Exploring Freelancing as a Novice: Effective Strategies and Insights for Achieving Success

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Abstract- This research paper presents the findings of a survey conducted to understand the interest of youth in freelancing, the skills they aspire to acquire, and their access to training for these skills. The survey concludes that most youths are inexperienced in freelancing and opt for freelancing to gain freedom and control over their work. The most sought-after skills in freelancing are digital marketing, web development, and content creation. Additionally, many beginners start freelancing for free to improve their skills. The study recommends that freelancers need the right gear, a desirable skill, a good reputation, and continuous self-improvement to succeed. The paper concludes that freelancing is expanding and offers many benefits but poses challenges like future work and income uncertainty. The study highlights the importance of constant skill development and growth for success in freelancing.

Index Terms- Freelancing, Skills acquisition, Training access, Novice freelancers, Digital marketing, Web development, Content creation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Everyone has been affected by Covid-19, but technology has also emerged during the pandemic. Recently, online freelancing platforms like Guru, Fiverr, and Upwork have gained popularity. Online employment is available to anyone with a degree or some professional abilities. Numerous digital tasks, including data entry, graphic design, coding, and web development, are accessible through these portals, which is advantageous for freelancers and small businesses seeking quality work. Although these platforms provide numerous opportunities, novices must overcome numerous obstacles. They are deemed incompetent and the most vulnerable to deception. Due to the hazards listed below, novices are more likely to develop the expectation of being "always available online," causing them stress. Consequently, these obstacles may influence their attitudes and intentions in specific situations, causing them to avoid freelance work. The organizations attract tens of thousands of individuals worldwide for tasks as simple as data entry and as complex as programming, digital marketing, game development, and data analysis.With the use of this personnel, businesses can reduce expenses in various areas, including time, which is a revenue generator. Working as freelancers will enable individuals to manage their careers by being more time-situated and self-directed, creating a more robust equilibrium between enjoyable and serious pursuits. Nonetheless, individuals in a digital environment must have technical knowledge and be able to employ it in real time. Additionally, interpersonal communication abilities are essential for success in the field.

This study examines the plethora of obstacles encountered by neophyte freelancers in depth, comprising a spectrum of research objectives. The investigation begins by examining the concept of self-efficacy among freelancers and illuminating its implications for their professional development. Second, the research investigates the phenomenon of avoidance behavior and its impact on freelancers' ability to engage with clients and projects effectively. Thirdly, the study assesses the significance of the burgeoning trend within crowdsourcing platforms to the freelance market. In addition, the study challenges the widely held belief that new freelancers frequently encounter difficulties in procuring projects due to clients' predilection for seasoned professionals, thus examining the obstacles encountered by novices in establishing themselves. In addition, the research investigates the difficulties faced by novice freelancers in effectively marketing their services to potential clients, emphasizing the significance of effective self-presentation. In addition, the study examines pricing strategies, emphasizing the common tendency for novices to underprice their services, which may have an impact on their income and perceived value. The study concludes by examining the time management challenges neophyte freelancers face and elucidating their implications for meeting project deadlines. This exhaustive analysis provides valuable insights into the multifaceted challenges freelancers confront in the early phases of their careers. This paper presents a comprehensive structure that coordinates required and optional information to direct quantitative research. The system consolidates both internal and external optional data, in addition to essential data. External supplementary information sources include distributed reports, books, and diaries, whereas interior supplementary information sources include inward websites, representative records, and financial reports of relevant associations. The pioneering report: In 2020, the computerized organization released a comprehensive report titled "Consultant Pay Report 2020," which delves into the fundamental aspects of outsourcing, the advantages and disadvantages of this career path, and the challenges faced by newcomers to the field. The report relies on analyzing more than 7,000 consultants from 150 countries, including Pakistan. The report highlights the fundamental motivations behind why numerous youths decide on outsourcing embody pay fulfilment, expanded open positions, and wage uniformity. This is the case in many non-industrial nations, where daily work opportunities may be restricted or contingent on non-standard wage practices. Surprisingly, despite the development of collaborative spaces and shared workplaces, a significant proportion of Pakistani specialists (81%) still choose to telecommute. This indicates that the adaptability of telecommuting remains an important factor for some

professionals, particularly in nations with inadequate infrastructure and transportation systems. CEO of Pioneer, Scott Galit, stated: "The freelance economy has grown exponentially over the past decade, and it is now safe to say that the future of work has arrived. Obstacles that impeded freelancers' ability to grow, connect, and be successful have been eliminated. "In addition, the report found that secondary school consultants are paid more than those with a four-year degree. This is feasible since younger consultants and newcomers have more specialized skills, which are continually growing as a result of technological development and altering business sector demands. In general, the report provides significant insights into the world of outsourcing, particularly for those just beginning their careers in this field. The evidence indicates that outsourcing is a viable option for some individuals, particularly those seeking greater adaptability and acquiring potential in a rapidly changing job market. The research compendium on freelancing and self-employment: The research of Professor Andrew Burke has revealed that the performance of highly skilled freelancers on the labor market differs significantly from that of individuals with remarkable academic credentials but weak interpersonal skills. His study sheds light on the rising demand for new freelancers on the job market, as well as their obstacles, career trajectories, and the need for a dynamic trajectory. Burke contends that "freelancer" is frequently self-descriptive because there is no legal definition. Some may identify themselves as independent contractors, others as self-employed, and others as freelancers. Burke emphasizes in his 2014 publication that the chapters of his compendium provide an overview of extant and new research on freelancing in 21st century business contexts. [2] In addition, Burke's research identifies additional characteristics of freelancers, such as their capacity for innovation, entrepreneurship, and risk management. In some instances, entire businesses rely on the expertise and skills of independent contractors to improve their performance. Burke's research also examines business organization and how freelancers, especially novices, can contribute value to companies. He asks how freelancers can boost business performance, what institutional support they require, and how they can contribute to economic development and job creation. [3] Overall, Burke's research provides insightful information about the expanding freelance industry and its prospective effects on businesses, the labor market, and the economy. It emphasizes the significance of examining the difficulties and opportunities of freelancing as a career path, especially for novices. Journal of business and entrepreneurship: The research aimed to accomplish multiple goals, including evaluating the current state of freelancing, identifying the factors that influence freelance income, identifying the significant challenges that beginners face in freelancing, assessing the impact of freelancing on the economy, and recommending ways to reduce unemployment through freelancing. [4] To collect data for the study, 206 Bangladeshi freelancers responded to surveys. The acquired data were analyzed using a variety of statistical methods, including ANOVA, multiple regression analysis, straightforward statistical tables, and graphs. Sukman's (2015) study surveyed 23,000 freelancers and discovered that 55% of the respondents had university degrees, while the remaining 45% had only completed high school. This indicates that a degree of the highest caliber is not necessarily required for success in the freelancing industry. [5] However, the research also revealed that 34% of freelance market novices struggle with skill development in a specific area, while 26% struggle with the English language, which is essential for effective client communication. This research provides valuable insights into the current state of freelancing and emphasizes some of the difficulties faced by newcomers to this field. It also emphasizes the significance of resolving these obstacles in order to leverage the potential benefits of freelancing, such as its contribution to reducing unemployment and bolstering the economy. In order to excel within the realm of freelancing on crowdsourcing platforms, digital professionals must possess a high degree of digital self-efficacy. This attribute imbues them with the confidence required to undertake a wide array of tasks and make calculated decisions [7]. Self-efficacy is intricately tied to an individual's belief in their ability to execute actions across diverse situations and attain their objectives [8]. Furthermore, self-efficacy encompasses an individual's assurance in implementing precautionary measures, a pivotal facet of avoidance motivation. It has the capacity to cultivate positive expectations, as individuals with elevated levels of self-efficacy tend to exhibit optimism concerning their competence as proficient digital workers [9]. In the context of the digital workforce, self-efficacy is closely correlated with a freelancer's confidence in their ability to perform digital tasks competently. Freelancers possessing heightened self-efficacy are more inclined to proactively pursue assignments commensurate with their skillset, confront challenges resolutely, and execute tasks aligned with their expertise, rather than shying away from adversity [10]. Upon perusal of the aforementioned factors, it becomes evident why self-motivation stands as a paramount attribute for freelancers. It is imperative to maintain a self-propelled work ethic and unwavering commitment to one's objectives, persisting even in the face of setbacks or unsuccessful bid attempts by other contenders [1]. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge that sustaining motivation always is a formidable task. In advance projects like internet of things, augmented reality ad advance game development rejection, a natural response within human behavior, is frequently encountered, wherein psychological, physiological, and social factors converge to engender resistance to unfavorable stimuli. In environments characterized by uncertainty, individuals often grapple with avoidance motivation when confronted with impediments [11-13].

II. METHODOLOGY

A quantitative survey study was conducted to gain insight into the perceptions of threat avoidance among newcomers in the digital workforce who engage in crowdsourcing platform environments. Due to the difficulty in obtaining a comprehensive list of individuals participating in digital platforms for online jobs, a non-probability sampling technique was utilized. The research team implemented a purposive sampling technique, which allowed for selecting individuals with prior experience using digital platforms to perform digital workforce tasks. This approach ensured that the sample group consisted only of relevant individuals to the study, while those without relevant experience were excluded. The survey was designed to collect quantitative data to determine the participants' perceptions of threat avoidance. These included questions related to their

perceived levels of security in digital platforms, their understanding of the potential risks associated with digital work, and their willingness to take actions to mitigate these risks. [6]

To determine the minimum sample size needed for the study, the researchers used the GPower program developed by Erdfelder, Faul, and Buchner in 1996. With a predictive power of 0.95 and a limit of two predictors, the required sample size was calculated to be 107 (with an effect size of 0.15) according to Cohen's 1992 guidelines. A survey was then conducted to gather data from participants. A five-point Likert form was used to collect data for each analysis model construct. All instruments were adapted from previous work by Alomar, Alsaleh, and Alarifi in 2019, based on the Technology Threat Avoidance Theory (TTAT). The questionnaires were distributed and collected by groups of undergraduate psychology students who had participated in digital workforce programs and enrolled in the subject for nearly four months. The program required students to apply for jobs through bidding or contest applications to ensure they had ample experience as digital workers.

To ensure that each student was familiar with the digital workforce concept and operating environment, they were required to apply for at least 100 job applications throughout the course. At the end of the semester, an online sample of 142 eligible responses was obtained. The study examined the perceptions of threat avoidance among newcomers in the digital workforce who actively participated in crowdsourcing platform environments. As there was no way to obtain a list of the population participating in digital platforms for online jobs, a non-probability sample technique was used. Using a purposive sampling technique, only those with experience using digital platforms to perform digital workforce tasks were included in the study, while others were excluded. [6]

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	120	84.5
	Male	21	14.8
Age group	<21 years old	3	2.1
	21-23 years old	128	90.1
	24-25 years old	7	4.9
	> 25 years old	4	2.1
The platform used for digital work	Freelancer.com	135	95.1
	Freelancing.com	1	0.7
	PeoplePerHour	3	2.1
	Upwork	1	0.7
	Others	1	0.7
Level of experience in digital work	Beginner	120	84.5
	Intermediate	21	14.8
	Advanced	1	0.7
Type of jobs applied in the freelance platform	Business and Accounting	1	0.7
	Data Entry	40	28.2
	Graphical Design	65	45.8
	Sales and Marketing	9	6.3
	Translation	9	6.3
	Typing	12	8.5
	Writers/Content Development	1	0.7

Figure 1 Datasheet of respondents.

One hundred forty-two people participated in the review surveys, and their segment profiles are introduced in Figure 1. Most respondents (84.5%) were ladies, and 14.8% were men. The age of the members was isolated into a few reaches, with 2.1% being beneath the age of 21, 35.9% being 21-22, 54.2% being 23-24, and just 2.1% being over the age of 25. Concerning virtual labour force action, Freelancer.com was the most regularly utilized stage, with 95.1% of respondents utilizing it, trailed by different sites utilized by less than five people each. True to form, most respondents (84.5%) were amateurs in virtual work insight, interestingly being college understudies presented to the virtual workplace.

The overview likewise uncovered the highest-level positions performed during the four-month meeting. Illustrations configuration was the most ordinarily performed work, representing 45.8% of the aggregate, trailed by the information section (28.2%) and composting (8.5%). Other work types, like deals and showcasing, interpretation, business and bookkeeping, and content creation, were less unmistakable among the understudies.

To guarantee the legitimacy and dependability of the review instruments, the following segment gives an evaluation inside a hypothetical setting. The examination will assess the adequacy of the Innovation Danger Aversion Hypothesis (TTAT) and its related builds in making sense of the impression of danger evasion among novices in the computerized labour supply, which effectively took part in publicly supporting stage conditions. By approving the development inside a hypothetical setting, the review intends to add to the current writing on the subject and give essential experiences for future examination.[6].

In 2020 it was filled by most of the fellow batchmates and other university students. This survey categorizes the interest of youth in freelancing, which skills they look forward to adopting, and if they had a proper course for their skill or not.

Most of the youth have just stepped into the freelancing field they marked as (just started). This shows that a significant category of freelancers includes inexperienced people.
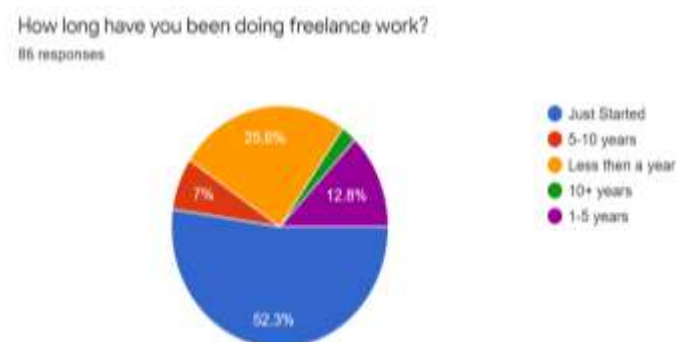

Figure 2 Freelancing experience of the respondents.

Students marked that they opted for freelancing for their freedom and ease of not being under someone's control.
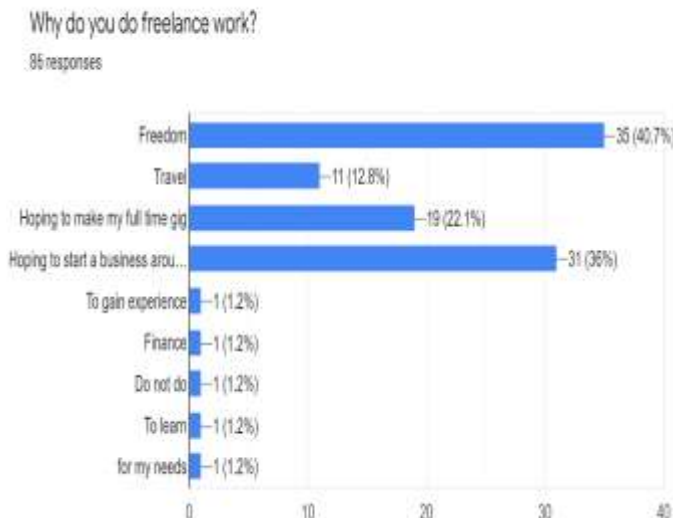

Figure 3 Motivation of respondents to do freelancing.

Their interests and services are related to digital marketing, web development, and content creation.
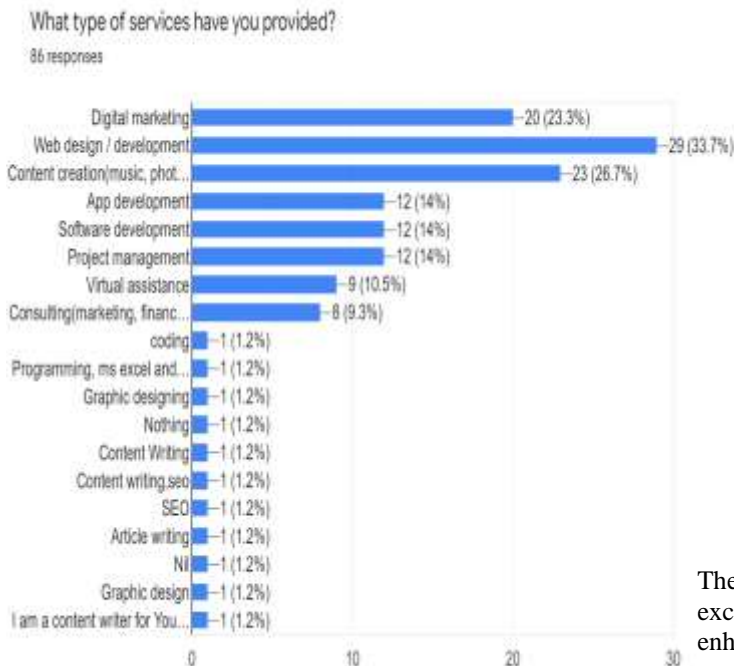

Figure 4 Freelancing services provided by the respondents.

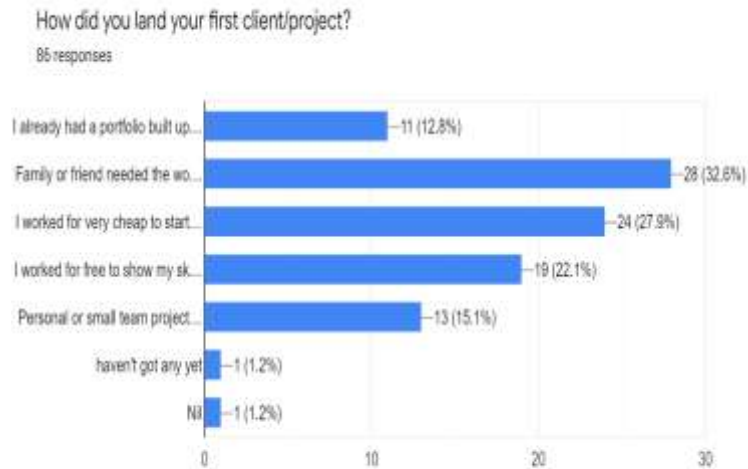The majority agreed that they started freelancing for free to improve their skills. Their families or friends asking for a favour was also a tremendous factor.

Figure 5 Freelancing first client experience.

Many beginners opt for freelancing websites like Fiverr, Upwork, and others. A mediocre amount has their websites as well.
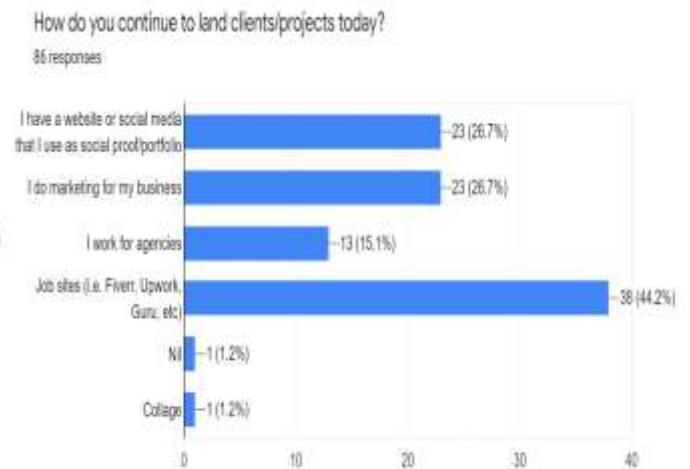

Figure 6 Techniques used by the respondents to acquire clients.

The tug between free and working for money has also been exciting. Some prioritize working for money, and some for the enhancement of their skills.
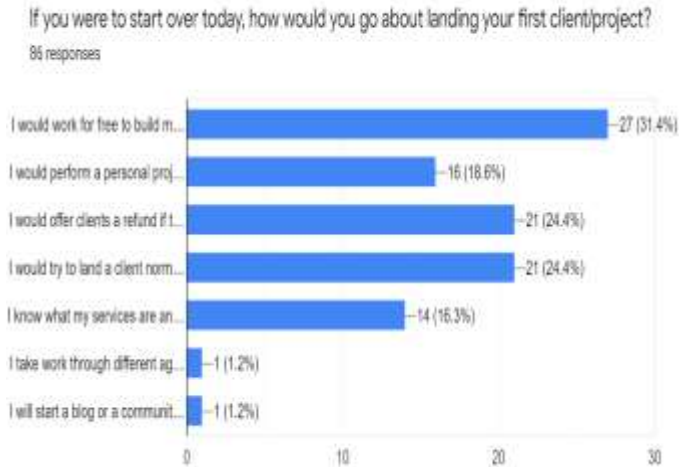
Figure 7 Improvements that could help start a new freelance career.

The chart shows that most freelancers won't work for free, but some are willing to work for free and show their talent to the world.
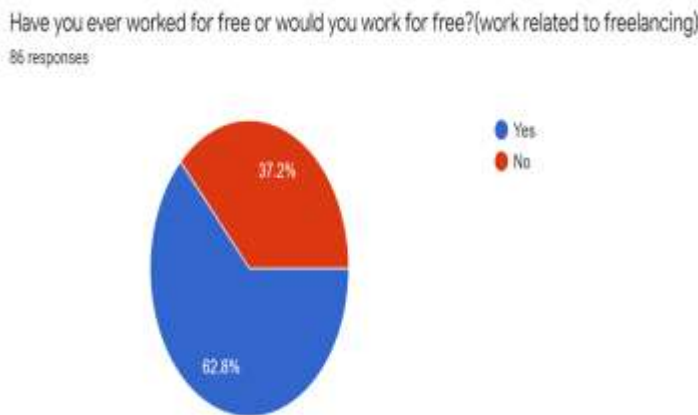

Figure 8 analysis of respondents who worked for free while freelancing.

As evident from the chart, a significant proportion of freelancers have cultivated their skills through independent self-guided efforts. Additionally, a notable contingent has acquired their expertise from resources associated with the YouTube platform.
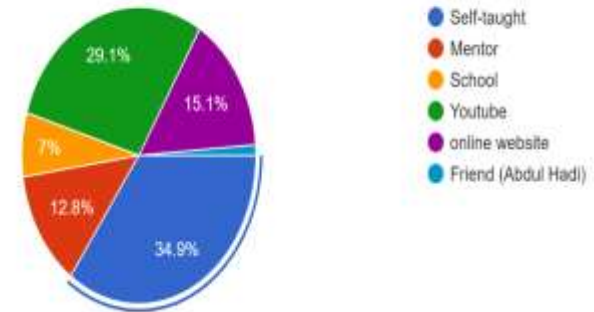

Figure 9 How did the respondents learn their freelance skills.

III. DISCUSSION

Rash decisions born out of desperation often lead to unfavorable outcomes. Therefore, it is advisable to exercise caution against embarking on a freelance venture solely for quick financial gain. Freelancing, as a pursuit, is not synonymous with swift wealth accumulation; rather, it entails a multifaceted set of prerequisites. Thankfully, contemporary options abound in this regard, and an increasingly common query pertains to the feasibility of performing freelance work exclusively through a smartphone. The concise response to this query is in the negative, particularly if the objective is to attain substantial remuneration. The functionality of smartphone applications remains limited in comparison to the comprehensive software required for proficient task execution and the delivery of high-quality results. Consequently, prior to venturing into the realm of online freelancing, it is advisable to secure access to a computer, and even an older laptop can suffice.

The subsequent and arguably most pivotal step in this endeavor involves the identification of a marketable skill to offer as a freelancer. This skill could encompass something as straightforward as transcribing audio or something more intricate, such as mobile app development. The crux of success in freelancing lies in selecting a skill that aligns with personal proficiency and possesses sufficient demand within the market. For example, individuals skilled in creating illustrations or product packaging should explore opportunities on freelance platforms such as Upwork or Freelancer. If these platforms exhibit a substantial number of job listings related to one's proficiency, a valuable opportunity awaits.

The ability to establish and showcase one's expertise serves as a decisive factor in the journey towards becoming a prosperous freelancer. Educational

qualifications and prior experience, while commendable, may not carry as much weight as the demonstration of genuine expertise within one's chosen field. For writers, this may involve publishing articles on renowned blogs, while photographers should be capable of referencing client portfolios and claiming authorship of brand creation. Similarly, web designers should ensure their portfolio includes websites they have designed. If required, one can commence by undertaking pro bono work, contribute guest articles to receptive blogs, or engage in conceptual design projects to build a credible portfolio.

Identifying a valuable skill marks the beginning of one's journey but achieving financial remuneration hinges on the mastery of that skill. For instance, if the aspiration is to write for health and fitness blogs, it is essential to recognize that the formatting and style of blog writing differ significantly from conventional academic or creative writing. To cater to a broader online audience, one must learn the art of crafting engaging blog posts. This includes mastering the usage of platforms like WordPress, creating compelling visuals to accompany articles, and other essential skills specific to the chosen field. This principle applies uniformly across all freelance disciplines, emphasizing the importance of acquiring fundamental proficiency through dedicated practice before pursuing paid opportunities.

IV. CONCLUSION

Considering the evolving landscape of freelancing over time, there has been a notable expansion in its scope. This trend has led many individuals to prefer freelance opportunities over traditional, long-term employment arrangements due to the inherent advantages it offers. Freelancing serves to augment one's income without being subject to the customary hierarchical structures prevalent in traditional workplaces, thus mitigating the effects of social biases. This study has meticulously examined both the merits and demerits of freelancing, as well as the pros and cons associated with independent work. An initial observation highlights that freelance professionals encounter fewer layers of management within their work environment, affording them greater autonomy and responsiveness in their professional undertakings. Furthermore, freelancers are not bound by the policies and procedures of a specific organization, and they are exempt from the financial burdens associated with commuting to a fixed workplace.

However, it is imperative to acknowledge that freelancers face their own set of challenges. Foremost among these is the inherent uncertainty regarding future employment opportunities and income stability. In contrast to conventional employees who typically have a predetermined monthly income, freelancers often contend with fluctuating earnings and uncertain work prospects. Regarding the imperative aspect of skill development, it is unequivocally established that continuous growth and adaptability are indispensable in one's professional journey, particularly within the realm of business. Novice entrants need not be deterred, as learning is an ongoing process that transcends experience levels. Aspiring freelancers are encouraged to invest in educational resources, such as relevant courses available on reputable platforms, recognizing that knowledge acquisition is a judicious investment with enduring value.

In conclusion, commencing one's freelancing journey may be facilitated by initially engaging in unpaid work opportunities, which provide a practical avenue for gaining experience and learning from established professionals in the same field of expertise. This approach fosters a solid foundation upon which to build a successful freelance career, underscoring the potential benefits of mentorship and experiential learning in the pursuit of freelancing excellence.

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