Income of i^{th} individual freelancer

$Gender_i$ = Gender of i^{th} individual freelancer

Pro_i = The i^{th} individual freelancer will take it as a profession or not in the future

Tr_i = The i^{th} individual freelancer took formal training or not

Typ_i = Type of i^{th} individual freelancer

$Cost_i$ = Monthly cost in BDT of i^{th} individual freelancer

Exp_i = Years of experience of freelancing of i^{th} individual freelancer

$Timesp_i$ = Weekly time spent of i^{th} individual freelancer in freelancing purpose

Edu_i = Years of schooling of i^{th} individual freelancer

Here, Gender, Profession, Training, and Type are dummy variables. They assign only two values 0 and 1.

Here,

$Gender_i = 1$; if the freelancer is Female

= 0; otherwise (here, it's Male and it is the benchmark category)

$Pro_i = 1$; if the freelancer will take freelancing as a profession in the future

= 0; otherwise

$Tr_i = 1$; if the freelancer took formal training

= 0; otherwise

$Typ_i = 1$; if the freelancer is a full-time freelancer

= 0; otherwise (the freelancer is a part-time freelancer)

The results are described below with the help of EViews.

Table 4. Statistical Result

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-80584.69	72432.43	-1.112550	0.2681
GENDER	-16178.63	15618.03	-1.035894	0.3024
PROFESSION	929.6992	14503.31	0.064103	0.9490
TRAINING	3735.741	12540.34	0.297898	0.7663
TYPE	26381.96	15399.98	1.713117	0.0893
COST_MONTHLY_BDT_	2.727644	0.130017	20.97912	0.0000
EXPERIENCE_YEARS_	7677.862	2796.519	2.745507	0.0070
TIME_SPENT_WEEKLY_HOURS_	1696.350	328.8889	5.157820	0.0000
YEARS_OF_SCHOOLING	3147.904	4360.632	0.721892	0.4718
R-squared	0.865851	Mean dependent var		97463.92
Adjusted R-squared	0.856833	S.D. dependent var		161204.3
S.E. of regression	60995.52	Akaike info criterion		24.94271
Sum squared resid	4.43E+11	Schwarz criterion		25.14324
Log likelihood	-1587.333	Hannan-Quinn criter.		25.02418
F-statistic	96.00952	Durbin-Watson stat		2.074692
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000000			

Source: Authors Calculation

In the ANCOVA multiple regression model, the dependent variable is monthly income in BDT and the explanatory variables are – gender, freelancing as a profession, formal training, types of freelancing, and the monthly cost for freelancing (which has taken as an investment for freelancing. Because, without buying internet or electronic accessories, it is not possible to work in the freelancing sector), years of experience to work as a freelancer, the weekly time spent for freelancing, years of schooling or educational qualification.

The ANCOVA multiple regression model-

$$(\widehat{Income}_i) = -80584.69 - 16178.63Gendr_i + 929.69Pro_i + 3735.74Tr_i + 26381.96Typ_i + 2.72Cost_i + 7677.86Exp_i + 1696.35Timesp_i + 3147.90Edu_i \quad (3)$$

Table 4 shows the results of the ANCOVA regression model. From these results, we see that the intercept is not statistically different from zero. The relationship between gender and freelancing income is negative. The estimated slope coefficient of explanatory variable gender of freelancer is statistically insignificant at 5% level of significant. Since the p-value is 0.30 which is greater than 5%.

The relationship between profession and freelancing income is positive but it is statistically insignificant. Because the p-value is 0.94. If someone wants to take freelancing as a profession in the future, the freelancing income will be increased. But in the real world, there is not any direct impact of this variable on the freelancing income. This decision will be taken in the future that if a random freelancer will take freelancing as a profession or not. So, it has no direct impact on the current income.

There is a positive relationship between formal training and freelancing income. However, it is not statistically significant. The p-value is 0.76. If a random freelancer takes formal training, the freelancing income will be increased. But, in the real world, many freelancers learn by themselves with the help of YouTube and Google and earn a lot from freelancing. So, the freelancing income is not quietly dependent on formal training.

The table shows that there is a positive relationship between the freelancer's monthly income and the types of freelancers. Here the benchmark category is part-time freelancing. So, if the Type = 1 or the random freelancer is a full-time freelancer, then *ceteris paribus*, on average the income of freelancers goes up by about BDT 26381.96. The dummy variable Type is statistically significant at a 10% significant level and the p-value is 0.08.

On the other hand, there is a positive relationship between the quantitative variable monthly cost and freelancing income. It is statistically highly significant because the p-value is 0.000. The table shows that *ceteris paribus*, for one unit increase in freelancing monthly cost or one unit increase in investment for freelancing purposes, on average, the freelancing income will be increased by 2.72 BDT.

There is a positive relationship between the quantitative variable years of experience and freelance income. It is also statistically significant because the p-value is 0.00 which is less than 5%. Moreover, the t-statistic is greater than 2. As these results suggest, *ceteris paribus*: as freelancing experience goes up by one year, on average, the freelancing income goes up by about 7677.86 BDT.

Another relationship between freelancing income and weekly time spent is positive. The results suggest that *ceteris paribus*, if a random freelancer weekly works one more hour, on average the income will be increased by about 1696.35 BDT. This relationship is statistically highly significant as the p-value is 0.000 and also the t-statistic is greater than 2.

The relationship between years of schooling and income is positive. However, it is statistically insignificant as the p-value is 0.47 which is greater than 5%, and also the t-statistic is less than 2. The results imply that there is no impact of the increase in the years of schooling on the freelancing income since freelancing skills are more important than academic education.

The value of R-square is a statistical measure in regression analysis that measures the proportion of total variation in dependent variable due to independent variables. A measure of the overall variance in the dependent variable caused by independent variables adjusted with the degree of freedom is the adjusted R-square (Rahman, 2022). In this study the value of $R^2 = 0.86$ which means approximately 86% of the variation in freelancing income is explained by the explanatory variables. The value of adjusted R^2 is 0.8568, which means that the overall model fits well. In regression analysis, the F-statistic is a crucial value that helps determine the overall significance of the model. Here, the F-statistic value is 96.00952 and p-value is 0.0000, suggesting that the overall model is statistically significant. The Durbin-Watson test is a statistical test that detects autocorrelation, specially first-order serial correlation, in the residuals of a linear regression model. The value of Durbin-Watson is 2.07469, which is close to 2, indicating no major autocorrelation issues in this estimated model.

7. Impacts of Freelancing on the Educated Unemployed

From the analysis, we find that freelancing has a positive impact on the educated unemployed in Bangladesh. To obtain the results, we consider two perspectives of the freelancers. One is whether they think that freelancing is an alternative to the traditional job market. The other is whether they will pursue freelancing as a profession in the future.

In the analysis, we find that 89.8% of respondents consider that freelancing is an alternative to the traditional job market. Moreover, 67.2 % of freelancers intend to pursue it as a profession in the future.

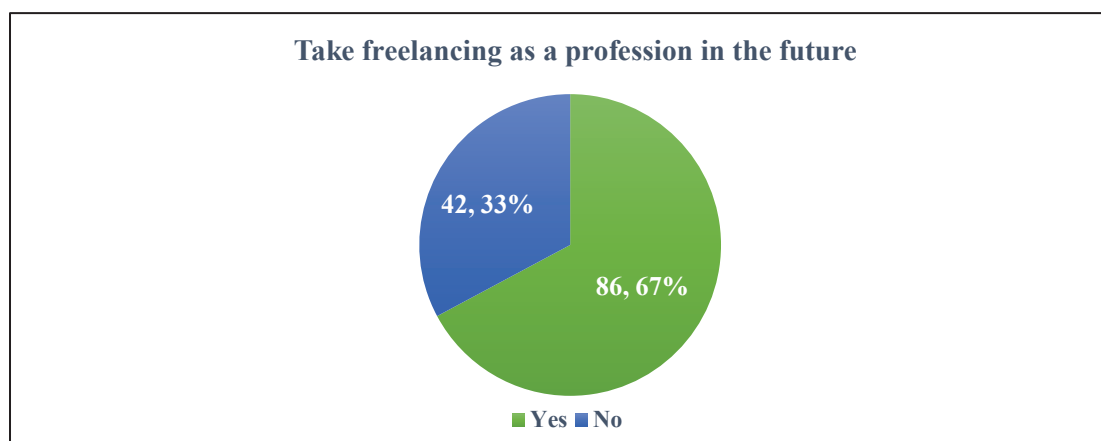


Figure 1. *Take freelancing as a profession in the future*

Source: Survey

Since a large portion of respondents will take freelancing as their profession in the future. So, it can be concluded that they will not enter the traditional job sector. According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), nearly 24 lakh educated people are unemployed in Bangladesh (Labor Force Survey 2023 – July to September). In the future, when this large portion of freelancers does not enter into the traditional job market, then the rate of educated unemployment will decrease.

Therefore, we can conclude that freelancing has a significant impact on the educated unemployed in Bangladesh. Day by day, freelancing is becoming increasingly popular among the educated unemployed in Bangladesh. In the future, it will decrease unemployment in Bangladesh.

8. The Problems Faced by Freelancers in Bangladesh

As the residents of a developing country, the freelancers of Bangladesh face various problems. The major problem identified is related to payments. The international payment gateway PayPal is not

available in Bangladesh. This paper has tried to point out the main problems faced by the freelancers of Bangladesh. The same problem is faced by different freelancers. The slow internet speed or internet buffering and frequent load-shedding are very disturbing to freelance work. It also makes communication with clients difficult.

Table 6. *Problems faced by freelancers*

Freelancer's Problem	Frequency	Percentage
Payment Problem	33	0.25
Unavailability of PayPal	29	0.22
Internet problems & load-shedding	30	0.23
Social importance or recognition	6	0.04
Communicate with client	8	0.06
Physical & Mental stress	12	0.09
High priced device	5	0.03
Do not face any problem	11	0.08
Total	134	1.00

Source: Survey

From the survey result, we find that 25% of freelancers in Bangladesh face payment problems. In which currency exchange, unavailability of cryptocurrency, money transactions, and client delays in sending payments are noteworthy. About 22% of respondents said that they face the problem of unavailability of payment gateway PayPal. PayPal is an international payment gateway and receiving payments through it is very easy. Sometimes, foreign clients want to pay through PayPal, but Bangladeshi freelancers can't receive payments via it.

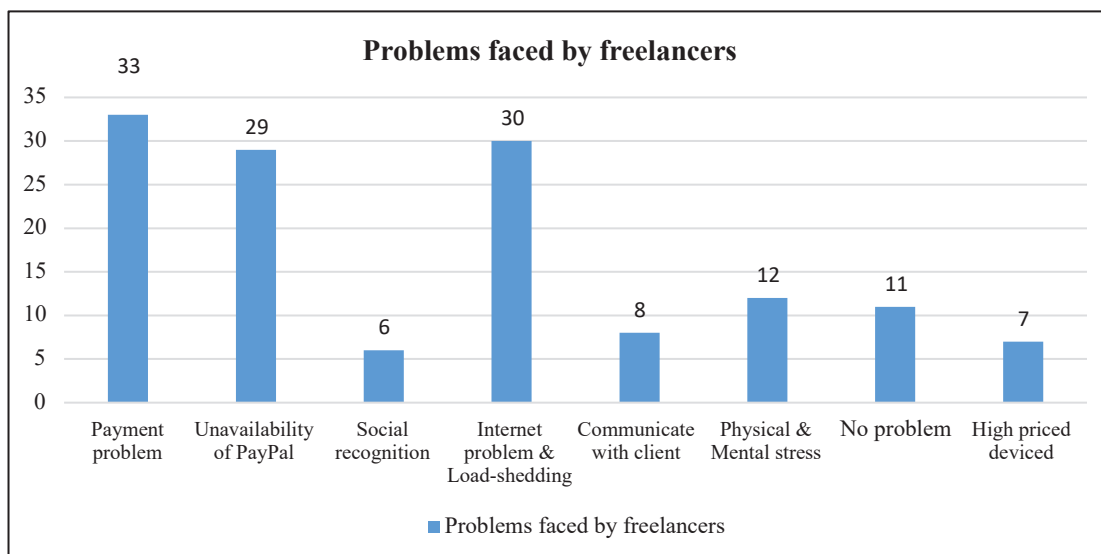


Figure 2. *Problems faced by freelancers*

Source: Survey

Almost 23% of respondents identified the problem of slow internet speed and frequent load-shedding. It is very terrible when someone's work is disrupted due to slow internet speed and frequent load-shedding. In rural areas, these two problems are very serious. Freelancers sometimes lose big deals due to internet problems and load-shedding.

A freelancer has to work for a long time on a computer. Sometimes, they have to work the whole night. It causes physical and mental stress. Back pain, eye problems, insomnia, irritability, and depression are mentionable physical and mental problems. About 9% of freelancers identified these physical and mental stresses as problems of freelancing.

However, about 8% of freelancers said that they do not face any kind of problem. Almost 4% of freelancers stated that they face a lack of social recognition and respect. It is true that in our country, society does not value properly to the freelancers. It is a matter of perspective. We can't take easily any work at the first time.

New freelancers face communication problems. They can't pick clients easily. They face a language barrier in reaching clients. About 6% of freelancers identified the communication problem. The first requirement for freelancing is to have high-priced electronic devices. A personal computer or laptop is essential for freelancing. Nearly 3% of respondents consider it as a problem. Besides these, freelancers in Bangladesh face several problems, including cross-border connectivity issues, server downtime, lack of proper training and guidelines, identity crisis, lack of work security, and insufficient government support. Freelancers are often overlooked in the local market. Their efforts are not valued based on hours worked but rather on the amount of work completed. Most freelancers do not receive fair compensation.

9. Ways to Take Freelancing as a Profession

People tend to prefer government jobs because of job security and government guidelines. If job security can be ensured in the freelancing sector, more people will consider freelancing as a profession. Here job security is not guaranteed in freelancing, because freelancers work with multiple clients. However, if the government establishes guidelines and helplines, then educated unemployed individuals in Bangladesh may pursue freelancing as a profession. If the government creates a specialized sector under the ICT Ministry of Bangladesh and provides freelancers with training and proper guidelines, then it will be helpful for the freelancers of Bangladesh. Moreover, if it helps to solve several problems faced by freelancers, then more people will be drawn to this sector.

10. Freelancing Marketplace or Platform

Most of the freelancers in our country, work on both Fiverr and Upwork. Besides, a large number of freelancers in our country work on freelancer.com and LinkedIn. Many freelancers said that they had started their freelancing career on Fiver. After that, they switched on other platforms. Nowadays, the local market is also very popular among the freelancers. Freepik, Passive Marketplace, Survey Site, Creative Fabrica, Creative Market, Designhill, Adobe Stock, Binance, Guru.com, Swagbucks, PeoplePerHour, Toptal, and Vecteezy are mentionable freelancing platforms where Bangladeshi freelancers work. In every platform, at first, they need to create their freelancing profile. From their freelance earnings, they have to pay a certain portion to the platform.

11. Limitations and Recommendations

This study is limited by a small sample size of 128 participants. Due to budget and time constraints, it was not possible to increase the sample size. Moreover, a major challenge was that most freelancers in Bangladesh are reluctant to share their economic information. Nevertheless, this research tried to cover a large part of Bangladesh. In the future, when someone chooses this topic, then he/she can increase the sample size and cover the rest of the parts of Bangladesh. This paper has tried to find the ways so that more people take freelancing as a profession, in further research the researcher can extend this topic and can find the statistical results. Freelancing is an emerging source of earning. The government should be aware of this sector. The government should organize free trainings. Under the ICT Ministry, the government can give shelter and guidelines to the freelancers of Bangladesh. The government can create

rules and regulations for this sector. Because, when something is governed by rules and regulations, it can be carried out more effectively. Additionally, the government should consider this sector at the time of policy evaluation.

12. Conclusions

Freelancing is an opportunity to reduce unemployment. Like other countries, Bangladesh also grabs this opportunity. Day by day many educated unemployed individuals tend to enter the sector which has a positive impact on the economy of our country. They earn a large amount of foreign currency every month, which contributes to economic growth. The objective of this study is to find the impacts of this emerging source of earning on the educated unemployed of Bangladesh and the factors that effects the freelancer's income. The study found that there is a positive impact of freelancing on the educated unemployed in Bangladesh. Most of the respondents said that they had taken it as their profession. They also added that in the future, they will not compete for any other jobs as long as they earn a sufficient amount from it. The study found that the determinants- types of freelancers, cost of freelancing, experience in the field and hours spent, affect freelance income. In Bangladesh, freelancers face many unavoidable problems, which are also addressed in this study. Most of the freelancer faces payment problem. They can't receive their payment easily due to the unavailability of PayPal. Frequent disruptions in electricity and internet connectivity hamper their ability to work efficiently. As a result, they can't progress as quickly as the freelancers of other countries. Many freelancers learn freelancing with the help of YouTube and Google. So, the government should organize free training for learning freelancing. The government should give adequate importance to this sector. The outcome of this study will be helpful for formulating new macroeconomic policies in Bangladesh. However, in the future, this sector will help to reduce unemployment in Bangladesh.

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