

## **Analyzing Challenges for Females in Freelancing in The Field of Information Technology, Sri Lanka**

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Many female professionals in the field of Information Technology in developed countries do freelancing as their career. Freelancing is a more appropriate occupation for all Sri Lankan females in the field of Information Technology as a profession. But in online freelancing platforms, the representatives of Sri Lankan females are very low. The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors which are negatively influence the motivation of female Information Technology professionals to involve in freelancing in Sri Lanka. The study was conducted through the use of both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Quantitative data were collected, through an online survey questionnaire. The respondents of the survey are 184 females in the field of Information Technology freelancing in Colombo district Sri Lanka. Researchers collected qualitative data from 5 telephone interviews with female Information Technology professionals who work in a prestigious multinational Information Technology firm located in Colombo, Sri Lanka. To analyze the qualitative data of the study has used thematic analysis. The reliability of the variables was confirmed using the help of experts. The study introduces a conceptual framework that includes four independent variables as disinclination, childcare and family responsibilities, gender pay gap, and job security and income stability. The study explains one dependent variable in the conceptual framework that is the motivation of female Information Technology freelancers. The study presents the effect of the above independent variables on the dependent variable. The study was conducted in Colombo district Sri Lanka; hence the change of the model needs to be investigated in different geographic areas. While the awareness of the community can be varying with the level of literacy and experience throughout the country. Moreover, there were limited research studies done on this are due to this is a novel concept in Sri Lanka. As per reviewed in the literature and even the study we conducted has suggested that results coincide with the previous reviews to some extent. Females are negatively impacted by the gender pay gap implied in the freelancing field. This will demotivate females to adopt freelancing. And even the childcare and family responsibilities also force them to give up on freelancing as a career. And even social and cultural aspects create a disinclination among females to adopt freelancing as a career. Moreover, comparing to traditional employment the level of job security and the income stability freelancing offers gives a bad impression to females about the freelance field. All Sri Lankan female Information Technology professionals who are willing to start a career in freelancing and currently working freelancers are encouraged to use the results of this study and enhance the awareness about freelancing and identify the challenges that are occurring locally while doing freelancing as a career.

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