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RESEARCH ARTICLE

FROM FULL TIME TO PART TIME: UNCOVERING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF THE FILIPINO EXPATRIATE FREELANCE WORKERS IN QATAR

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Abstract

Background: Freelancing has become an increasingly profitable prospect for many working professionals, especially those who want to work on their terms, as it provides benefits and experiences unparalleled to those workers in full-time employment.

Purpose: Captivated by varied experiences and life stories, the researchers aimed at exploring the factors that contribute and shape the lived experiences of the Filipino freelance workers in Qatar.

Method: Utilizing phenomenology as a research design, the researchers chose seven respondents via qualitative purposive sampling with set criteria. Data were gathered through a semi-structured interview. The results were analyzed using the inductive approach: audio recording of the conversations, transcribing the results from emic to etic observing cool to warm analysis, and member checking to validate the instrument used.

Findings: Findings have revealed essential factors that contribute to the lived experiences of the Filipino freelance workers as specified in terms of familial (finance, support, and freedom), social (self-esteem, impartiality, and influence), and personal (contentment, pride, and happiness) aspects. These further imply that the road to freelancing may be bumpy, but it promises opportunities and advantages.

Conclusion: Notwithstanding the benefits of having formal employment, there are still Filipino expatriates in Qatar who have opted to venture into freelancing due to different reasons and circumstances.

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Introduction:-

Modern-day workers live a complex and challenging life. They take responsibility for a demanding workplace, deal with diversified groups of people, solve and resolve conflicts, and, most importantly, lead and look over the needs and wants of their families. As the employment rates increase, jobs in demand of employees would eventually reach their limit, leaving a percentage of the masses unemployed. Thus, getting a job these days would be hard if one does not or cannot meet the standards of workers employed.

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want to work on their own terms, as it provides freedom and independence unparalleled to those workers in full-time employment. In popular discourse, the myth of the freelancer persists, not only as a quick remedy for job scarcity but also as liberation from rigid schedules and office routines (Drobnič, 2011).

Shifting from full-time employment to part-time employment is undoubtedly not an easy task, mostly when it comes to preparing to face the obstacles that could either bring positive or negative effects on the person's behavior or way of thinking. At first, it may seem daunting and ill-advised, but some advantages can be yielded as one commits into the desired career. The superficial understanding of freelancers and their various social standings also play as obstacles that contribute to many professionals' hesitance in their decision-making process. To some, the image of freelancing is somewhat distant from the image of serious professionals. As previously mentioned, people assume that they have a comfortable life. As a freelancer, it is common to hear from acquaintances, "Why don't you come over my place to have lunch as you have more time than me?" or "I envy you. You have a free soul to leave your job like that!" People also associate freelancers with the terms containing "free", such as "free folks", which cannot identify the ideal image of a master in any authority. The fact that the name starts with "free" does not mean that freelancers are free from time pressure or professional responsibility. Hence, to overcome the stereotype surrounding the term, some freelancers, especially professionals who use fancy titles on their business cards, choose different names, like solopreneur, to emphasize their entrepreneurship and to impress others (Burke & Cowling, 2019).

In general, our society gradually realizes the benefits of replacing some professionals with freelancers. For many young people, freelancing is an additional job or even the only one. However, it is essential to note that there are advantages to this method of employment, as well as disadvantages. Thus, to decide between leaving a formal job and turning into freelancing, one should take as a rule that personal disposition, qualities, experiences, and qualifications are not enough. It may take some years before the investment in the form of knowledge will bring real profit.

It is, therefore, based on this proposition that this qualitative study was formulated to attempt to understand and realize the essence of the lived experiences of Filipino freelance workers in Qatar as they have shifted from full-time employment to part-time employment. Through this phenomenological inquiry, the researchers endeavored to explore the relative factors through which freelance workers have gone through on their journey to freelancing and to identify the impacts of these aspects on their personal lives, their families, and their daily living as part-time workers. The results further claimed that there are, indeed, positive aspects of being expatriate freelance workers.

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Method:-

Research Design:

In order to understand the lives and experiences of Filipino expatriate freelancers in Qatar, the researchers used a phenomenological approach in attaining the given responses. According to Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (n.d.), "phenomenology is a study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view" wherein it allows the interviewer to view the interviewee's personal experiences. It studies human experience, and of the way things present themselves to us in and through such experience as stated by Sokolowski (2000). It further lessens the barrier of communication between two sides by having a thorough search on the skills acquired. Van Manen & Adams (2010) claimed that phenomenology is an approach to qualitative inquiry that is grounded in certain traditions of philosophy, humanities, and that aims at reflecting on the pre-reflective human experience. In addition, the researchers followed a set of parameters to gain qualitative data utilizing it to form a correlation among the experiences.



Figure 1:- Map of Qatar.

Locus and Sample:

Sufficient information is needed to conclude. The respondents of this study consisted of six individuals that have varying part-time jobs. They were chosen explicitly through qualitative purposive sampling that attains informative cases related to the phenomena of interest (Lawrence Palinkas, Sarah Horwitz Et al., 2016).

The selection of the respondents is based on the following criteria: (a) of any age and must be of Filipino nationality; (b) must have graduated from a bachelor's degree, and (c) must have at least one year of formal work experience in Qatar before shifting to part-time employment. Four among the respondents interviewed were private caterer, coach, driver, "jack-of-all-trades," entrepreneur, and online stocks trader. Two of them were previously working in a restaurant, the other two were nurses, and the rest had regular jobs.

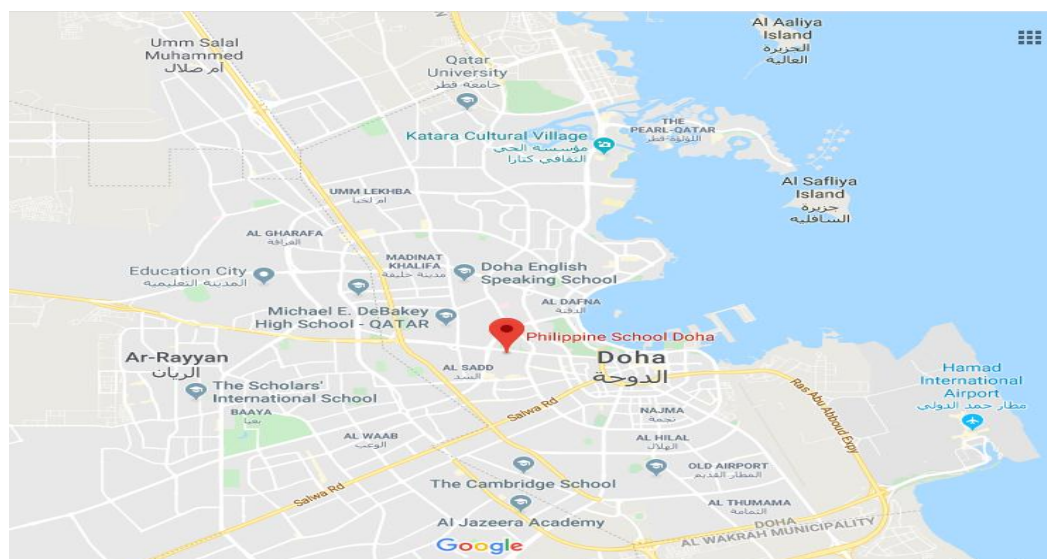


Figure 2:- Location of Philippine School Doha in Messaimeer, Doha, Qatar.

Only a sample was taken from a population instead due to a lack of time, money, and resources. Nonetheless, the number of these respondents can represent the population as a target for this study. As stipulated by Buckland, Anderson, et al. (2001), the sample size depends on the research objectives, hypotheses, and methods to have available data for the problem. The size needs to be adequate to draw valid inferences from which the researchers of this study have considerably obtained. In Addition, the study was conducted in Qatar, a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which is located east of the Arabian Peninsula (Jacques Leblanc, 2015).

Instrumentation:

To acquire the content of the study, the researchers made use of an instrument that consisted of two parts. First, a robot-foto was administered before the interview to provide background information about the participants. It is a cartographic sketch in Dutch, which was drawn from a description of a suspect in a criminal investigation (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002). In research, this refers to personal data sheets of vital personal and professional information about the respondents, including nationality, civil status, age, gender, educational attainment, and duration of former occupation (de Guzman & Tan, 2007).

The second instrument was a twenty-item semi-structured interview, a verbal interchange wherein the interviewer attempts to elicit information from the interviewee through questions. It unfolds in a conversational manner allowing the participant to explore topics that are essential to the problem (Robyn Langhurst, 2003). It also involves open-ended questions that are determined beforehand and is better in terms of subject handling by utilizing an interview guide (Ayres, 2008).

Data Collection and Ethical Consideration:

To further elaborate on the phenomenon of this study, the researchers have made use of qualitative (Rubin, Herbert & Rubin, Irene. 1995) and semi-structured interviews (Alison Doyle 2019) while engaging in the systematic approach of organizing, considering, and assembling the chronology of experiences stated by the respondents.

The following steps were observed by the researchers during course of the study: (1) transcribing the recording in a verbatim manner; (2) reading and re-reading each respondent's responses on the questions; (3) reorganizing the emic to form etic views (Kenneth pike, 1954); (4) attaining essential statements from the respondent's perspective and constructing a compilation of these statements; (5) comprehending for similarities and synthesizing to create thought units; (6) organizing these thought units into a dendrogram (Tim bock); (7) formulating a simulacrum and representation of the findings; and (8) ensuring the credibility of the emerged themes to ensure validity and quality of the interpretations (Gallup, 2007). The analysis of data was strictly done through an inductive process, writing down ideas and categorizing it after to verify the emerging themes.

Findings:

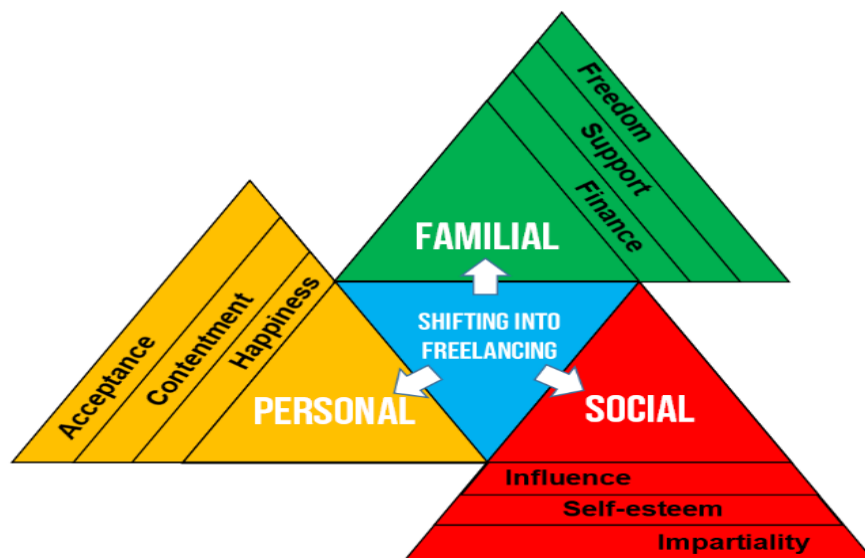


Figure 1: Uncovering the Lived Experiences of Filipino Expatriate Freelance Workers in Qatar

Figure 1 shows the factors that contribute to the lived experiences of Filipino Freelance workers in Qatar. It shows that shifting into freelancing involves three major factors that freelance workers encounter in the process. Three other sub-themes were extracted to further explain the experiences of the respondents as indicated: **familial** in terms of finance, support, and freedom; **personal** including contentment, pride, and happiness; and **social** incorporating self-esteem, influence, and impartiality. All of these, though of different aspects, contribute in the course of freelancing as experienced by the respondents.

To provide clear view of the entire dendrogram, the following interpretations of the colors and figure have been formulated: Triangles: These shapes represent the directional tool of freelancers as they expand their horizons in their line of work. The bases from the three triangles rest on all sides of the fourth triangle to show stability and eagerness on the part-time workers/freelancers. Blue (full time): This color is associated with responsibility and understanding when taking freelance work. The depth of the situation and adapting to it molds one to be a capable individual. Red (social factors): This color is associated with passion and resilience of the freelancers in receiving comments or prejudices about them from others. They are not concerned with the opinions of others, but instead treat all with respect to show confidence and independence. Green (familial factors): This color is associated with growth and harmony of the freelancers' familial relations. There is a mutual exchange of connection, understanding and support between freelancer and their families which allows them to reinforce each other. Yellow (personal factors): This color is associated with self-love and affirmation for the freelancers. They learn to accept their profession, making them induce pleasant feelings that spread positivity inside of them and to the people around them. Arrows (white): The arrows show an expanding motion to visualize the factors encountered when shifting to freelancing. It is colored white to symbolize a clean mold for success due to the freelancers' humble beginnings. All the factors extracted from the respondents shape the lived experiences of the Filipino expatriates who decided to shift into freelancing.

Familial

A family is considered as the foundation of personal values, beliefs, and orientations. Family relationship involves the dynamics of social interactions, bound and regulated by social and cultural norms, including how society understand freelancing as a profession. It is also about the kind of intimate connection that only family members can share as each person has different relationships and roles. In the same light, each Filipino freelance worker in Qatar also experiences either struggles or the opposite when it comes to the familial aspect as part of their decision to embrace freelancing as their career and source of income.

One of the contributory aspects is in terms of finance. Being a financially successful freelancer is everyone's goal. However, not all end up in that position. As observed, the respondents have relative stand on the impact freelancing has in providing for their families' needs. Two of the respondents expressed the difficulties they have encountered:

"The financial part, because from a fixed salary which you know how to spend and allocate, but now it's different. You have to manage because sometimes it's lacking or there's spare money." (P6)

"Becoming a freelancer is not a good decision for me. I don't have a stable company, especially the benefits a company provides, like insurance. With the future in mind, freelancing is not a good goal. This line of work is sometimes used in instances when you cannot find a viable job anymore..." (P4)

Other respondents also shared different stories on the effects of freelancing in the family's financial status, which indicates that freelancing can also be financially rewarding in the process.

"At first, it's hard because we started with only a few items to sell. It's hard because you'll always think of the things you have to pay. It's difficult at first, but we slowly adapted to it because our sales grew bigger." (P2)

"Looking back on how much I was receiving as my salary; I've realized that I earn more than before" (P5)

Aside from the financial aspect, support from family members also appears to have a significant impact on freelancing. Most of the freelancers would fear that their loved ones would not accept and support them in their decision to leave their full-time jobs and venture into freelancing instead. One of the underlying reasons is Filipino culture, as mentioned by these respondents:

"At first, my spouse wasn't in favor due to our culture where we are used to working as a regular employee. But along the way, she accepted it because I proved that this is what I love to do, and I can earn money to provide for our needs." (P6)

"He thinks that it's cool and great because at first, he really didn't want me to go to work and just wanted me to tend to our kids because he can already provide for us because he receives a good amount of salary from his job. So, it's okay for me to stay at home and tend to the kids. He is also very supportive of me because when I said I wanted to learn other things, like investing, he said that it's fine, so I studied, and now, it made me focus on liquid investments." (P5)

This positive spirit of support that Filipino freelancers receive from their families can be related to the known fact that Filipinos, in general, possess warm and welcoming traits. It encourages Filipino freelancers to make them feel that they are home and supported with what they want to do as stated by these respondents:

"My family is very understanding in every decision that I make. I can feel their support as I continue to do this freelance work, and I can feel that they are proud because I am doing what I want." (P6)

"None of my relatives know I am a freelancer, but if they do know, they would be happy since they know that it would help myself." (P1)

Furthermore, Filipinos are known for being perseverant and would always prefer being free, especially when it comes to providing for the needs of their families. Some circumstances can make things go out of hand but being able to possess qualities that counteract the struggles in life would yield positive results, especially in terms of setting time for the family as a priority. Two respondents remarked:

"My decision depends on the situation, but for me, it is better to be a part-timer because I want to prioritize my children." (P1)

"Being a freelance worker or part-timer is beneficial because you have the freedom, and you have more time to spend with your family than in your work." (P1)

Also, the innate characteristics of Filipinos to adjust to certain situations have become trademarks that other nationalities appreciate. Though no longer in formal employments, freelancers also feel motivated as they have the privilege to take other opportunities for personal growth and productivity as they sustain the needs of their families. The statements of these respondents accentuate this claim:

"Well, a freelance work is fun and difficult. It is fun because you have your own time. It is not fun because you don't have an employer. Your time is precious, and it's difficult to earn money sometimes. It is fun because you can create your schedule and plan to make yourself rich." (P4)

"Being a freelance worker or a part-timer is beneficial because you have the freedom, and you have time to spend with your family than in your work." (P1)

"Being a freelance worker gives you freedom, unlike regular employees that follow a deadline, and that you can maximize your time so that you can do your things in your schedule. For me, it is better to become a freelancer because whenever I want to do something in my schedule, I can do it." (P6)

Personal:

People commit to a specific change that distinguishes them from others, such as freelancing. Qatar has been a home for several Filipino expatriates that are inclined toward freelancing. With this in mind, having to adapt to an entirely new job style as a Filipino is considered to be an impressive shifting skill. Revealing the experiences of Filipino freelance workers here in Qatar, two respondents stated their side of the story of the feeling of happiness they get from freelancing:

"I'm happier because my life now is way easier. I don't need to ask for permission from my manager if I need to go somewhere anymore. As a freelance, I only need a timetable to be able to manage my time well and balance everything. There's no more pressure or anything. That's why I'm way happier being a freelancer." (P2)

"I don't have any regrets like I am happy with what I am doing, and the people I get to deal with are usually children. I enjoy myself, as you can see the kids, especially the classmates. All of them go to you: "Hug po, Tito," or " Bless po, Tito." Anyways, I'm happy with what I am doing right now." (P3)

My wife told me, as long as I'm glad and contented with what I'm doing, she will support me in my decision even though her salary is more significant compared to mine. She likes it better when I spend my time with my daughter and her activities and everything she does. My wife just keeps supporting us, and it's okay with her. She doesn't get affected whatsoever." (P3)

The statements show freelancers are granted the sense of independence and happiness, unlike non-freelance workers, which permits them to focus more of their time with their family and on what matters to them. As a result, freelancers have gained contentment in the process, though gradually. One respondent shared:

"I have no regrets because I'm happy with my decision to become a freelancer." (P2).

Other respondents also expressed their satisfaction:

"I don't have regrets, but I can say that the big change in salary was the only problem. But all in all, I love what I am doing, so I am happy." (P6)

"No regrets at all. I am enjoying what I'm doing now, and it's for the better. What I earn is also for my kids. It is more of a learning process, like when you trade for one single company, you learn after. You learn whether you have to cut loss or not. You learn a lot. So, you learn, and you earn. So, for me, every day is a learning process. I continue to learn, and it's good." (P5)

The respondents' answers imply their firm stand as freelancers. They have learned to be contented because they have managed to adapt to their new working environment and have a sense of enjoyment in what they do. However, freelancers also have their pride, which is an essential element in the process of shifting to freelancing. It is just heart-warming to note that the decision to leave previous employment for freelancing has not affected the sense of pride of the respondents. The following responses support this claim:

"It doesn't affect my pride." (P1)

"It doesn't affect my pride. It's fine because I know that I'm working hard. I do not depend on anyone else." (P2)

"It doesn't affect my pride, unlike others who feel down because their wives have regular jobs compared to them being freelancers. As long as I'm doing my part as a father, a husband, while not hurting anyone, then I'm happy with my decision." (P3)

Analyzing the revelations made by the respondents, the Filipino freelance workers' experiences would depend on how the world treats them and how they react to it. The emotional stability plays a significant role on the road of shifting into freelance workers.

Social

In the world today, as technology continues to grow, connections between and among people have also widened. Expatriates living in the Middle East also consider the importance of social connections and relationships as these help them combat stress and homesickness, thus enabling them to function more effectively and efficiently at work. The same experiences also relate to freelance workers though in different fields of work. The findings of this paper presented varied stories of the respondents in terms of their social life being freelancers and the implications that go with their chosen careers. As observed, freelancing has shaped positively their social skills. One aspect is in terms of their self-esteem, as mentioned by this respondent: "A person must look at the bright side of things. As a result, this will help a lot in gaining connections, whether it would be about your work, business, or when looking for part-time jobs." Others also added:

"It affected me in a more positive way than negative because it depends on us on how we look at it. Right now, I have a more positive way of communicating with others because I am more confident with what I do, and I am not ashamed." (P6)

"Change me as a person? Well, before I worked under a company having a boss, my social life was affected since I needed to complete several hours. Now, my social life has improved. I can just skip my part-time and attend social gatherings like weddings and birthdays, unlike before, when I had a boss to order me around. I don't have that anymore, so yeah, I enjoy my social life now." (P4)

Influence is also another factor faced by freelancers because it significantly affects their decisions and their work performance. It may come either as a positive or a negative force when it comes to the realities about freelancing, especially when the influencers are family members and close friends. It has a more significant impact because support from family and close friends encourages freelancers to make the right decisions, and it gives them a sense of assurance that what they are doing is right. The following statements of the respondents prove this:

"To tell you the truth, some of my relatives like my sister, sister-in-law, and two aunts have already been doing freelancing here in Qatar. They are the ones who encourage me to enter this line of work, and they are supportive of it." (P4)

"Previous workmates, well, there is no change since I have worked in Qatar for eight years before becoming a freelancer. When I meet my previous workmates, they would also ask me how I attained my freelance visa, so I guess it changed them and our relationship as well because they have gained an interest in becoming freelance workers. For example, my previous workmates, three of them to be specific, are now freelance workers. Two of them are now uber drivers who have their visas, and the other one also has a visa but still works in a company. However, he doesn't work there full time to maintain his freedom." (P4)

Furthermore, impartiality also matters to freelancers. Based on their experiences, it affects their whole personality, especially when negatively, though it is the opposite to others. To be treated equally is what most freelancers are most concerned about when they get into freelancing. Most fear that they might get discriminated by others. Nevertheless, most freelancers nowadays are still being treated fairly compared to when they used to have a formal job, and not what most expect it to be. One respondent uttered:

"Their treatment to me has not changed ever since I changed to a part-time worker." (P1).

Two others also stated:

"There are some questions from them because it is not the conventional way in our culture where office work is what we want. But there is no discrimination or negative comment." (P6)

"They treat me like how any normal person would. You won't feel them stepping on you or looking down on you. Sometimes, they'll ask you if you're a freelancer. Then, that's it." (P2)

Discussion:-

Familial Finance

Being financially stable is one of the goals that everyone aspires to achieve. It is a kind of freedom wherein the individual does not have any debts and can pay fees on time with extra money left (Farrington, 2019). However, managing income or being financially stable for freelancers is quite tricky because the jobs vary from each person and depend on how much money it can pay. According to the survey made by FreshBooks (2019), 35% of freelancers struggle significantly about their financial management, and 37% of freelancers with businesses for at least two years shared that their biggest challenge is finding new customers. Also, one in four of the freelancers admit that cash flow is a serious challenge they regularly face when working for themselves. As they gain five years or more experience, their most significant struggle shifts to finding talented staff or contractors.

Nevertheless, these financial challenges that go with freelancing can be mitigated through financial strategies. According to Maji (2019), the unpredictable income earned by a freelancer should be saved and invested for at least

25 percent of the average monthly earnings. It creates a budget that can compensate expenses and allocate money toward different goals. Furthermore, due to this current employment trend, a study by Freelancers Union and Upwork (2011) claim that 50 million American employees venture into freelancing, and 60% of these earn more than traditional employees.

Moreover, there are positive and negative aspects when entering freelancing work as stated by the New Haven Register (2017). Although the benefits are well said, it is still nonetheless accompanied by uneven cash flow, lack of job security, and not getting paid for work. Managing finances vary in difficulty among freelancers that are caused by either external or internal factors.

Support:

Having support can have a positive impact on one's life. Freelancers usually get relief from their families when they are facing difficulties in their jobs (Goldsmith, 2014). According to Brzosko (2018), freelancers tend to work alone and pull all-nighters just to finish the task that is required, which may affect their emotional needs. It is where family and colleague support come in and can be utilized as a therapeutic and motivating drive for the freelancers. To add, social workers who reported to have high level of perceived emotional support from co-workers and supervisors appear to have less stress, depression, anxiety, and irritability, and fewer somatic complaints.

In the same manner, the support of co-workers reduces emotional exhaustion and increased personal. It leads to job satisfaction, which plays a vital role in one's well-being. As reported by Kwok, Cheng & Wong (2014), a survey involving 227 white-collar workers in Hong Kong, China revealed that hope, optimism and self-efficacy are significantly associated with job satisfaction. Family emotional support is closely related to job satisfaction. However, the outcome of family emotional support on job satisfaction is mediated by self-efficacy and optimism. Family emotional support positively influenced one's levels of confidence and self-efficacy, which in turn led to greater job satisfaction.

Freedom:

Attaining freedom leads one to exercise the right to speak, act, and think without any restrictions from an opposing authority (Gammon, 2012). Although a "normal 9-to-5 employee" has freedom, there are certain restrictions that they have, which set a difference between them and freelancers.

According to an article written by Salleh (2015), young people in Singapore switched to freelancing despite the challenge of flexibility. These workers can set their budgets, deadlines, and working hours for clients, unlike a non-freelancer that ultimately follows the heads or bosses when doing a task. Subsequently, being one's boss can motivate one to start their own business. This claim is supported by a survey done by Khan (2016), wherein 74% of the respondents' ideal employment situation is part-time rather than the traditional job model. One of the respondents, a freelance web developer, stated that being one's boss provides direct ownership to the product, which leads to high engagement at work. Another study done by a company called the Field Nation (2016) showed that 86% of freelancers intentionally opted to freelance. They exhibited factors that enable career autonomy, such as flexible hours and the ability to control the future, leading to equal or higher income compared to non-freelancers. Freelancing may be a daunting and challenging employment situation, but they have much more freedom than traditional employees in terms of revenue, time, and flexibility.

**Personal
Happiness**

If any individual is asked what his/her goal in life is, the possible answer would often be connected to the concept of "happiness in life" (Limbasiya, N. 2015). The freedom to make decisions, developing skills and enriching knowledge, and pursuing a clear goal creates a sound basis for happiness in committing to a freelance life (Fowle, 2018).

In freelancing, workers have full control of their happiness, as well as their destiny. It may appear discouraging because it's unfamiliar (Croatto, 2019). According to the Hindu Business Line (2019), experts reported that in freelancing, there is a higher happiness and satisfaction level with their work than those in full-time employment, even though they were likely to work for more than 45 hours a week and earn slightly lower salaries.

Additionally, the TD Ameritrade Survey (2019) revealed that freelance workers appear to be happier than traditional workers. 84% of freelancers mentioned that they're satisfied with work. 59% percent of conventional workers reported being stressed with work, while only 41% among them shared feeling stressed.

Moreover, there was also a study conducted by start-up Tinypulse, which included full-time remote U.S. employees and compared their answers to benchmark calculated from over 200,000 employees across all work areas. They were asked to rate their joy on a scale from one to ten. Astonishingly, remote workers had an average rating of 8.1, whereas the office workers had an average rating of around 7. The study also revealed that remote workers were feeling more valued at work (M2 Presswire, 2016).

Although freelancing jobs are uncertain and temporary, cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses revealed that freelancers are at par with other own-account workers, employers, and wage workers regarding life satisfaction. Besides, freelancers are equally satisfied with their health as other own-account workers and employers. In general, the analysis of several subdomains of life reveals much how different groups of self-employed workers score regarding their overall subjective well-being (Hessels & Burger, 2019). In the same light, the kaleidoscope career model focuses on the balance between work and other activities in life (Dickmann& Baruch, 2011). The protean career is relevant in understanding modern societies as it increases the value of psychological success, happiness, or contentment, rather than only success measured by salary or position (Hall, 2004).

Contentment

Job contentment is an emotional response to a situation at work (Ariani, 2012). This endeavor for doing better work from own trinsic motivation leads to a sense of contentment, which further produces consistent work performance (Sharma, 2019).

One support to this is an author, Lewis, who has received an unexpected commendation as a literary biographer and has found contentment as a freelance journalist. He enjoyed working on his biographies more than anything else he had done in his working life (The Daily Telegraph, 2017). The beauty of such simple things can help one achieve the joy and contentment in what one may have been striving and struggling to make. Quality of life can be determined through an individual's life experience. If a person sees life as good, it is possible to assume that it is indeed so in his/her case.

From such a point of view, the core criteria for the evaluation of the quality of life include joy, pleasure, and contentment with life. Added to these elements are happiness and satisfaction that make up an employee's positive mental attitude towards work (Mrzyglód, 2004).

In the same manner, job contentment as a measure of personal satisfaction and happiness is crucial to job satisfaction, productivity, and performance debate, especially in higher education where performance measures are less quantitative and only better captured in the longer term (Adeleye, 2013).

Pride

What drives engagement? This question leads to the concept of "pride". Freelancers, like any other individuals, need to take pride in their work. Pride doesn't necessarily refer to ego, but a motivation to give a reason, incentive, enthusiasm, or interest that causes a specific action or individual behaviour (Pan, 2008).

Isa Watson, the founder of Invested, a workplace engagement platform, shared that pride is seen among employees who wake up and are enthusiastic about going to work. They respect their brand, the people they work with, and their significance to the world. She also added that the lack of pride flows down to how workers treat customers (Alton, 2018). When they feel a sense of pride in their work, they have a purpose, they feel motivated, and this leads to more success (Hamilton, 2015).

Social

Self-esteem

The adjustment stage in freelancing does not only affect the lives of freelancers through physical changes that occur around them, but also the way how other people, like families or close friends, treat them. The response of the people around them regarding their decision affects them significantly, particularly in terms of their self-esteem.

A successful freelancer, Vicky Spratt (2019), shared that freelancing had given her an increase in self-confidence. She was able to focus on her skill due to the time when she was managing people involved in the commercial aspects, unlike when she was in another department. She felt more confident because she was not trying to force herself in a position that she is not familiar with the task assigned. Another interview with an equally successful freelancer, revealed that before, she was a mother to her newly born child and was barely sustaining the needs of her family. She was doing everything that she could to earn extra income, but it wasn't enough, leaving her and her husband devastated. She turned to her parents to ask help in taking care of her daughter to lighten her load and to focus more on earning income. A few years later, after shifting to freelancing through her own business, she was already able to sustain the needs of her family. She now has her daughter in pre-school and a one-year-old son. Since then, she never felt more confident when it comes to earning for their own needs (Ridout, 2018).

Ratul (2019) also supports this claim. "Women in developing countries like Bangladesh have trouble reaching goals despite having the qualifications for it. Such women may find solutions in freelance jobs. Freelancing is more like the construction of virtual careers to provide women with self-esteem alongside becoming self-reliant."

Influence

Before being able to adapt to freelancing, one goes through changes that affect how he/she thinks, feels, and acts. These changes mainly focus on persuading an individual to continue his/her vision in a freelancing career. However, these changes or influential factors come in different forms.

According to Younger (2019), the freelance movement has another, more sophisticated effect, beyond the growth of freelancing as an individual career choice: its influence on the Millennial and Gen-Z workers of today, and the organizations that employ them. Side hustles are transforming into part-time freelancers with more and more professionals, and there are more chances to open up. For example, NASH offers the opportunity to fly to Mexico to treat medical tourists to U.S. doctors on days off. Kolabtree provides an opportunity for scientists.

Having an economy that grows at a steady pace may affect the views of the freelancers because of the particular factors that may have a positive outcome or an optional advantage that they can use for them to achieve successful leverage in terms of different sets of skills as solo entrepreneurs (Angleberger, 2018). The fact that many people are in need of stabilizing their financial status and their lifestyle, freelancing becomes an option for these employees. Because of the increase of global internet users today, this aspect has influenced many employees, for instance, in Malaysia, for a precise reason such that it has been easier for specific individuals to access the online market for online freelancing job purposes (Krishnamoorthy, 2016). According to Henson (2016), the positive effects of transitioning into a freelancer outweigh any downsides, which easily influence any individual. Many of these advantages allow individuals to rethink and gather different advantageous factors to fully complete their vision when it comes to freelancing.

Impartiality

Balance is needed by everyone to perform adequately. Freelancers usually are said to be mistreated or discouraged, considering that most of them decided to become a freelancer because they have to due to financial instability, and sometimes, it isn't financially rewarding. However, not all discourage freelancers. Some also openly accept freelancers without considering them belonging to the lower class. The members of the community perceive them as independent employees that are an "all-in-one," in other words. The experience of being a boss and an employee at the same time, the director, or the financial advisor, is quite exhilarating (Akshay, 2019).

However, some responses by the respondents of this study regarding fair treatment, there are still others who experience the negative side of freelancing. An Australian journal stated that freelancers are mistreated not only from other people but also from their clients, such as missing payment terms to work (Carnell, 2017). Having to deal with a growing dependence on independent workers, such as the freelancers, will not only result in bias and maltreatment but will also give a sense of achievement and attainment when freelancers have successfully fulfilled their freelancing vision (Hendy, 2017).

Conclusion:-

This qualitative research concentrated on Filipino expatriate freelancers in Qatar and their experiences from various part-time work and revealing the factors throughout their freelancing careers that have effect on them and other people around them. Through careful assessment and analysis of data, three major factors associated with

freelancing experiences were drawn, namely social, familial, and personal. From these aspects, other significant factors were extracted to further expound on the lived experiences of the freelancers. First, it has been observed that familial ties provide freelancers a family-oriented mindset, support toward their work, and financial stability to keep on providing for their families and continuing their line of labor. Coinciding with that, social ties are of equal importance for it affects their self-esteem to do their part-time work, builds influence to others, and receives impartiality or fair treatment from clients, as well as other freelancers. Finally, personal ties give freelancers pride in their shift from full-time to part-time, happiness in their decision, and acceptance from families and others. These were the thought units produced as reflected in the phenomenological data.

The findings in this study showed that although freelancing is considered by some as an unorthodox way to make a living, it still provides equal or more benefits than conventional employment. The word freelancing usually or stereotypically goes with negative implication, but this research revealed otherwise. From the payouts of their clients to the flexibility of scheduling, there is clear evidence that they have freedom to perform certain tasks that are normally restricted. Moreover, the support and happiness gained form a passionate driver toward success despite the obstacles. When beset with financial problems, freelancers merely endure and work hard to overcome it. At the end, the freelancers show indifference to negative aspects for they have the means to provide for their families, produce stable income, and improve their social network. Thus, those who may opt to enter the world of freelancing may take encouragement and optimism through the significant stories and experiences of freelance workers as incorporated in this study.

Further studies can still be conducted to excavate other possible and interesting factors that can be attributed to freelancing. Filipinos in other countries, aside from the Middle East, can be potential prospects in order to capture wider scope in uncovering the lived experiences of Filipino expatriate freelancers worldwide. In the same manner, graduates of the K to 12 program may also contemplate on taking freelance job opportunities as they are honed with various life skills and are expected to survive as competent individuals in this era of globalization.

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