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The Role of Freelancing in Job Creation in Gaza Strip

دور العمل الحر عبر الانترنت في خلق فرص عمل في قطاع غزة

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إقرار

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The Role of Freelancing in Job Creation in Gaza Strip

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والله ولي التوفيق ،،،

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.....

أ.د. عبدالرؤوف علي المناعمة



Abstract

This study aims to investigate the role of freelancing in job creation in Gaza strip. The study examined the freelancer through dividing it into its sub-parts which are: technology, skills, contacts, awareness of job availability and skills mismatch.

To meet the aim of the study, the statistical approach was followed. A questionnaire was distributed online as the data collection tool. The study population was 260 persons who received extensive trainings to work as freelancers by MercyCorps Association in Gaza; 199 questionnaires were collected out of 260 distributed.

The study findings showed that the independent variables: technology, skills, contacts, awareness of job availability and skills mismatch are important factors that every freelancer should have before and during working as freelancer. These variables contribute to the success of freelancers in getting jobs and performing these jobs. It also indicated that freelancing is still new in Gaza Strip as most of the respondents has been freelancing from 3-5 years. The study results also showed the high important role that technology plays in promoting and making the work of freelancers easier.

The study recommended creating free access to learning resources for those involved in freelancing and for freelancers-to-be people to help in increasing the awareness of freelancing skills and tools. It also recommended connecting the freelancing with the high education institutes to help students better engage in freelancing work upon their graduation. The study assures about the role of the policy makers in promoting and facilitating the work of freelancers through campaigns, providing free work places and providing verified payment methods for freelancers.

الملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد دور العمل الحر عبر الانترنت في خلق فرص عمل في قطاع غزة. حيث تمت دراسة العمل الحر عبر الانترنت من خلال تقسيمه لمكوناته الفرعية والتي تشمل على: التكنولوجيا، المهارات، جهات الاتصال، المعرفة بتوفر الوظائف وعدم توافق المهارات.

لتحقيق الهدف من الدراسة، تم اتباع المنهج الوصفي الاحصائي، حيث تم توزيع استبانة تم تصميمها إلكترونياً كأداة لجمع البيانات من مجتمع الدراسة والذي يتكون من 260 شخصاً تلقوا تدريبات مكثفة للعمل عبر الانترنت من خلال مؤسسة ميرسي كور في غزة. تم تجميع 199 استبانة من أصل 260 تم توزيعها إلكترونياً.

أظهرت نتائج التحليل الاحصائي عدة نتائج أهمها أن متغيرات الدراسة: التكنولوجيا، المهارات، جهات الاتصال، المعرفة بتوفر الوظائف وعدم توافق المهارات تعتبر عوامل هامة يجب أن تتوفر لدى كل الأشخاص الذين في مجال العمل الحر عبر الانترنت قبل أو خلال عملهم. تساهم هذه العوامل في نجاح العاملين عبر الانترنت في الحصول على وظائف بالاضافة لأداء تلك الوظائف. كما وأظهرت النتائج بأن مجال العمل الحر عبر الانترنت يعتبر مجالاً جديداً في قطاع غزة حيث أشار من أجابوا على الاستبانة بأنهم يعملون في مجال العمل عبر الانترنت لفترات بين ثلاث وخمس سنوات. وأظهرت الدراسة الدور الهام الذي تقوم به التكنولوجيا في الترويج للعمل عبر الانترنت وجعله أسهل.

أوصت الدراسة بضرورة انشاء مصادر الكترونية للتعلم بحيث تكون مجانية وتساهم في دعم العاملين في مجال العمل عبر الانترنت وتوجيه الراغبين في العمل عبر الانترنت من خلال زيادة وعيهم بمهارات وأدوات العمل عبر الانترنت. كما أوصت الدراسة بربط مجال العمل عبر الانترنت بمؤسسات التعليم العالي لمساعدة الطلاب في الاندماج بشكل أفضل في العمل الحر عند تخرجهم. وأكدت الدراسة على دور صانعي القرار في الترويج وتسهيل العمل الحر عبر الانترنت من خلال الحملات الترويجية وتوفير مكان مجاني للعمل الحر وكذلك توفير وسائل دفع موثوقة للعاملين عبر الانترنت.

Dedication

To my parents whose continuous support and encouragement helped me through my life, their prayers helped me to continue this work

To my soul mate, my wife Ghada, who always motivates me through her optimism and smile

To my sweethearts, Majdal and Bashir

To my beloved brothers and sisters who always stand near me.

To my friends Ismail Abu Al-Aish and Mohammad Al-Danaf whose limitless support and motivation is unforgettable

To everyone who supported, helped and motivated me.

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List of Abbreviations

ILO	International Labor Organization
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNRWA	United Nations Relief & Works Agency
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
CSM	Caribbean Single Market
ICT	Information and Communication Technology

Term Definitions

Freelancing: the process of contracting overseas workers to perform specific tasks through internet-based platforms.

Freelancer: someone who sells his or her services to employers or clients without a long-term contract.

Self-Employed Person: An independent contractor or sole proprietor who reports income earned from self-employment. Self-employed persons control who they work for, how the work is done and when it is done.

Entrepreneurship: is the process of designing, launching, and running a new business which is often initially a small business offering a product, process, or service for sale or hire. The people who create these businesses are called entrepreneurs.

Online freelancing platforms: offer digital marketplaces that connect clients with freelancers and facilitate the remote performance of a contract for which they set their own prices.

Digital jobs: short-term or permanent positions that use the information technology to deliver a product or a service.

Chapter One

Research Framework

1.1 Introduction

Gaza Strip witnessed a telecommunication and IT entry at the early of this century. This revolution connects it widely to the global economy. Since then, the telecommunication infrastructure was notably developed and the prices of accessing the telecom tools have been decreasing dramatically. This improvement in connectivity presents a great opportunity to Palestinians to overcome the complicated situation of increased unemployment and poverty ratios amongst Palestinians especially in Gaza strip.

Increased unemployment is one of the toughest obstacles that face the development projects within governments in both the developing and the developed countries. Unemployment has a negative impact on many sides of the community including economic and social sides.

The high number of youth and the highest unemployment rates among these youth puts a new challenge in front of the authorities. It became clear that stepping forward to find new forms of work to create employment using IT became a necessary. The use of IT in employment went through different success stories in many countries where they generated new forms of work that created more jobs supported by the use of IT and telecommunication. Freelancing is a new way of work that was raised worldwide by the revolution of ICT.

Demand for Online Freelancing is globally rapidly growing as it exceeds 4 Billion USD according to World Bank. The open and international market is an opportunity to capitalize on for Palestinian professionals, but is also comes with big international competition from both developed and developing countries.

Some of the Online Freelancing categories with greatest demand include software development, graphic design, sales & marketing support, admin Support, writing & translation, and many other categories which are in high demand.

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of 'Freelancing' in job creation in Gaza strip to help decreasing the unemployment ratio.

Freelancing can be defined as a short-term job contract that is based on completing a specific task. Employers and freelancers agree on the terms of reference for the contracts signed identifying the tasks and duration of contract. By the end of the contract period or

task, the freelancer needs for search for and find a new job to generate income (Storey, 2005). A freelancer is defined as an individual who has skills and is able to provide services to employers in a short-term contract (Burke, 2008).

1.2 Problem Statement

When talking about Gaza Strip, the unemployment appears strongly with its effects as the unemployment rate in Gaza Strip was 42.7% in the third quarter 2015 (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics “PCBS”, 2015). The problem of unemployment increased significantly due to many reasons including: siege, electricity cuts and the continuous Israeli attacks over Gaza. These factors led to closure or destruction to a big number of factories and industries which caused that thousands of Palestinians lost their jobs on the other hand, thousands of new graduates are unable to find job opportunities as these opportunities are tightly limited in Gaza Strip.

In 2015/2016, there were 216028 students enrolled in higher education and females represent 60% in a range of sciences and humanities. Moreover, more than 50% of the 277200 females in the Palestinian workforce work in services, including media, law, engineering, architecture, the arts, academia, and others. These populations constitute a large potential service base for potential freelancers. (The Palestinian Market Development Programme, 2016)

As a result of the complicated economic situation of Gaza strip and the increased number of unemployed people, which came from the siege and the increased number of graduates besides the lack of job opportunities, many (I)NGOs working in Gaza like UNRWA, UNDP and MercyCorps have initiated job creation programs which offer temporary job opportunities for different slides of the Gazans. The problem with these opportunities is that they are not sustained and the problem of unemployment comes again when this opportunity expires. The study aims to highlight the impact of ‘Freelancing’ as a solution to create jobs and help in decreasing the ratio of unemployment. This study will highlight freelancing, its properties and specifications, how can it help in creating different job opportunities, how can it be used as a part of the solution to overcome the problem of unemployment and finally to address what kind of jobs it might suit and what types it might

not. The study also highlights challenges and opportunities to increased growth in Online Freelancing for Palestinian graduates in Gaza. Among these include business skills (weak English, negotiation skills, business communication, etc.) and specialized technical skills (such as software and web development) amongst graduates with little work experience, lack of awareness about Online Freelancing platforms, limited training opportunities, and receiving payments online.

1.3 Research questions

Main question: To what extent does freelancing play a role in creating jobs and decrease the unemployment ratio? This question includes two sub-questions as follows:

- What is required to implement a successful freelancing programme in Gaza?
- What are the suitable job types for freelancing in Gaza?

1.4 Research objectives

- To identify the level of contribution that freelancing might provide in creating new job opportunities.
- To recognize the current situation of Palestinian labor and study the nature of freelancing in Gaza.
- To give suitable recommendations to implementing a successful and effective freelancing programme.
- To highlight the most popular freelancing platforms and their benefits and techniques.

1.5 Research importance

The research aims is important for different parties as follows:

1.5.1 Graduates

- Increase the awareness about freelancing as a potential solution for unemployment.
- Being aware of the main tools and techniques of freelancing.
- Have a wider look about online freelancing platforms.

- Being aware of freelancing projects in Gaza Strip.
- Give more attention to the factors required for a successful freelancer.

1.5.2 Ministry of higher education

- Training of staff to best deliver the freelancing topics.
- Being aware about the importance of freelancing and its inclusion in education institutes.

1.5.3 Government and policy makers

- Promoting freelancing as a potential solution to tackle unemployment.
- Marketing for freelancing among graduates and follow-up its application in education institutes.
- Conducting training sessions for freelancing related-parties.
- Networking with potential partners to promote and apply freelancing in Gaza Strip.

1.5.4 Researcher

The study will extend the researcher's knowledge of the term 'Freelancing' and its application and techniques for his future development and career opportunities.

1.6 Hypothesis

H1: There is a role of technology in job creation at a significant level 0.05.

H2: There is a role of skills in job creation at a significant level 0.05.

H3: There is a role of contacts in job creation at a significant level 0.05.

H4: There is a role of awareness of job availability in job creation at a significant level 0.05.

H5: There is a role of skill mismatch and job creation in job creation at a significant level 0.05.

H6: There are statistical differences at a significant level 0.05 among the responses' mean of respondents regarding the role of freelancing in job creation due to (gender, age,

educational level, number of years in freelancing, income from freelancing and type of work in freelancing).

1.7 Variables

1.7.1 Dependent variable

Job creation.

1.7.2 Independent Variables

Factors affecting freelancing opportunities divided into two groups:

1.7.2.1 Personal factors, including:

- Technology.
- Skills.
- Contacts.
- Awareness of job availability.
- Skills mismatch.

1.7.2.2 Demographic characteristics of jobless persons in Gaza (gender, age, educational level, number of years in freelancing, income from freelancing and type of work in freelancing).

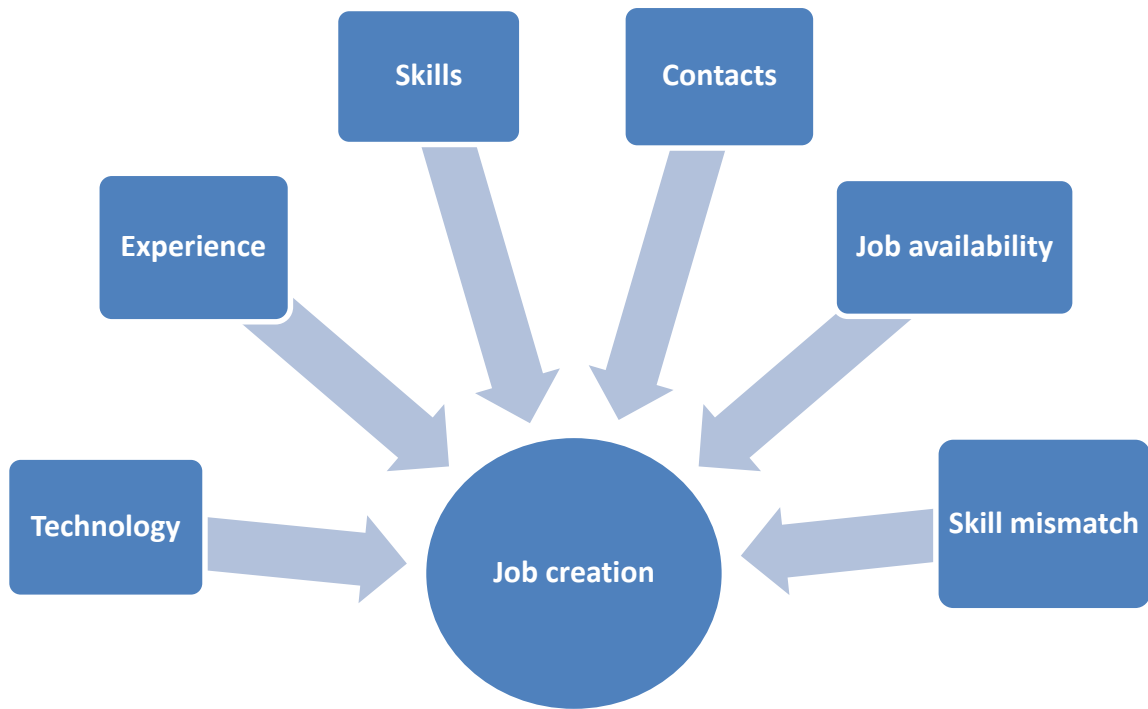


Figure (1.1): Conceptual Framework

Source: This model is modified based on Mobile Services for Youth Employment Research by Lauren Dawes and Revital Marom Research, 2013.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to review the literature related to essential concepts of this study, especially online freelancing and its role in job creation in Gaza strip from different sides. First section introduces Freelancing, definition, characteristics of freelancer, benefits, impact on economy, challenges and most popular platforms used by freelancers. The second section introduces unemployment and job creation, unemployment around world and in Palestine, Freelancing reality in the world, and Freelancing projects in Palestine.

Small and medium business enterprises (SME) and entrepreneurs create jobs more than any other businesses in any economy, in this economy freelancer are the newly existed version that replaces the traditional workers who work eight hours each day at offices. The rise of the digital nomad and the freelance work is clearly observed where SME and self-employed persons are shaping this new work arrangement and transition. Nowadays, nearly 30% of the American workplace is represented by freelancers and independent contractors (Small Business Majority, 2015).

The digital economy brings new opportunities to youth where it provides them with easy access to formal jobs. These ‘digital jobs’ can be defined as short-term or permanent positions that use information technology to deliver a product or a service.

The internet is the key player in matching job seekers with businesses or individuals who search for experienced contractors to do specific tasks or provide them with any kind of service. This kind of transactions can be completed in an informal way, but it turned to take the formal way that constructed a new global market of different players that include: service providers who compete to win bids and get work, aggregators or mediators who ensure secure and trustworthy transactions between clients and service providers through their platforms that were designed for this purpose. These platforms through their contracting modules ensure the best quality of work for clients and guarantee the payment for clients in the most

available secure ways. oDesk and eLance are two examples of aggregators that lead the freelancing digital economy (International Youth Foundation, 2013).

Online freelancing platforms offer digital marketplaces that connect clients with freelancers and facilitate the remote performance of a contract for which they set their own prices. Online freelancing platforms allow hiring managers to connect with millions of freelancers around the world—doing so at a speed and scale that was unimaginable just a few years ago. Between 2016 and 2017, there has been a 26% increase in the number of projects sourced via these platforms, with popular categories of work being software development, design and creative, and writing. Corporaal, G.F., & Lehdonvirta, V. (2017).

In the Arabic countries in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, the past two years witnessed a remarkable growth in the freelance economy. Many Arabic Online Freelancing platforms were launched and started the freelancing business such as Nabbesh, Khamsat and Mostaq. However, these platforms still have a small number of projects that are posted daily when compared with the famous global freelancing platforms. Even though, the optimistic vision of Arabic freelancing market sees that this market will grow and create a good marketplace that provides good opportunities for the Arabic freelancers. Freelancing platforms bring a great advantage to freelancers where it enables them to view and bid for any project regardless their location, this advantage avoids freelancers from facing the market access challenge like the classical outsourcing industries (Palestinian Market Development Programme, 2014).

Section one

Freelancing

2.1.1 Online Freelancing

Given the variety of online platforms that mediate relations between clients and vendors of digital work and services, it is helpful to start by defining what we mean by ‘online freelancing’. Online freelancing platforms focus on more specialized and knowledge-intensive projects in categories such as software development, creative and design, and writing and translation. But in principle, clients can source any type of work that can be delivered online. Freelancing platforms place emphasis on the quality of the matches and the coordination and evaluation of the work.

It is not easy to define the characteristics of freelancing as it has some shared aspects with traditional employment and entrepreneurship. Freelancers have different points of view on the definition of freelancing. Some of the freelancers define themselves as contract workers and disagree with the freelancers term (Osnowitz, 2010). To sum up, there is no agreement about how the typical freelancer looks like. They are different in personal characteristics, work type, freelancing reasons and skills (Kitching & Smallbone, 2008).

This section discusses the term of freelancing in more details, the definition, the characteristics of freelancer, the benefits and challenges of freelancing and the most popular platforms that are used by freelancers.

2.1.2 What is Freelancing?

“The freelancer” is a term that newly used but it has very old origins where it was first appeared in late 1700s in Sir Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe* from the words “free” and “lance”. Sir Scott used the freelancer term to refer to a medieval mercenary—a sort of roving soldier in the middle ages, who didn’t particularly care for morals, ethics, or even whom he fought. The meaning of the term doesn’t fairly reflect the ideal scheme of its nowadays image of freelancing as a career, rather than some parts of this term can be witnessed when things during the project goes wrong and one of the freelancing agreement parties failed to fulfill his commitment (Burke, 2008). The collaboration between freelancers and clients including

the tasks needed, payment per work and components of the commission are project or task-related and laid down in a service contract (Süß & Becker, 2013).

In online freelancing, clients ask for professional services to be completed by third-party workers. The nature of work in online freelancing tasks usually tends to be large projects that requires a long duration to be completed, therefore it requires worker who possess a high level of technical and professional skills (Kuek, et al., 2015).

Freelancer can be identified as a person who makes himself or herself available to be engaged for work on particular assignments or projects, rather than being engaged on a long-term or permanent basis by a single employer (Oxford English Dictionary, 2016). Freelance workers are skilled professional workers who are neither employers nor employees, supplying labor on a temporary basis under a contract for services for a fee to a range of business clients (Kitching & Smallbone, 2008). Freelance refers to a type of job where the worker is self-employed. A freelance worker works for themselves and bids for temporary jobs and projects with one or more employers. Other terms used are independent contractor and consultant (Fishman & Guerin, 2005).

Freelancers can be seen as individual contractors who provide their services on a limited period contract for a specific amount of money based on the outcome of their work. Freelancers are responsible for managing their time and productivity which in downtime might be costly and risky (Burke, 2012). Freelancers are Individuals who have engaged in supplemental, temporary, project- or contract-based work, within the past 12 months (Daniel J Edelman Inc., 2015).

A freelancer is defined as someone who sells his or her services to employers or clients without a long-term contract (Burke, 2008). Online Freelancing is the process of working online through some special online platforms (such as freelancer.com, upwork.com etc.) which connect the client and the freelancer in creating a professional business atmosphere (Palestinian Market Development Programme, 2014). In North America, freelancing is called gigging and refers to the work on freelancing form independently. Gigging is a sort of marketing that a person decided to use in order to provide services to companies and other individual employers who seek service providers (upwork, obtained November 2016).

For the purpose of the study, the researcher chooses to define freelancing as the process of contracting overseas workers to perform specific tasks through internet-based platforms.

2.1.3 Benefits of freelancing

Freelancing is not an easy job that suits everyone. Regardless the plenty of advantages that may appear bigger than the disadvantages of freelancing, but by the time is going some individuals will leave working as freelancers and find alternative jobs because the life style of freelancer is not suitable for them (Burke, 2008). Plenty of reasons push people to freelance, of these reasons the top five reasons are, the desire of more work flexibility, more control of projects, being able to work from home, making more money and growing a business (Hackwith, 2011).

- **Flexi-work hours and location**

A key factor that increases the company's attractiveness in nowadays labor market is by allowing employees to work on a flexible work schedule (Kazan Federal University, 2015). This factor can easily be attained by freelancers where they are not bound by the employer's instructions and can work on the time and place he prefers (Süb & Becker 2013).

- **Choice of projects**

Freelancers are individuals with different fields of specialties who can find an opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills (Sadgrove, 2013).

- **Being in charge**

In a survey conducted by eLance, 69% of respondents said that the most important part of freelancing for them is being their own boss (Elance-oDesk, 2015).

- **Wide variety of projects:**

Freelancers have the opportunity to work with different industries and with projects with different sizes (Burke, 2008). Freelancer sources of income varies depending on the number of projects he is working on, no company or boss is 100% in control of his living income (Kania, 2012).

2.1.4 Impact of freelancing on Economy

Online talent platforms strengthen these drivers in multiple ways. These include drawing inactive workers into the labor force and making it possible for people who want more work to add hours. Talent platforms can reduce unemployment by cutting the search time needed to find a new job and enabling new matches that would not have otherwise happened. They can also raise productivity by facilitating job matches that are a better fit and offering an alternative to workers in the shadow economy (Manika, J. et al., 2015).

Freelancers contribute to economic growth as they create more jobs where in 2013 25% of freelancers created additional jobs and hired other contractors. These freelancers spent about \$96 billion and employed 2.3 million workers. Research shows nearly 2.5 million freelancers expect to launch bigger businesses (The State of Independence in America workforce, 2013).

Freelancing is particularly important in economies with a large creative industry. In the United Kingdom, for instance, freelance numbers increased by 15-20 percent between 1998 and 2008 and generated an estimated £222 billion [\$346 billion] in sales in 2006, or approximately 8 percent of total private sector turnover (Kitching and Smallbone, 2008).

2.1.5 Challenges of Freelancing

Freelancers decided to go solo in work to have more flexibility than the traditional employees, choosing this way to get the freedom they seek puts them in front of different challenges and risks (Pehkonen, 2013). These risks include word and income insecurity, separated position and losing the employment benefits and protection (Storey et al. 2005).

- **Income insecurity**

Freelancers can avoid the problem of income insecurity by controlling and understanding their cash flow. Those who fail to control their finance and are receive less income than expected might leave the freelancing work and search for a traditional full time employment position (Burke, 2008).

- **Loss of regular employment benefits**

A major challenge with freelancing is losing the benefits of regular employment forms. Freelancers usually has no leaves of different types, they don't receive retirement benefits neither they are involved in any pension scheme (Sapsed et al., 2015).

2.1.6 Freelancing platforms

Online freelancing platforms are creating a new form of work that changes the traditional arrangements of work. These platforms are operating in different shapes like websites or mobile apps. They act as a mediator that connects job seekers and opportunities to produce better work outcomes. These online platforms power needs time to be measured as they should first reach a certain mass. These platforms benefits grow when they expand the size of their users and the amount of data they can analyze and provide (Manyika et al., 2015).

- **Freelancer**

Freelancer.com is considered the world's largest freelancing marketplace by number of users and projects. This platform has over 20 million registered employers and freelancers around the world. Through this platform, employers can search for freelancers in different specializations to complete any required task including IT-related tasks, writing, translation and a big variety of other specializations (www.freelancer.com, obtained on January, 2017).

- **Upwork**

Upwork was formed as a merge of the two companies' eLance and oDesk. It is a global freelancing platform that was founded in 2003 in the USA, it connects business owners with the independent freelancers so that they can cooperate and work remotely. Upwork has more than 12 million registered freelancers around the world (www.upwork.com, obtained on January, 2017).

- **Toptal**

Toptal is an online freelancing company that was found in USA in 2010. It provides its services mainly to software engineers, software designers and financial experts. Toptal gained its fame because it's completely a virtual company without any offices and because it connects the top 3 percent of developers and designers around the world. There are no official

statistics that shows the number of registered freelancers in Toptal (www.toptal.com, obtained on January, 2017).

- **Guru**

Guru is an online platform that was found in 2001 and is located in the USA and connects businesses with freelancers around the world. Guru has more than 1.5 million registered freelancers who can work in different specializations that match their skills and experiences and as may be needed by employers (www.inc.com, obtained on January, 2017).

- **FlexJobs**

FlexJobs is an online job search website that was found in 2007. It is mainly specialized in listing part-time, freelance and flexible jobs. It lists more than 100 career categories and job seekers can browse the jobs based on the criteria they select then they can apply on the advertising company website. FlexJobs provides skills tests, search tips and memberships (www.flexjobs.com, obtained on January, 2017).

- **Nabbesh**

Nabbesh is the Arabic word for “Search” and Nabbesh.com is a marketplace that helps companies find, hire, manage and pay top freelancers from the world’s emerging markets. Since our foundation in Dubai in 2012, Nabbesh goal was to create a marketplace for freelancers and independent contractors across the Middle East & North Africa region to find jobs, gain experience and earn an income. With a community of 75,000 freelancers, Nabbesh.com helps startups, small businesses and multinational companies find, hire and pay freelance talent on demand (www.nabbesh.com, obtained on January, 2017).

- **Khamsat**

Khamsat is the first Arab market for buying and selling mini-services, Khamsat combining between Arab youth who are ready to provide services, and buyers who are willing to buy these services, and thus provides a suitable income for Arab youth and services distinctive. Khamsat was launched in August 2010 and was awarded the first honor in the Tech World competition in 2011 for the Arabs best Web Projects. Khamsat was sold to Hsoub Limited Company in July 2012 (www.khamsat.com, obtained on January, 2017).)

- **FreelanceME**

FreelanceME is an online freelancing platform that aims to tackle youth unemployment in Egypt. To achieve its aim, the platform provides a matching system that connects employers with freelancers and it provides its services for free. Employers can guarantee the high quality of work needed and freelancers get paid for the work they complete then each other can give feedback about the other (www.freelanceme.net, obtained on January, 2017).

- **Peopleperhour**

An online freelancing platform that was established in 2007 and now have more than one million daily users. Peopleperhour focuses mainly on web-related projects such as: web design, programming, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), content writing and online marketing. (www.peopleperhour.com, obtained on January, 2017).

Section Two

Freelancing and Job Creation

2.2 Unemployment and Job creation

2.2.1 Unemployment and job creation

International Labor Organization (ILO) said that in 2011 more than 200 million people around the world were unemployed, 75 percent of them are from developing countries. Young people aged 15-24 years old are the most affected of unemployment and are 2-3 times more likely to be unemployed than adults.

More than 700 million jobs must be created between 2005 and 2020 according to The World Bank. These jobs are needed to halve the unemployment rate around the globe.

Employment crises have emerged at the beginning of this millennium and became a challenging issue that faces most of the economies around the world. The slowdown and uncertainty in global economics plunged many economies into recession which affected the job markets. The increased unemployment was one of the main outcomes of these affects and affected mainly the developing countries (Makinde, 2013).

In advanced and emerging economies, people are having difficulties to find work and build careers that make use of their skills and capabilities. In many countries, concerns about employment have been increased by the trends of low wage growth and automation. The increased use of online platforms may begin to address these problems in favor of workers by empowering them with broader choices, and more flexibility (Manyika et al., 2015).

The number of freelancers is dramatically increasing as freelancers are independent service providers who use the internet to search for jobs. The new communication technologies allow them to distance-work on tasks when they have the skills for. This flexible arrangement allows them to choose what time they work and set their own schedules (Absalyamova & Absalyamov, 2015).

2.2.2 Unemployment around the world:

The Unemployed persons are those individuals aged 15 years and over who did not work at all during the reference period, who were not absent from a job, were available for work and actively seeking a job during the reference period by one of the following methods newspaper, registered at employment office, ask friends or relatives or any other method (ILO Terminology, 2008).

While there is not enough number of jobs being created by the global economy, the world of work is changing. ILO estimates that 201 million people are unemployed in 2011 which is higher by 30 million before 2008 global crisis. A new challenge that is not easy to come over is that 40 million jobs are needed every year. Another challenge that the employment relationship is facing major changes (International Labour Office, 2015).

2.2.3 Unemployment in Palestine:

After the electoral victory of Hamas in the Palestinian national elections in 2006, Gaza people suffered a blockade that was imposed by Israel and limits the movements of people and goods in and outside Gaza (Beschoner, Kuek & Narimatsu, 2015).

Unemployment rates have skyrocketed and poverty rates have climbed. In particular, Israeli closure policies have restricted the movement of large numbers of unskilled males, who previously were able to find work in Israel at relatively generous wages. Those workers have now been forced to seek employment within a Palestinian economy facing shrinking GDP and a hobbled private sector in the face of widespread barriers to the movement of people and goods. In response, the public sector has expanded, but not to an adequate level that would compensate for the loss of private sector jobs. This has left a growing pool of workers competing for a shrinking pool of jobs, and it is in this context that youth employment has reached its present levels (Marrar, et al. 2009).

An important characteristic of Palestine's unemployment crisis is its concentration in the 15–34 age cohorts, and it is, therefore, seen as a problem of “youth unemployment”. Table 1, which decomposes unemployment by age, illustrates that the 15–24 age group accounts for 67.9% of aggregate unemployment, and the 25–34 age group for 46.2%. In

aggregate, the 15–34 age cohorts represents a staggering 57% of Gaza Strip’s unemployed (PCBS, 2015).

Table (1.1): Percentage Distribution of Persons Aged 15 Years and Above in Gaza Strip by Sex, Age and Labour Force Status, 2014

Sex and Age	Labour Force Status						
	Total	Outside LF	Inside LF	Total	Unemployment	Under-employment	Employment
Both Sexes							
15-24	100	71.2	28.8	100	67.9	8.2	23.9
25-34	100	35.5	64.5	100	46.2	8.3	45.5
35-44	100	41.2	58.8	100	25.6	6.5	67.9
45-54	100	45.5	54.5	100	28.9	3.8	67.3
55-64	100	70.8	29.2	100	22.5	3.0	74.5
65+	100	93.2	6.8	100	6.1	0.0	93.9
Total	100	55.6	44.4	100	43.9	7.0	49.1

Source: PCBS, 2015

Youth unemployment is widely recognized to be a pressing economic and social challenge in the oPt. Due to high fertility rates in recent decades, over 70% of West Bank residents and three fourths of Gazans are under 29. Youth’s share of the population will continue to increase for the next decade or so, given demographic trends (Sayre, et al. 2009).

How to stimulate growth and support job creation are two critical challenges that countries and localities confront. Policy-makers are faced with the challenge of doing more with less. It is increasingly necessary to think laterally about how actions in one area, such as employment and training, can have simultaneous benefits in others, such as creating new jobs and better supporting labour market inclusion (Barr, J. et al., 2012).

2.3 Freelancing reality in the world

For freelancers, not being bound to one location means they can live wherever life brings them. And if they are able to live somewhere with a lower cost of living, then they can be competitive in what they charge for their services. Often in developing countries, professionals turn to freelancing because they are unable to get hired in a cutthroat job market. Many end up making far more money working how and when they want than they would if they were working for someone else. Figure (2.1) shows the top 20 countries based on the estimated ratio of freelancers and the specializations these freelancers work in.

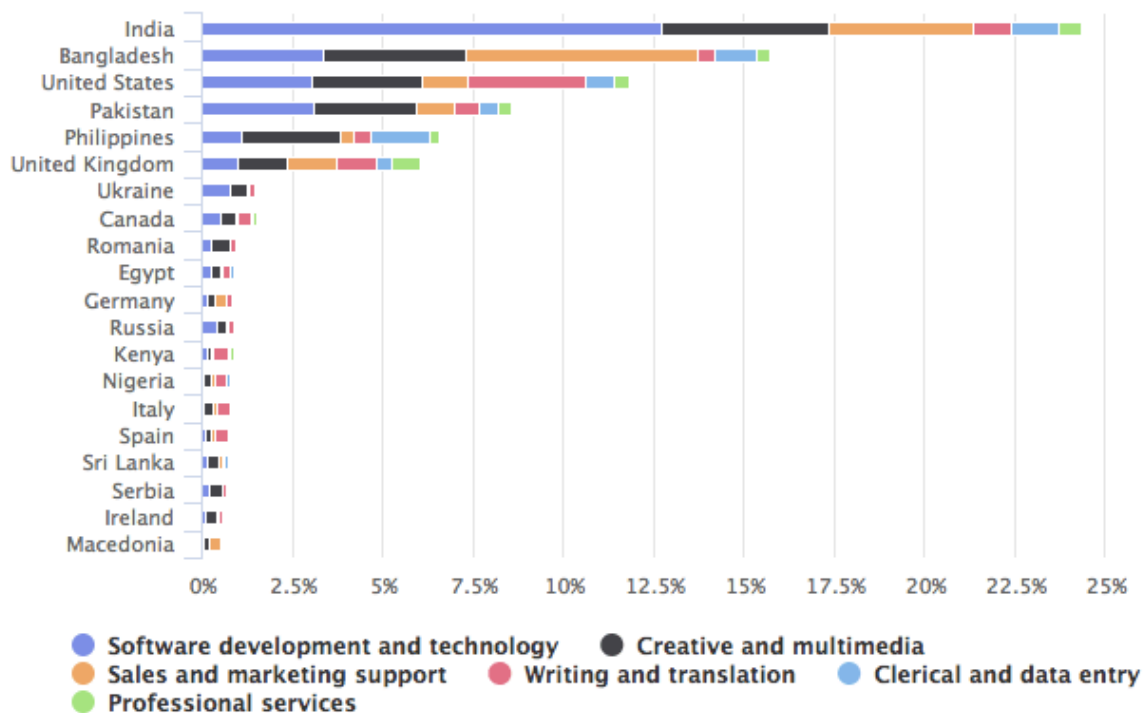


Figure (2.1): Online Labour Index top 20 worker home countries, July 2017

Source: This figure is obtained from Payoneer.com on October, 2017

2.3.1 Australia

Australia workforce witnessed an increase in freelancing by 2 percent since 2014 where 32 percent of its total workforce is now freelancers. Based on the Australian Bureau

of Statistics' August 2015, 4.1 million people are freelancing out of the total labor force which is 12.5 million workers (Daniel J Edelman Inc, 2015).

2.3.2 European Union

The European Union's freelancing workforce has grown during the past decade in a consistent way across the union's different member states. During the period from 2004 to 2013, the freelancers population increased by 45 percent to become about 9 million freelancers. The lowest growth of freelancers was in Italy where the ratio was 12 percent. Netherlands had the highest growth rate of freelancers where the ratio was 93 percent (Leighton & Brown, 2013).

2.3.3 United Kingdom

The UK's Labor Force Survey data estimates that there are 1.91 million freelancers in UK, out of them 1.65 million freelancers working in main jobs and the others are freelancing in second jobs. These freelancers represent 6 percent of UK employment. The number of freelancers in UK increased by 36 percent since 2008 (Kitching, 2016).

2.3.4 United States of America

The United States has about 53 million freelancers who represent 34 percent of the country's workforce. These freelancers contribute about \$715 billion every year to the US economy. This number of freelancers is expected to reach 50 percent by the year 2020 (Freelancers Union & Elance-oDesk, 2015).

2.3.5 India

India settled the first rank in the number of freelancers where 24% of the whole world's freelancers live in India. Indian freelancers are competing globally due to the high levels of education and technical experience. Nearly 55% of Indian freelancers work in software development. (Payoneer, 2017).

2.4 Freelancing in Palestine

2.4.1 Freelancing in Palestine:

There is no official statistics that shows the number of freelancers in Palestine; however, the researcher searched the biggest freelancing platform, Freelancer.com, for the registered freelancers whom identified their country of living as Palestinian territories and found that there are only 508 registered freelancers on the platform. The researcher avoided repeating the search on other freelancing platforms to eliminate the possibility of repeated registered users on different platforms.

2.4.2 Problems facing freelancers in Palestine:

Success rates among the Palestinian freelancers are low due to different problems they face. These problems include: electricity cuts, payment problems, high level of competition, lack of experience, lack of training, and insufficient commitment (Sadgrove, 2013).

- **Electricity cuts:**

Electrical supplies available in Gaza only covers 46 percent of its actual needs which makes the Gazans suffer the repetitive cuts of electricity. This lack of electrical power affected the local businesses and reduced the quality of life for Gazans. It also stands as a challenge in front of the private sector competitiveness and growth (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2014).

- **Payment problems:**

Freelancers should have protection against late and unpaid payments. With 34 percent of US force are freelancers, many ways should be applied to insure these freelancers receive the money they deserve (Freelancers Union, 2015).

- **Level of competition:**

The level of competition in freelancing work is very high especially when it comes from high-skilled freelancers who offer high quality work in cheap prices. Indians are the main competitive to the whole world because of their big number and the cheap prices they offer (Sadgrove, 2013).

2.4.3 Freelancing Projects in Gaza

Online freelancing platforms are a major source of income for young professionals in the Gaza Strip who are freelancing in different fields via websites that connect them with potential clients from around the world. These websites present an alternative to the local labor market, where the unemployment rate is skyrocketing. These online platforms might have offered alternative solutions for unemployment in Gaza due to the continuous Israeli siege on Gaza since 2007 (Al-Monitor, retrieved on December, 2016).

2.4.3.1 Taqat

Taqat project is one of Qatar Charity projects, funded by the Islamic Development Bank, and is considered as a mediator between the Palestinian graduates and professionals and the external market place. Its role is to connect the two sides based on the needs of the company and the related CV submitted by the applicants. The project gives the company the freedom to select the suitable applicant through conducting direct interviews organized by the project. When an applicant is selected, the nature of work and employment (full-time, part-time or project-based) and salary are identified according to both sides agreement. The work is done through attendance (full-time or part-time) in a 'work station' that hosts employees in Gaza (www.taqat.ps, retrieved on December, 2016).

2.4.3.2 Fursati

Meaning “my opportunity” is a pilot program by Silatech and Nabbesh to create virtual jobs for youth in Palestine. Fursati aims to encourage businesses based mainly in the Gulf region to leverage the education and expertise of expert Palestinian talent to get work done remotely. To the Palestinians, Fursati will become a means for them to access quality jobs and earn a guaranteed income and reviews via Nabbesh.com. The project aimed at creating 300 remote work opportunities for Palestinian Youth in Q4 of 2015 (www.nabbesh.com, retrieved on December, 2016).

2.4.3.3 Ta3mal

A regional employment portal that aims to help job seekers from the Arab youth to get support while moving from education level to work level. It has different levels of resources as it provides e-learning resources, career guidance, employability training. This portal was an output of cooperation between Silatech and Microsoft while there are different partners who provide content and services access for the countries included in this network (www.ta3mal.com, retrieved on December, 2016).

2.4.3.4 Tamyaz

Tamyaz is a project that aims to promote freelance work in Palestine, especially online freelance work. The project includes the following elements: A roadshow that will travel to the main cities in Palestine on 24 – 28 January 2014, to promote freelance working, a self-study training programme. Tamayaz hope in due course to establish more training and mentoring programmes, and additional marketing to create awareness. (www.tamyaz.com, retrieved on December, 2016).

2.4.3.5 Work without Borders

A Palestinian nonprofit company that was considered a creative idea aims to provide work opportunities for skilled Palestinians through freelancing. The company provides different services and helps companies to hire skilled Palestinians through its offices and availing the freelancing required tools (www.wwp.ps, retrieved on December, 2016).

2.4.3.6 Mercy Corps

Mercy Corps launched a training programme for graduates in Gaza. This programme aimed to train is training graduates from various disciplines on the basics of freelancing to help them find work and alleviate the unemployment crisis. Mercy Corps also launched the freelancing academy and provided some short period to allow them to start working and accepting offers (www.mercycorps.org, retrieved on December, 2016).

Chapter Three

Previous Studies

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide an overview of the literature that studied and covered freelancing, understanding how a freelancing project can be implemented successfully, the general characteristics needed for freelancers, the impact of applying freelancing on the economy and how can it help in creating jobs, as well as, the impact of the factors related to freelancers and society on the successful application of freelancing.

3.2 Previous Studies

Twenty five studies covered the different aspects of freelancing. These studies were arranged descending from 2017 to 2006. In terms of Arabic studies and because freelancing is a new phenomenon in the Arab world, the researcher only found three Arabic studies in relationship to the topic of this study.

The following studies have a straight forward link to the topic of this study and serve its purpose and objectives to a large extent.

3.2.1 Niam Yaraghi and Shamika Ravi (2017)

The Current and Future State of the Sharing Economy

This study aims to examine the current state of the sharing economy, investigate the underlying economic, technological, social, and political factors that lead to the rise of the sharing economy and predict the growth of this sector in the coming years. It also shows the importance of online platforms in facilitating the contact between contractors and companies. The study goes further to show that bias can be found online based on gender and race. It shows the importance of privacy and consumers should be able to control how businesses use their data. The data was collected by desk research and internet sources.

The study recommends that regulations in the sharing economy should be to lower barriers to entry for startup companies, which raises competition for incumbents. It also recommends Sharing data and algorithm with government as a one way that sharing economy companies can build trust with regulators.

3.2.2 The Palestinian Market Development Programme (2016)

Rapid Market Systems Assessment: Online Freelancing for Women in oPt

This study aims to provide an assessment for online freelancing in Palestine with a specific focus on females. This study used the M4P approach to identify the challenges that face online freelancing growth among Palestinian graduates in IT sector. It also aims to provide practical interventions that can facilitate the expansion of freelancing sector to increase employment and provide graduates with work opportunities.

The study found that there is a potential international market for Palestinian freelancers online, it also found that freelancing already worked for many Palestinian women despite the current market failures and systemic constraints. Finally, the study recommends that practical and sustainable interventions are required to introduce freelancing markets to greater number of Palestinian women, and support them with the skills required to undertake robust participation in the work opportunities available.

3.2.3 Janos Novits (2015)

An Essential Guide to Online Freelancing

This study aims to highlight the freelancing phenomenon from an entrepreneurial perspective. It focuses on understanding the reality of freelancers, what motivates them to freelance, how they manage their self-employment, what challenges they face and to identify the most platforms they use. The data of theoretical part for this study was collected from various literatures and published case studies and it was based mainly on the experience of its author who worked as graphic designer freelancer for a period from 2012 to 2014. The practical part is a project that contains an activity which was executed individually as a way of solving the study problem. The study design is explanatory with extensive features of descriptive studies. Due to the specific nature of the project thesis, only qualitative research methods were used.

The project results show that online freelancing is considered a new phenomenon with an increased trend around the world. Another result shows that freelancing provides a good alternative for traditional forms of employment especially for IT-related fresh graduates as it provide them with flexibility, skills and experience.

The study recommends that the freelancing phenomenon should be under extensive research from its all sides to get more detailed information about to benefit those interested in working as freelancers.

3.2.4 Jonathan Sapsed, et al (2015)

Freelancers in the Creative Digital IT Economy

This study follows a previous study “The Brighton Fuse report” that was published in 2014 and was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The study uses a mixed method approach of collecting data combining quantitative and qualitative types of data. In term of quantitative analysis, a survey was distributed for 500 businesses and took place in the period from July-September 2014. In the qualitative research, 32 interviews and two focus groups were conducted.

The results of the study were admirable as they show that IT-related freelancers generated remarkable income. The study also found that freelancers should consider the global markets to grow their businesses and enhance their market positioning and the competitiveness.

The study recommends the launch of two information campaigns that are led by governments, the first campaign to publish important information and guidelines on the business model of freelancers which can be used by freelancers and their potential clients while the second campaign to promote the freelancing role through media and to compare it with other popular services.

3.2.5 Natasha Beschorner, Siou Chew Kuek, and Junko Narimatsu (2015)

ICT for Jobs in the Pacific Island Countries (PICs)

This study was prepared by the World Bank Group. The study aims to examine how feasible is using the IT in job creation in the Pacific Island Countries. It chooses global experiences in managing and developing global outsourcing to find new ways that overcome the challenging nature of the Pacific Island Countries and to support creation more jobs for women and youth. It started by analyzing the job creation points of views in three countries as a first stage and focuses mainly on cities and urban areas due to the lack of broadband

access in remote areas. The study was done based on desk research, interviews and discussions with all stakeholders.

The study results showed that there is a small labor pool who are young, qualified, and computer literate and they are ready to freelance. The study recommends providing internet connection and payment methods for this pool.

3.2.6 Siou Chew Kuek, et al (2015)

The Global Opportunity in Online Outsourcing

The study was conducted by the World Bank and it aims to define the Online Outsourcing through answering and finding out the contribution that Online Outsourcing might bring to job creation especially for youth and women. This study builds on its researcher's knowledge of online outsourcing and freelancing and wants to give recommendations to policy makers who may contribute to increasing the opportunities of online freelancing.

Data was collected from 30 online freelancing workers who contributed by availing information and their points of views. Different interviews with different stakeholders also conducted.

The main results of the study showed that freelancers earn more than their colleagues in traditional forms of work. Freelancers also assured that freelancing helped them in developing their skills.

3.2.7 Abdalla Y. H. Balousha (2015)

Toward A Freelancing Business Model for Gaza Strip: A Case Study

This study aims to build a business model for Gaza strip that would help in creating more jobs and overcome unemployment among youth in Gaza strip through the promotion of e-commerce and freelancing forms of work. A questionnaire was used as a method of data collection as 20 questionnaires were distributed. Individual interviews were conducted with different freelancers.

The main results of the study include the lack of support from universities to build and enhance their skills and there is a lack of awareness in the term of freelancing.

The study recommends encouraging universities to include practical training in the study plans and the universities to take an effective role in developing students' skills especially English language skills.

3.2.8 Conor D'Arcy and Laura Gardiner (2014)

Just the job – or a working compromise? The changing nature of self-employment in the UK

The study was conducted by the support of the Resolution Foundation in 2014. It aims to investigate and explain the rise of self-employment. Data was collected through an online survey of 985 self-employed persons.

The main findings of the study were that older people tends to prefer self-employment as an alternative of retirement. It also found that many others are moving from unemployment to self-employment. The last finding was one out of seven UK workforce is now a self-employed and the study draws a dark picture about the security of these working in the future.

3.2.9 Naim, Nour (2014)

Influential Factors Affecting Applying Telework in Palestine

This study aims to identify the influential factors that affect application of Telework in Palestine. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire where 53 questionnaires were distributed to freelancers working in 'Work without Borders' company in Gaza strip.

The study found that there are five factors which influence the application of telework in Palestine. These factors play a significant role to the success of teleworks and the application of telework.

The study recommended that there should be moves towards enhancing the awareness of telework especially in marginalized groups like women and youth and the study pushed towards conducting more extensive future studies to better understand telework and its application.

3.2.10 Nattha Komolvadhin (2014)

New Economy and Gender Relations in Thailand-The Implications of the Internet

The study focuses on the new form of work based on new technology, and its gender implications. The analysis has drawn upon the case of Thailand, and linked it with the global

arena. So the analysis is based on individual experience. The research takes a gendered perspective on the new economy; it aims to investigate the extent to which work in this sector may result in changing gendered social relations in Thai society. The study tried to explore "real" life experiences through in-depth interviews around a semi structured questionnaire. The main research question was "In what way has the new economy opened up a new career option for women and men and how is the new economy gendered?".

The main findings showed that although work based on the Internet does not become permanent, its emergence during the economic collapse heightened interest in a tool bringing new work opportunities and a channel to 'get rich quick', to escape from the pattern of a 'job for life' and suggest that increasingly flexible forms of work allow both genders to enjoy less structured lives. It also found that internet has allowed work to happen across time and space, thus working hours for dot.com and e-commerce entrepreneurs are not fixed, while there is no guarantee of regular contracts or payment for work in this sector.

3.2.11 Yiping Jian (2013)

Application of Technology in Business

This study aims to build a project that connects online freelancers with potential employers. The research explains the problems that exist in marketplaces where employers are facing difficulties in finding a suitable talent employee in the local commute.

Forty-two questionnaires were distributed and four individual interviews were conducted to collect data, in addition; a website, that matches employers and job seekers, was built to support the study aims.

The main finding of the study was feedback from users indicates some issues still exist such as the information asymmetry problem and the moral hazard.

3.2.12 Jenni Pehkonen (2013)

Freelancer as an owner-manager – the challenges and opportunities of knowledge-based self-employment

This study aims to provide an in-depth investigation to the concept of freelancing and to provide guidelines for new entrances to the freelancing marketplace. It also aims to figure the main issues to be considered before working as a freelancer.

The information and data used in the study were gathered from various literature and Internet sources. The empirical data was gathered from an existing survey on freelance translators, journalists and artists in Finland. The survey was part of a wider study on entrepreneurship completed by the Finnish Ministry of Labour.

The results indicate that new freelancers should be well-prepared for the freelancing work. These freelancers feel more freedom and flexibility than the traditional forms of work.

3.2.13 Siddhartha Raja, et al. (2013)

How information and communication technologies could help expand employment opportunities

This policy note was conducted by World Bank staff and focuses on how the information and communication technologies (ICTs) sector has created jobs and how ICTs have been helping more people find employment and as work has become digitized do work.

The study propose three possible strategic considerations for governments as they evaluate the opportunity and potential of supporting more of their citizens to connect to work.

The study concluded that the changes that ICTs are causing to economies, to employment, and to workers' lives are inevitable and they are global. The focus of governments should be to support and prepare their workers, businesses, and policy frameworks through and for these changes, mitigating the losses and maximizing the benefits.

3.2.14 Patricia Leighton & Duncan Brown (2013)

Future Working: The Rise of Europe's Independent Professionals (iPros)

This study aims to give general characteristics of iPros and their life styles and the style of their work.

This study was carried out in two stages, the first stage went through the analysis of existing data about iPros in European Union. The second stage included 87 interviews with freelancing individuals or firms who are in relationship to iPros.

The main finding of the study was to assure on the new move towards the new way of flexible work rather than the traditional work arrangements. The study also mentioned that it is not easy to work as an iPro and suggested that policy makers should take additional steps to support the work of iPros.

3.2.15 Siou Chew Kuek, Cecilia Paradi-Guilford, Alexander Linden and Ihab Jabari (2013)

Microwork for the Palestinian Territories

The purpose of this analytical study is to assess the feasibility of microwork for the Palestinian Territories' socioeconomic development in general, and for employment opportunities for youth and women in particular. The methodology of this feasibility study is based on a four-step approach.

The study found that there is a readily available, skilled, and accessible youth workforce for microwork and Palestinian youth have adequate access to computers and Internet for microwork in general.

It provides recommendations for microwork industry development in PT with the objective of increasing microwork businesses and employment of youth and women in the short-term and building PT's comparative advantage in the microwork industry in the medium- to long-term. The path towards Palestinian statehood and economic development remains challenging for PT as it faces comprehensive restrictions on movement and access, and limited economic growth has led to increasing unemployment, particularly among youth and women.

3.2.16 Kit Sadgrove (2013)

Online Freelance Work in Palestine

A study conducted by Tamyaz Association in 2013 showing the growth of online freelancing, and the unique difficulties encountered by people in Palestine. The aim of this study was to identify whether online freelance sites were attractive to people in Palestine, how active or successful they are, and to see whether there were specific problems holding them back.

The study results included that freelancing is a good way to earn income but most of the freelancers find it is difficult to succeed in the freelancing work. The results also highlighted the main difficulties that face the Palestinian freelancers which are common in many other countries.

The recommendations were to give more focus and extensive research on the status of freelancers in Palestine and how to promote the freelancing awareness to create more opportunities for youth.

3.2.17 The International Youth Foundation (2013)

Analysis of ICT-enabled youth employment in GHANA, kenya, and south Africa

This analytical study was submitted by The International Youth Foundation and it aims to identify broad trends across the eight sectors in terms of ICT-enabled employment quality and skill gaps.

For the purpose of the study, 12 interviews were conducted, 40 focus group discussions with young people were facilitated and a survey to 384 young people was also distributed.

The key findings of the study were: Definition of ICT-Enabled Employment, Growth Sectors for ICT-Enabled Employment, employers said that the demand for ICT jobs will continue to increase in Ghana. The majority of working youth reported not earning sufficient income to cover basic expenses. Overall, there is an ICT skills gap between what is taught in schools and what is necessary to obtain employment in available positions in the labor market.

3.2.18 Andrey Shevchuk, Denis Strebkov (2012)

Freelance Contracting In the Digital Age: Informality, Virtuality and Social Ties

This study aims to provide a quantitative evidence of online freelancing and to explore the role of networking in freelancing.

The data was collected through a structured questionnaire that covered 5,784 Russian-speaking respondents and involves not one particular industry or occupational group as in many prior studies of contract work, but the wide range of expertise present in e-markets for freelance services.

The key findings of the research were that freelancers act under constant threat of malfeasance from clients. It also added that the virtualization of relationships with clients is associated with greater moral hazard risks and fewer opportunities for dispute resolution. Another conclusion contributes to debates about jobs quality in the new economy. Finally, electronic freelancers do not fit the popular image of atomized global actors surfing the Internet for jobs.

3.2.19 Stéphane Rapelli (2012)

European I-Pros: A Study

This study aims to identify the socio-demographic characteristics of iPros across the European Union. Through these characteristics the researcher builds a definition of the self-employed workers which does not exist before.

In order to ensure maximum statistical consistency in the analyses, the data used all come from bases provided by Eurostat in 2011. It was necessary to use this particular source of information because it includes all of the data collected at national level by European statistical bodies.

The study findings showed a remarkable increase in the number of iPros around Europe. The study results included defining the iPros, estimating their number in 2011 and finally identifying their demographic characteristics and activities.

3.2.20 Andrew Burke (2012)

The Role of Freelancers in the 21st Century British Economy

This study was commissioned by Professional Contractors Group (PCG), the voice of freelancing and it aims to identify the role of freelancers in the British economy and assessed their effectiveness and added value.

The data for this study was gathered through the analysis of 23 firms that work in major industries in the British economy.

The study found that freelancers have an important role to play in creating jobs and leading the economic growth but they still under-analyses in the modern British economy. This research highlights that a key priority for leaders of industry and Government must be

to ensure that Britain has a sufficient supply of highly skilled and expert freelancers to maximize the performance of its modern innovation-driven economy.

3.2.21 Aidan White (2012)

The digital labour challenge: Work in the age of new media

This study aims to highlight the role of technology in media and entertainment sector and in labor markets. The study indicates that flexibility of work has led to increase the number of new employees in the media sector.

Published literatures and statistics from different sources and ILO were used for the purpose of the study.

The findings of the study show that changes in the arrangements of work required a special training to meet the needs of freelancing in two ways, the first to meet the requirements of the related sector and the second to prepare new workers for entry. Finally, the study highlights the need for more research on labour market conditions in media and entertainment. It concludes with recommendations on promoting social dialogue, creativity and respect for decent work in the media and entertainment sector.

3.2.22 Berna Kahraman (2011)

Youth Employment and Unemployment in Developing Countries: Macro Challenges with Micro Perspectives

The study aims to figure out the factors that indicates the size of youth unemployment problems and the distribution of this unemployment.

For the purpose of the study, a time series analysis of data for the last 22 years were used to identify the first purpose of the study and for the second purpose he used micro data from Turkey was used to test the impact of structural characteristics of regions under the study.

The results of the analysis of time series data across countries illustrated that relative cohort size had no impact on youth labor market outcomes controlling for other factors, in contrast to the findings of earlier studies. Results of the micro-level analysis illustrated the

varying impact of education, the significance of the role of both parents and siblings and the distinct nature of family dynamics in rural versus urban contexts and across genders.

3.2.23 Fersch, Barbara (2009)

Work and Life Patterns of Freelancers in the (New) Media

This study aims to analyze work and life arrangements of freelancers involved in the “cultural end” of the (new) media branch. Thirteen freelancers were interviewed in the course of this research project are mainly concerned with graphical work of all kinds. These freelancers are especially confronted with flexibilized work organization. As the study is a comparative one, the two countries which form the frame of the comparison are Denmark and Germany, whilst it is the narratives of the individual freelancers that are compared. The study literature shows this is very often accompanied by blurring boundaries between work and non-work/life. Therefore within this project freelancing is seen as an extreme case of “new” flexibilized work organization. The project aims to shed light on how the freelancers handle and organize their work and life under these conditions.

The study findings contribute to an investigation of the freelancing work form and the working conditions in the graphical field / (new) media branch in the two countries in question. The study contributes with insights on the specific logics and working conditions of this extremely flexibilized and market-dependent work form, and especially its consequences for the individual. The findings of this study could also serve as inspiration in the much more “practical” realm of politics, or to be more precise, in the field of welfare state and labour market policies and reforms.

3.2.24 Katerina Voutsina (2008)

Information Technology (IT) experts In Flexible Forms of Employment

This study aims to investigate the possibilities that technology creates to the IT freelancing.

Thirty interview with highly-skilled freelancers were conducted in Greece. The analysis of the findings suggests that the exchange of highly-skilled IT services between the IT contractor and the client-firm, instead of simply being subject to the rules of supply and

demand governing spot markets, tends to be highly contingent on the technological infrastructure and socio-economic conditions which govern the current workplace.

In other words, the particular technological tools that the contractors possess along with concrete social and institutional conditions that rule the IT sector appear to partly account for the spread and maintenance of IT freelancing techniques.

3.2.25 Noel M. Cowell and Hopeton S. Dunn (2006)

Telework: New Forms of Work and Employment Opportunities in the Caribbean

This study aims to explore stakeholders' perceptions of the extent to which Caribbean technology infrastructure, labour policy framework and stakeholder attitudes support the growth of Telework in the region. The study also sought to determine the extent to which teleworking practices hold the potential to expand opportunities for employment.

The study was carried out in two parts. The first comprised of a review of studies and other documentary sources relating to telework in the region and internationally. The second aspect of the study comprised of fieldwork involving a combination of in-depth interviews, "personal accounts" and focus groups. A total of 48 such encounters were arranged involving 63 key informants.

The study found that telework it is a growing practice in the region being carried out under a variety of names and forms. The potential for its growth becomes more evident with increasing traffic congestion, poor public transport, improving telecommunications infrastructure and the need to work across national boundaries within the spirit of the Caribbean Single Market (CSM) and the proposed integrated regional economy. Despite limited current uptake, therefore, telework is expected to grow as the level of global knowledge sharing on the subject increases.

3.3 Comments and Conclusion:

The main objective of commenting on the previous studies is to reinforce and support the idea of the current research, as well as to drawing attention to its unique position for other studies. Hence, it is important to shed light on the differences and similarities between the present study and the previous studies in the same field.

In this research, a number of twenty five previous studies have been mentioned, all of them were conducted in the period from 2006 to 2017. During the period from 2012 to 2017, a total of (21) studies were carried out. However, the studies have been conducted in several countries around the world, mostly, the USA, UK. In addition, these studies have been conducted in several organizational environments and sectors, mostly on the private sector more than the public sector.

The majority of previous studies are master theses, and have appropriately served the purpose of the current study and took part in enriching its literature review with the needed information. Moreover, these studies have contributed in designing the questionnaire and analyzing its results.

The topic of this study is new in the Arab world and in Gaza Strip and according to the knowledge of the researcher, this is one of the first studies that discuss the role of freelancing in job creation in Gaza Strip.

On the other hand, the variables that were used in this study has not been previously used as one set in the previous studies. Each of the previous studies focused on one or more variables in relationship to the subject of the study and many studies are qualitative researches that didn't use any variables but focused on descriptive aspects and literatures of the freelancing concept as a general topic to be discussed.

The current study includes three Arabic studies, because freelancing is a new phenomenon in the Arabic world that still needs to spread more and be under extensive study and investigation.

Most of previous studies depended mainly on questionnaires to collect data, and according to these studies, the results were analyzed by using the analytical descriptive method as a very common tool for describing the basic features of data.

This study coincides the studies with the studies of Novits (2015), Conor D'Arcy and Laura Gardiner (2014), Jenni Pehkonen (2013) in focusing on the concept of freelancing, the

characteristics of freelancers and challenges that face freelancers. This study coincides on the important role of technology with (The Palestinian Market Development Programme, 2016), Sapsed (2015), Natasha Beschorner, Siou Chew Kuek, and Junko Narimatsu (2015), Siou Chew Kuek, et al. (2015), Naim, Nour (2014), Nattha Komolvadhin (2014), Siddhartha Raja, et al. (2013), Patricia Leighton & Duncan Brown (2013), Aidan White (2012), Katerina Voutsina (2008). It also coincides with the studies of The Palestinian Market Development Programme (2016), Siou Chew Kuek, et al. (2015), Abdalla Y. H. Balousha (2015), Kit Sadgrove (2013) in the importance of skills in job creation and with Abdalla Y. H. Balousha (2015), Kit Sadgrove (2013), The International Youth Foundation (2013) in discussing the skills mismatch and the necessity to consider it and working more on graduates capacity building to enable them compete better in online markets. Finally, it shares the discussion about awareness of job availability with (The Palestinian Market Development Programme, 2016), Yiping Jian (2013), Kit Sadgrove (2013), Aidan White (2012), Noel M. Cowell and Hopeton S. Dunn (2006). In terms of the individual characteristics, it shares most of the previous studies with these characteristics.

In conclusion, all the previous literature indicated the importance of freelancing and its important role in job creation. However, the variables in this study have not been fully investigated in Gaza strip before. The researcher hopes this study will draw a roadmap to a successful application of freelancing projects in Gaza strip which will create more job opportunities and help in tackling the unemployment.

3.4 Research Gap

The main distinction of this study comes from being:

- a) One of the first studies to explore in-depth the reality of freelancing as a new area of research and theory analysis in Palestine and the Arab World.
- b) One of the first studies to examine the role of freelancing job creation in Gaza Strip.
- c) The study examines the importance of technology in tackling unemployment through creating online jobs without leaving Gaza, which most Gazans face problems in.

To sum up, this study aims to become a contribution to providing a better understanding of the reality and impact of online freelancing and its role in tackling unemployment among the graduates in Gaza strip. Moreover, this study might contribute to developing freelancing plan which in turn takes part in providing work opportunities for jobless graduates.

Chapter Four

Research Methodology

Chapter 4

Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology that was used in this research to explore the role of freelancing in Job creation in Gaza strip. The adopted methodology to accomplish this study uses the following techniques: the information about the research design, research population, questionnaire design, statistical data analysis, content validity and pilot study.

4.2 Research Design

The first phase of the research thesis proposal included identifying and defining the problems and establishment objective of the study and development research plan.

The second phase of the research included a summary of the comprehensive literature review. Literatures on freelancing and job creation were reviewed.

The third phase of the research included a field survey which was conducted with the graduates who received training by MercyCorps to work as freelancers.

The fourth phase of the research focused on the modification of the questionnaire design, through distributing the questionnaire to pilot study. The purpose of the pilot study was to test and prove that the questionnaire questions are clear to be answered in a way that help to achieve the target of the study. The questionnaire was modified based on the results of the pilot study.

The fifth phase of the research focused on distributing questionnaire. This questionnaire was used to collect the required data in order to achieve the research objective.

The sixth phase of the research was data analysis and discussion. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, (SPSS) was used to perform the required analysis. The final phase includes the conclusions and recommendations.

260 questionnaires were distributed to the research population and 199 questionnaires were received. Figure (4.1) shows the methodology flowchart, which leads to achieve the research objective.

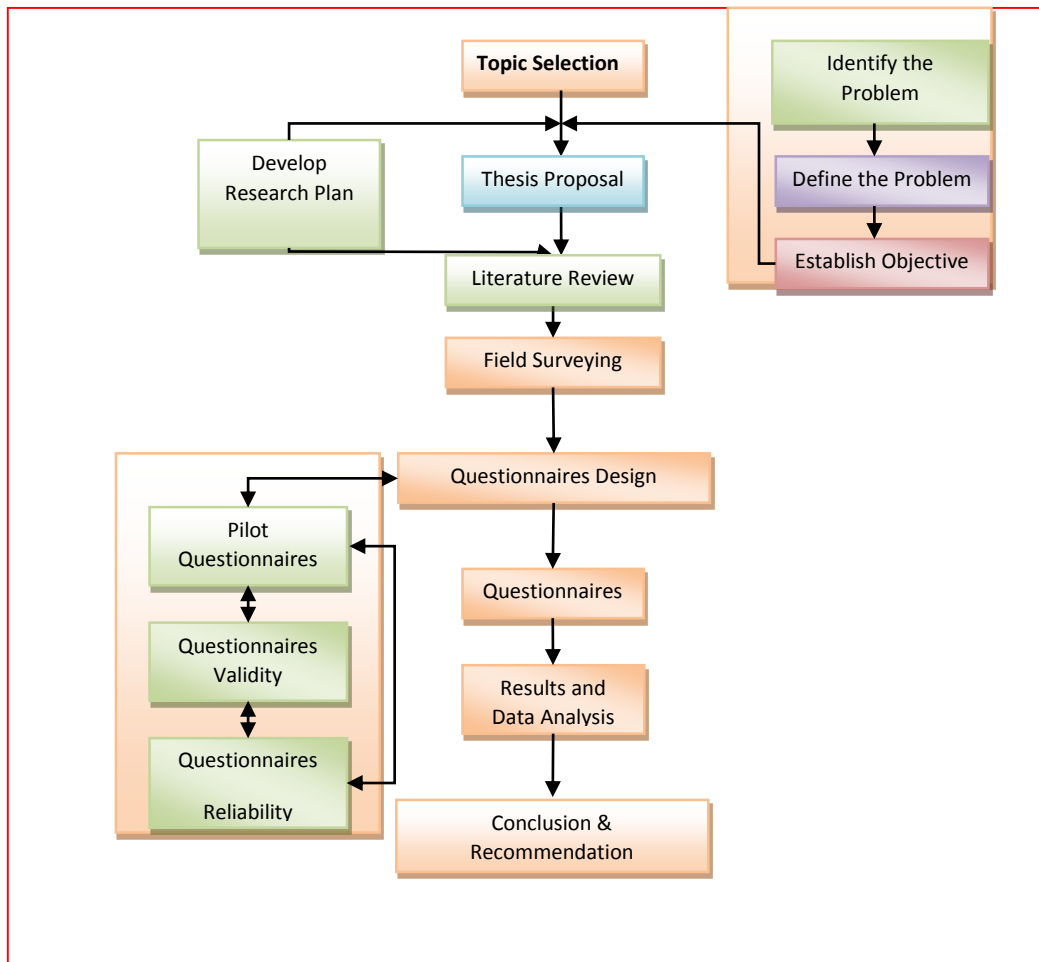


Figure (4.1): Research Design

4.3 Data Collection Methodology:

In order to collect the needed data for this research, the researcher used the secondary resources in collecting data such as books, journals, statistics and web pages. In addition to preliminary resources that are not available in secondary resources, the researcher distributed

a questionnaires on the study population in order to get their opinions about role of freelancing in job creation in Gaza strip. Research methodology depends on the analysis of data on the use of descriptive analysis, which depends on the questionnaire and use the main program (SPSS).

4.4 Population

The study population included all graduates who received training by MercyCorps to work as freelancers, they are (260) participants according to data provided by the freelancing project manager. Accordingly, a number of (260) questionnaires were distributed, and (199) valid questionnaires were collected which means that the response rate is 76.5% as a result of dividing valid questionnaires by distributed questionnaires. Its worth to note that there are other freelancers working in Gaza strip but were not included in this study.

4.5 Pilot Study

A pilot study of 40 respondents for the questionnaire was conducted before collecting the results of the sample. It provided a trial run for the questionnaire, which involved testing the wordings of question, identifying ambiguous questions, testing the techniques that used to collect data, and measuring the effectiveness of standard invitation to respondents. The questionnaire was fitting to collect data, so that the forty (40) questionnaires that have been used as a pilot study were added to the remained questionnaires.

4.6 Arbitration from Experts

The questionnaire was developed by the researcher and modified by nine (9) experts from several Palestinian universities in the Gaza Strip. The expert panel included experts in the fields of business administration, information technology and statistics. The final copy of the questionnaire was finalized according to the experts' comments (see Appendix B).

4.8 Data Measurement

In order to be able to select the appropriate method of analysis, the level of measurement must be understood. For each type of measurement, there is/are an appropriate

method/s that can be applied and not others. In this research, ordinal scales were used. Ordinal scale is a ranking or a rating data that normally uses integers in ascending or descending order. The numbers assigned to the important (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) do not indicate that the interval between scales are equal, nor do they indicate absolute quantities. They are merely numerical labels. Based on Likert scale, the scale is shown below:

Table (4.1): Questionnaire Scale

Level	Totally disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Totally agree
Scale	1	2	3	4	5
Weight mean	20%-36%	36%-52%	52%-68%	68%-84%	84%-100%

Source: Designed by the researcher, 2017

4.9 Content validity of the questionnaire:

The content validity of the questionnaire was conducted through the supervisor review in order to assure that the content of the questionnaire is consistent with the research objectives, and evaluate whether the questions reflect the research problem or not. Also, nine academics from the Islamic University of Gaza, Al-Azhar University, and Management and Politics Academy reviewed the questionnaire and provided valuable notes to improve its validity that their comments were taken into consideration. (See appendix B).

4.10 Validity of Questionnaire

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to be measuring. Validity has a number of different aspects and assessment approaches. Statistical validity is used to evaluate instrument validity, which include internal validity and structure validity.

4.10.1 Internal Validity

Internal validity of the questionnaire is the first statistical test that used to test the validity of the questionnaire. It is measured by a scouting sample, which consisted of 40

questionnaires through measuring the correlation coefficients between each item in one field and the whole field.

Table (4.2) clarifies the correlation coefficient for each item of the "Technology and job creation" and the total of the field. The p-values (Sig.) are less than 0.05, so the correlation coefficients of this field are significant at $\alpha = 0.05$, so it can be said that the items of this field are consistent and valid to measure what it was set for.

Table (4.2): Correlation coefficient of each item of "Technology and job creation" and the total of this field

No.	Item	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	P-Value (Sig.)
1.	I continuously follow the required technological development that helps me accomplish the required tasks.	.419	0.004*
2.	My awareness of technology means use increases my opportunity to become a successful freelancer.	.576	0.000*
3.	My freelancing work is dependent on the available communication and technology equipment.	.518	0.000*
4.	The fast growing technology sector helps me search and find jobs.	.508	0.000*
5.	I use my computer or mobile phone to do my work anywhere.	.430	0.003*
6.	My awareness of online freelancing platforms increases my opportunity to get a job.	.503	0.000*
7.	The higher the internet speed, the more tasks I can do in a more efficient and effective way.	.398	0.005*
8.	Technology helps me in finding more online jobs other than the traditional jobs.	.547	0.000*

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table (4.3) clarifies the correlation coefficient for each item of the "Skills and job creation" and the total of the field. The p-values (Sig.) are less than 0.05, so the correlation coefficients of this field are significant at $\alpha = 0.05$, so it can be said that the items of this field are consistent and valid to measure what it was set for.

Table (4.3): Correlation coefficient of each item of "Skills and job creation" and the total of this field

No.	Item	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	P-Value (Sig.)
1.	Building skills enhances my capacities, creativity and getting jobs.	.344	0.015*
2.	Training and skills help me to develop my full capacities and seize employment opportunities.	.552	0.000*
3.	Skills contribute to my future innovation and development.	.334	0.018*
4.	I think that having high level skills encourages employers to hire me.	.622	0.000*
5.	The more good skills I have, the higher my wage becomes.	.676	0.000*
6.	Skills' building helps me in expanding my labor market opportunities.	.332	0.018*
7.	I face uncertainty in moving from education into decent work due to lack of skills.	.709	0.000*

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table (4.4) clarifies the correlation coefficient for each item of the "Contacts and job creation" and the total of the field. The p-values (Sig.) are less than 0.05, so the correlation coefficients of this field are significant at $\alpha = 0.05$, so it can be said that the items of this field are consistent and valid to measure what it was set for.

Table (4.4): Correlation coefficient of each item of "Contacts and job creation" and the total of this field

No.	Item	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	P-Value (Sig.)
1.	I use my contacts network to search for freelancing jobs.	.483	0.001*
2.	The more contacts I have, the more freelancing jobs I get.	.695	0.000*
3.	I get my work as a freelancer by Word of mouth / client referrals	.550	0.000*
4.	I get my work as a freelancer by referrals from other freelancers.	.544	0.000*
5.	I get my work as a freelancer by direct outreach to current and/or prospective customers/clients	.677	0.000*
6.	I get my work as a freelancer by a former employer	.635	0.000*
7.	I get my work as a freelancer online freelancing marketplaces (Elance, oDesk, Freelancer, etc.)	.446	0.002*
8.	I get my work as a freelancer by social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, blogs)	.659	0.000*

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table (4.5) clarifies the correlation coefficient for each item of the "Awareness of job availability and job creation" and the total of the field. The p-values (Sig.) are less than 0.05, so the correlation coefficients of this field are significant at $\alpha = 0.05$, so it can be said that the items of this field are consistent and valid to measure what it was set for.

Table (4.5): Correlation coefficient of each item of "Awareness of job availability and job creation" and the total of this field

No.	Item	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	P-Value (Sig.)
1.	Being able to search for a job helps me get one.	.605	0.000*
2.	Online freelancing marketplace provides me with an easy way to search for jobs.	.540	0.000*
3.	When I see or hear about a suitable job, I apply for it and sometimes get it.	.471	0.001*
4.	I lost many suitable jobs or tasks because I didn't hear about.	.671	0.000*
5.	Technology helps me know more about available jobs and apply for.	.492	0.001*
6.	I develop my skills to match the expected future job trends.	.604	0.000*
7.	I follow job boards to find jobs that suit my skills and experiences.	.433	0.003*

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table (4.6) clarifies the correlation coefficient for each item of the "Skills mismatch and job creation" and the total of the field. The p-values (Sig.) are less than 0.05, so the correlation coefficients of this field are significant at $\alpha = 0.05$, so it can be said that the items of this field are consistent and valid to measure what it was set for.

Table (4.6): Correlation coefficient of each item of "Skills mismatch and job creation" and the total of this field

No.	Item	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	P-Value (Sig.)
1.	I think that freelancing is an easy job that everyone can do.	.637	0.000*
2.	I need special skills to obtain a freelancing job.	.730	0.000*
3.	Lack of skills affects my performance as a freelancer.	.557	0.000*

4.	Soft skills like time management and communication are necessary skills for freelancers.	.433	0.003*
5.	I think that employers prefer freelancers with low level skills.	.661	0.000*
6.	I need to develop my skills to be able compete for a freelancing job.	.438	0.002*
7.	Focusing in one skill is better than having different skills.	.609	0.000*
8.	The more related skills I have, the more freelancing jobs I get.	.516	0.000*

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

4.10.2 Structure Validity of the Questionnaire

Structure validity is the second statistical test that used to test the validity of the questionnaire structure by testing the validity of each field and the validity of the whole questionnaire. It measures the correlation coefficient between one field and all the fields of the questionnaire that have the same level of liker scale.

Table (4.7) clarifies the correlation coefficient for each field and the whole questionnaire. The p-values (Sig.) are less than 0.05, so the correlation coefficients of all the fields are significant at $\alpha = 0.05$, so it can be said that the fields are valid to be measured what it was set for to achieve the main aim of the study.

Table (4.7): Correlation coefficient of each field and the whole of questionnaire

No.	Field	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	P-Value (Sig.)
1.	Technology and job creation	.741	0.000*
2.	Skills and job creation	.755	0.000*
3.	Contacts and job creation	.741	0.000*
4.	Awareness of job availability and job creation	.750	0.000*
5.	Skills mismatch and job creation	.698	0.000*

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

4.11 Reliability of the Research

The reliability of an instrument is the degree of consistency which measures the attribute; it is supposed to be measuring (George and Mallery, 2006). The less variation an instrument produces in repeated measurements of an attribute, the higher its reliability. Reliability can be equated with the stability, consistency, or dependability of a measuring tool. The test is repeated to the same sample of people on two occasions and then compares the scores obtained by computing a reliability coefficient (George and Mallery, 2006). To insure the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha should be applied.

4.12 Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha

Cronbach's alpha (George D. & Mallery P, 2006) is designed as a measure of internal consistency, that is, do all items within the instrument measure the same thing? The normal range of Cronbach's coefficient alpha value between 0.0 and + 1.0, and the higher values reflects a higher degree of internal consistency. The Cronbach's coefficient alpha was calculated for each field of the questionnaire.

Table (4.8) shows the values of Cronbach's Alpha for each field of the questionnaire and the entire questionnaire. For the fields, values of Cronbach's Alpha were in the range from 0.634 and 0.726. This range is considered high; the result ensures the reliability of each field of the questionnaire. Cronbach's Alpha equals 0.849 for the entire questionnaire which indicates an excellent reliability of the entire questionnaire.

Table (4.8): Cronbach's Alpha for each field of the questionnaire

No.	Field	Cronbach's Alpha
1.	Technology and job creation	0.634
2.	Skills and job creation	0.642
3.	Contacts and job creation	0.726
4.	Awareness of job availability and job creation	0.695
5.	Skills mismatch and job creation	0.725
	All items of the questionnaire	0.849

Thereby, it can be said that the researcher proved that the questionnaire was valid, reliable, and ready for distribution for the population sample.

4.13 Test of normality

The One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test procedure compares the observed cumulative distribution function for a variable with a specified theoretical distribution, which may be normal, uniform, Poisson, or exponential. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z is computed from the largest difference (in absolute value) between the observed and theoretical cumulative distribution functions. This goodness-of-fit test tests whether the observations could reasonably have come from the specified distribution. Many parametric tests require normally distributed variables. The one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test can be used to test that a variable of interest is normally distributed (Henry, C. and Thode, Jr., 2002).

Table (4.9) shows the results for Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of normality. From Table (4.8), the p-value for each variable is greater than 0.05 level of significance, then the distributions for these variables are normally distributed. Consequently, parametric tests should be used to perform the statistical data analysis.

Table (4.9): Kolmogorov-Smirnov test

Field	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	
	Statistic	P-value
Technology and job creation	0.705	0.703
Skills and job creation	1.355	0.051
Contacts and job creation	0.870	0.436
Awareness of job availability and job creation	0.696	0.718
Skills mismatch and job creation	0.974	0.299
All items of the questionnaire	0.862	0.447

4.14 Statistical analysis Tools

The researcher used data analysis both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods. The Data analysis made utilizing (SPSS 24). The researcher utilizes the following statistical tools:

- 1) Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of normality.
- 2) Pearson correlation coefficient for Validity.
- 3) Cronbach's Alpha for Reliability Statistics.
- 4) Frequency and Descriptive analysis.
- 5) Parametric Tests (One-sample T test, Independent Samples T-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)).

T-test is used to determine if the mean of an item is significantly different from a hypothesized value 3 (Middle value of Likert scale). If the P-value (Sig.) is smaller than or equal to the level of significance, $\alpha = 0.05$ then the mean of an item is significantly different from a hypothesized value 3. The sign of the Test value indicates whether the mean is significantly greater or smaller than hypothesized value 3. On the other hand, if the P-value (Sig.) is greater than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$, then the mean an item is insignificantly different from a hypothesized value 3.

The Independent Samples T-test is used to examine if there is a statistical significant difference between two means among the respondents toward the role of freelancing in job creation in Gaza strip due to (gender).

The One- Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is used to examine if there is a statistical significant difference between several means among the respondents toward the role of freelancing in job creation in Gaza strip due to (age, educational level, number of years in freelancing, income from freelancing and typically work in freelancing).

Chapter Five

Data Analysis and Discussion

Chapter 5

Data Analysis and Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyze the data that was collected through the questionnaire in order to investigate the role of freelancing in job creation in Gaza strip. The findings that respond to the questions and objectives will be discussed and compared to other findings in previous studies.

5.2 Personal data

5.2.1 Gender

Table No. (5.1) shows that the majority of the respondents are males and this represents 62.8% of the study sample and 37.2% are females. This percentage ratio shows hope for females where freelancing is bringing more inclusion for females in labor market as when it is compared to the gender distribution of labor force we found that females only represent 19.1 percent of the Palestinian labor force (PCBS, 2016).

Table (5.1): Gender distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	125	62.8
Female	74	37.2
Total	199	100.0

5.2.2 Age

Table No. (5.2) shows that the majority of the respondents have ages between 25- Less than 30 years , and this represents 53.8%. 24.6% of the respondents have ages "Less than 25 years" and 21.6% of respondents have ages 30 years and more. The age distribution of the participants indicates that young people were unable to find jobs as the unemployment

rate reached 41 percent in the age group 15-30 years in Gaza strip (PCBS, 2015) and these jobless youth are more likely to work as freelancers to get income resources.

Table (5.2): Age distribution

Age	Frequency	Percent
Less than 25 years	49	24.6
25- Less than 30 years	107	53.8
30 years and more	43	21.6
Total	199	100.0

5.2.3 Education level

Table No. (5.3) shows that 1.0% of the respondents hold “Secondary school or less” which considered a phenomena that should be highlighted to show that even less educated people with proper training and skills can work as freelancers, 32.7% “diploma degree ”, 53.3% “Bachelor” and 13.1% of the sample hold" Master or above ". The results indicate that most of the respondents are well-educated, whereas working as freelancers needs more skills and a good level of education to succeed in the freelancing sector.

Table (5.3): Education level

Education level	Frequency	Percent
Secondary school or less	2	1.0
diploma degree	65	32.7
Bachelor	106	53.3
Master or above	26	13.1
Total	199	100.0

5.2.4 Field of work

Table No. (5.4) shows that 35.2% and 24.6% of the respondents work in “Web, mobile and Software Development”, 24.6% work in “IT and Networking”, 19.6% work in “Translation” and the rest of respondents work in other different specialties. The results indicate that most of the Palestinian freelancers work in IT-related specialties (Sadgrove, 2013). These results can be justified to the work nature of freelancing where freelancers need to work in using technology and the IT-related tasks are the most required in the global market (Upwork, 2016).

Table (5.4): Field of work

Field of work	Frequency	Percent
Web, mobile and Software Development	70	35.2
Design and Creative	3	1.5
Content Writing	22	11.1
Sales and Marketing	19	9.5
Admin Support	16	8.0
IT and Networking	49	24.6
Translation	39	19.6
Engineering & Architecture	6	3.0
Customer Service	10	5.0
Medical	2	1.0
Other	3	1.5

5.2.5 What’s the number of years have you been freelancing?

Table No. (5.5) shows that 51.8% of freelancers has been freelancing between 3-5 years, 30.7% have been freelancing for less than 3 years and 17.6% has been freelancing for more than 5 years. The results shows that the freelancing work did exist for more than 5 years

in Gaza, but most of the freelancers are newly involved in this type of work. These results can be justified as a result of the lack of jobs in Gaza and the graduates are headed to new ways of work.

Table (5.5): Freelancing years of experience

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 3 years	61	30.7
3- 5 years	103	51.8
More than 5 years	35	17.6
Total	199	100.0

5.2.6 Approximate percentage of your income comes from your freelancing

Table No. (5.6) shows that freelancing contributes “less than 50%” for 48.7% of the respondents, “50%-75%” for 29.1% of the respondents and “more than 75%” for 22.1%. These results indicate that freelancers are unwilling to be 100% dependent on freelancing due to different reasons so they still face the income insecurity (Storey et al. 2005).

Table (5.6): Income comes from freelancing

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 50%	97	48.7
50% - 75%	58	29.1
More than 75%	44	22.1
Total	199	100.0

5.2.7 How many hours do you typically work in a week as a freelancer?

Table No. (5.7) shows that 41.2% of respondents work “31-less than 60 hours” a week. 34.7 % work “30 hours and less” a week and 24.1% work “60 hours and more” every

week. The results shows that freelancing needs more working hours than traditional 5-9 office work and income apparently is based on the number of working hours each week.

Table (5.7): Working hours every week

	Frequency	Percent
30 hours and less	69	34.7
31 – less than 60 hours	82	41.2
60 hours and more	48	24.1
Total	199	100.0

5.2.8 Why do you freelance?

Table No. (5.8) shows that reasons that stands behind the choice of freelancing. The first choice was to “Earn more than in a traditional job” and the last choice was to have “More flexibility”. In the opinion of the researcher, the ranking of choices shows that freelancers prefer freelancing as it offers more income and it helps them to develop their skills. Most of them appears to need or get less flexibility (Hackwith, 2011). This was agreed with a study conducted by (Sapsed, et al, 2015) which indicates that freelancers were active and generating revenues across a range of CDIT sectors.

Table (5.8): Field of work

	Percent	Rank
Augment my income	83.72	3
Do what I love	80.90	8
Better work / life balance	82.51	4
Develop new skills	84.22	2
Unable to find traditional work	81.61	7

More flexibility	80.90	9
Like being my own boss	82.21	5
Control my own schedule	81.61	6
Earn more than in a traditional job	86.43	1

5.3 Research Hypothesis

H1: There is a role of technology in job creation at a significant level 0.05.

Table (5.9) shows the following results:

The mean of item #5 “I use my computer or mobile phone to do my work anywhere” equals 4.29 (85.73%), Test-value = 25.45, and P-value = 0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this item is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to this item.

The mean of item #1 “I continuously follow the required technological development that help me accomplish the required tasks” equals 4.04 (80.80%), Test-value = 16.34, and P-value = 0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this item is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to this item.

The mean of the field “Technology and job creation” equals 4.18 (83.66%), Test-value = 45.06, and P-value= 0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this field is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to field of “Technology and job creation ”.

Table (5.9): Means and Test values for “Technology and job creation”

	Item	Mean	S.D	Proportional mean (%)	Test value	P-value (Sig.)	Rank
1.	I continuously follow the required technological developments that help me accomplish the required tasks.	4.04	0.90	80.80	16.34	0.000*	8
2.	My awareness of technology means use increases my opportunity to become a successful freelancer.	4.18	0.67	83.52	24.76	0.000*	5
3.	My freelancing work is dependent on the available communication and technology equipment.	4.12	0.72	82.41	21.91	0.000*	7
4.	The fast growing technology sector helps me search and find jobs.	4.24	0.74	84.72	23.62	0.000*	2
5.	I use my computer or mobile phone to do my work anywhere.	4.29	0.71	85.73	25.45	0.000*	1
6.	My awareness of online freelancing platforms increases my opportunity to get a job.	4.23	0.75	84.62	23.16	0.000*	3
7.	The higher the internet speed, the more tasks I can do in a more efficient and effective way.	4.15	0.75	82.91	21.42	0.000*	6
8.	Technology helps me in finding more online jobs other than the traditional jobs.	4.23	0.77	84.52	22.52	0.000*	4
	All items of the field	4.18	0.37	83.66	45.06	0.000*	

* The mean is significantly different from 3

For the hypothesis that received the higher (agree) percentage, it emphasizes that freelancers feels free to work everywhere using their computer or mobile. The availability of broadband access makes it easy for freelancing to do their work while commuting and so

they can avoid being stuck in an office for long working hours. Freelancing offers this flexible arrangement as employers doesn't force freelancers to be in a specific place while completing their work, they are free to move while they are accomplishing the required tasks (Arensmeyer, J, 2015). On the other hand, due to continuous cuts of electricity in Gaza, this option gives freelancers to work in any place with available electricity power and broadband connection. One final point to assure is that mobile and computer are playing a noticeable role in today's freelancing work as they provide the freelancer with every tool and application he might need to complete his work. It also provides him with the ability to connect with employers from outside Gaza.

Generally, this hypothesis agrees with a study done by (Beschoner, et al, 2015) which assured that availability of basic Internet infrastructure that is improving in terms of speed, quality, and cost owing to new and ongoing connectivity initiatives.

H2: There is a role of skills in job creation at a significant level 0.05.

Table (5.10) shows the following results:

The mean of item #4 "I think that having high level skills encourages employers to hire me" equals 4.32 (86.33%), Test-value = 25.26 and P-value = 0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this item is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to this item.

The mean of item #1 "Building skills enhances my capacities, creativity and getting jobs" equals 4.09 (81.81%), Test-value = 17.09, and P-value = 0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this item is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to this item.

The mean of the field "Skills and job creation" equals 4.20 (84.08%), Test-value = 41.63, and P-value= 0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this field is significantly greater than the hypothesized

value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to field of “Skills and job creation ”.

Table (5.10): Means and Test values for “Skills and job creation”

	Item	Mean	S.D	Proportional mean (%)	Test value	P-value (Sig.)	Rank
1.	Building skills enhances my capacities, creativity and getting jobs.	4.09	0.90	81.81	17.09	0.000*	7
2.	Training and skills help me to develop my full capacities and seize employment opportunities.	4.21	0.77	84.12	21.99	0.000*	4
3.	Skills contribute to my future innovation and development.	4.25	0.71	84.92	24.87	0.000*	3
4.	I think that having high level skills encourages employers to hire me.	4.32	0.74	86.33	25.26	0.000*	1
5.	The more good skills I have, the higher my wage becomes.	4.26	0.68	85.23	26.33	0.000*	2
6.	Skills’ building helps me in expanding my labor market opportunities.	4.17	0.74	83.32	22.11	0.000*	5
7.	I face uncertainty in moving from education into decent work due to lack of skills.	4.14	0.85	82.81	19.00	0.000*	6
	All items of the field	4.20	0.41	84.08	41.63	0.000*	

* The mean is significantly different from 3

It is clear the respondents strongly agree that freelancers need high level skills to be able get a job online. Having a high level skill brings more opportunities as it encourages the employers to hire these freelancers and is also a reason to increase the income of the freelancers. Respondents also found it difficult to move from education to decent work due to lack of skills, this difficulty costs them more efforts to enhance and build their own skills to be able compete in the crowded online job market.

This agreement among the respondents that freelancing needs high level skills agrees with the study done by (Kitching and Smallbone, 2008) which indicated that freelancers should have skills beyond the traditional job boundaries.

H3: There is a role of contacts in job creation at a significant level 0.05.

Table (5.11) shows the following results:

The mean of item #2 “The more contacts I have, the more freelancing jobs I get” equals 4.16 (83.12%), Test-value = 20.93, and P-value = 0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this item is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to this item.

The mean of item #1 “I use my contacts network to search for freelancing jobs” equals 3.96 (79.20%), Test-value = 13.48, and P-value = 0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this item is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to this item.

The mean of the field “Contacts and job creation” equals 4.09 (81.76%), Test-value = 34.74, and P-value= 0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this field is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to field of “Contacts and job creation ”.

Table (5.11): Means and Test values for “Contacts and job creation”

	Item	Mean	S.D	Proportional mean (%)	Test value	P-value (Sig.)	Rank
1.	I use my contacts network to search for freelancing jobs.	3.96	1.00	79.20	13.48	0.000*	8
2.	The more contacts I have, the more freelancing jobs I get.	4.16	0.78	83.12	20.93	0.000*	1
3.	I get my work as a freelancer by Word of mouth / client referrals	4.01	0.81	80.10	17.57	0.000*	7
4.	I get my work as a freelancer by referrals from other freelancers.	4.12	0.73	82.41	21.70	0.000*	4
5.	I get my work as a freelancer by direct outreach to current and/or prospective customers/clients	4.10	0.86	82.01	17.96	0.000*	5
6.	I get my work as a freelancer by a former employer	4.14	0.78	82.71	20.64	0.000*	2
7.	I get my work as a freelancer online freelancing marketplaces (Elance, oDesk, Freelancer, etc.)	4.13	0.82	82.51	19.31	0.000*	3
8.	I get my work as a freelancer by social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, blogs)	4.10	0.86	82.01	18.08	0.000*	5
	All items of the field	4.09	0.44	81.76	34.74	0.000*	

* The mean is significantly different from 3

It is noticed that respondents strongly agree about the importance of contacts in getting a freelancing job as they consider the number of contacts is a good factor that as much as it increased the more jobs they will get. These contacts might be professional contacts, former employers or other freelancers. The respondents also choose the online freelancing marketplaces in the third place in importance of getting jobs online, this highlights the importance of these marketplaces in creating more opportunities for freelancers and connecting them to possible employers.

Generally, this conclusion agrees with the study done by (Novits, 2015) which highlighted the most platforms that freelancers use and their importance in generating job opportunities.

H4: There is a role of awareness of job availability in job creation at a significant level 0.05.

Table (5.12) shows the following results:

The mean of item #7 “I follow job boards to find jobs that suit my skills and experiences” equals 4.29 (85.73%), Test-value = 23.25, and P-value = 0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this item is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to this item.

The mean of item #1 “Being able to search for a job helps me get one” equals 4.04 (80.80%), Test-value = 15.15, and P-value = 0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this item is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to this item.

The mean of the field “Awareness of job availability and job creation” equals 4.17 (83.43%), Test-value = 37.47, and P-value=0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this field is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to field of “Awareness of job availability and job creation ”.

Table (5.12): Means and Test values for “Awareness of job availability and job creation”

	Item	Mean	S.D	Proportional mean (%)	Test value	P-value (Sig.)	Rank
1.	Being able to search for a job helps me get one.	4.04	0.97	80.80	15.15	0.000*	7
2.	Online freelancing marketplace provides me with an easy way to search for jobs.	4.21	0.79	84.12	21.45	0.000*	2
3.	When I see or hear about a suitable job, I apply for it and sometimes get it.	4.16	0.82	83.12	19.96	0.000*	5
4.	I lost many suitable jobs or tasks because I didn't hear about.	4.13	0.73	82.51	21.72	0.000*	6
5.	Technology helps me know more about available jobs and apply for.	4.19	0.81	83.82	20.83	0.000*	4
6.	I develop my skills to match the expected future job trends.	4.20	0.80	83.92	21.20	0.000*	3
7.	I follow job boards to find jobs that suit my skills and experiences.	4.29	0.78	85.73	23.25	0.000*	1
	All items of the field	4.17	0.44	83.43	37.47	0.000*	

* The mean is significantly different from 3

It is noticeable that most of the respondents search for jobs that suits their skills and experiences using online job boards and online marketplaces. It's clear that the respondents have good awareness of the available tools to search for jobs and the importance of technology which facilitates their search process. The respondents also are able to apply for jobs that suits them and often get jobs from online resources. Respondents also follow a

developing mechanism to learn more and develop their skills which increases their opportunities in getting jobs online.

Generally, the awareness of job availability increases the freelancers' chances in applying and getting jobs and this has become easier using the technology and online marketplaces. This agrees with a study done by (Jian, 2013) which investigates the problem in the markets where companies are difficult to look for talents in their local area and where students have barriers to get opportunities to do some work and gain experience.

H5: There is a role of skill mismatch and job creation in job creation at a significant level 0.05.

Table (5.13) shows the following results:

The mean of item #6 "I need to develop my skills to be able compete for a freelancing job" equals 4.16 (83.23%), Test-value = 22.41, and P-value = 0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this item is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to this item.

The mean of item #1 "I think that freelancing is an easy job that everyone can do" equals 3.50 (70.05%), Test-value = 5.54, and P-value = 0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this item is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to this item.

The mean of the field "Skills mismatch and job creation" equals 4.02 (80.34%), Test-value = 33.65, and P-value=0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The sign of the test is positive, so the mean of this field is significantly greater than the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to field of "Skill mismatch and job creation".

Table (5.13): Means and Test values for “Skills mismatch and job creation”

	Item	Mean	S.D	Proportional mean (%)	Test value	P-value (Sig.)	Rank
1.	I think that freelancing is an easy job that everyone can do.	3.50	1.28	70.05	5.54	0.000*	8
2.	I need special skills to obtain a freelancing job.	4.12	0.79	82.31	19.86	0.000*	5
3.	Availability of skills affects my performance as a freelancer.	4.16	0.73	83.12	22.27	0.000*	2
4.	Soft skills like time management and communication are necessary skills for freelancers.	4.14	0.75	82.81	21.39	0.000*	4
5.	I think that employers prefer freelancers with low level skills.	3.85	1.00	77.09	12.09	0.000*	7
6.	I need to develop my skills to be able compete for a freelancing job.	4.16	0.73	83.23	22.41	0.000*	1
7.	Focusing in one skill is better than having different skills.	4.06	0.80	81.11	18.63	0.000*	6
8.	The more related skills I have, the more freelancing jobs I get.	4.15	0.80	83.02	20.39	0.000*	3
	All items of the field	4.02	0.43	80.34	33.65	0.000*	

* The mean is significantly different from 3

It is noticed that freelancers need to continuously develop their skills and gain more skills related to the field of work they want to work in. The lack of skills affect the freelancers’

performance and pushes the employers away from hiring them. This agrees with a study done by (Siou Chew Kuek, et al, 2015) which stated that online workers reported that OO allows them to develop skills and progress professionally. On the other hand, the respondents assured that freelancing is not an easy job that anyone can do, this confirms that freelancing needs special skills and characteristics of freelancer to be done. Finally, the respondents showed less agreement that employers prefer freelancers with low level skills and this confirms the need of special high level skills to increase opportunities that a freelancer gets.

In General “All items”:

Table (5.14) shows the mean of all items equals 4.13 (82.59%), Test-value = 49.63 and P-value =0.000 which is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$. The mean of all items is significantly different from the hypothesized value 3. The researcher can conclude that the respondents agreed to all items of questionnaire.

Table (5.14): Means and Test values for all items of questionnaire

Item	Mean	S.D	Proportional mean (%)	Test value	P-value (Sig.)	Rank
Technology and job creation	4.18	0.37	83.66	45.06	0.000*	2
Skills and job creation	4.20	0.41	84.08	41.63	0.000*	1
Contacts and job creation	4.09	0.44	81.76	34.74	0.000*	4
Awareness of job availability and job creation	4.17	0.44	83.43	37.47	0.000*	3
Skills mismatch and job creation	4.02	0.43	80.34	33.65	0.000*	5
All Items of questionnaire	4.13	0.32	82.59	49.63	0.000*	

*The mean is significantly different from 3

The results are expected based on the outcomes of answers and responses received. The respondents believe that skills, technology, awareness of job availability, contacts, and skill mismatch are necessary parts of freelancing that have a role in job creation in Gaza Strip.

H6: There are statistical differences at a significant level 0.05 among the responses' mean of respondents regarding the role of freelancing in job creation due to (gender, age, educational level, number of years in freelancing, income from freelancing and type of work in freelancing).

This hypothesis can be divided into the following sub-hypotheses:

- **There are statistical differences at a significant level 0.05 among the responses' mean of respondents regarding the role of freelancing in job creation due to gender.**

Table (5.15) shows that the p-value (Sig.) is greater than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ for each field, then there is insignificant difference among the respondents toward each field due to gender. The researcher can conclude that the personal characteristics' gender has no effect on each field.

Table (5.15): Independent Samples T-test of the fields and their p-values for gender

No.	Field	Means		Test Value	Sig.
		Male	Female		
1.	Technology and job creation	4.18	4.18	0.060	0.952
2.	Skills and job creation	4.19	4.23	-0.584	0.560
3.	Contacts and job creation	4.09	4.08	0.251	0.802
4.	Awareness of job availability and job creation	4.15	4.20	-0.718	0.474
5.	Skills mismatch and job creation	4.01	4.03	-0.251	0.802
	All items of the questionnaire	4.12	4.14	-0.304	0.762

- **There are statistical differences at a significant level 0.05 among the responses' mean of respondents regarding the role of freelancing in job creation due to age.**

Table (5.16) shows that the p-value (Sig.) is greater than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ for each field, then there is insignificant difference among the respondents toward each field due to age. The researcher can conclude that the personal characteristics' age has no effect on each field.

Table (5.16): ANOVA test of the fields and their p-values for age

No.	Field	Means			Test Value	Sig.
		Less than 25 years	25- Less than 30 years	30 years and more		
1.	Technology and job creation	4.17	4.19	4.18	0.036	0.965
2.	Skills and job creation	4.17	4.22	4.19	0.326	0.722
3.	Contacts and job creation	4.09	4.09	4.07	0.062	0.940
4.	Awareness of job availability and job creation	4.19	4.16	4.19	0.142	0.868
5.	Skills mismatch and job creation	4.10	4.00	3.96	1.437	0.240
	All items of the questionnaire	4.14	4.13	4.11	0.101	0.904

* The mean difference is significant a 0.05 level

- **There are statistical differences at a significant level 0.05 among the responses' mean of respondents regarding the role of freelancing in job creation due to educational level.**

Table (5.17) shows that the p-value (Sig.) is greater than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ for the fields ""Skills and job creation" and "Skill mismatch and job creation"", then there is insignificant difference among the respondents toward these field due to educational level. The researcher can conclude that the personal characteristics' educational level has no effect on these fields.

For the other fields, the p-value (Sig.) is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$, then there is significant difference among the respondents toward these fields due to educational level. The researcher can conclude that the personal characteristics' educational level has an effect on the other fields.

For the other fields, the mean for the category " Master or above " respondents have the highest among the other educational level category, then the researcher conclude that the category " Master or above " respondents is agreed much more than the other educational level category.

Table (5.17): ANOVA test of the fields and their p-values for educational level

No.	Field	Means			Test Value	Sig.
		diploma degree or less	Bachelor	Master or above		
1.	Technology and job creation	4.21	4.13	4.33	3.367	0.036*
2.	Skills and job creation	4.22	4.16	4.36	2.541	0.081
3.	Contacts and job creation	4.14	4.01	4.25	4.085	0.018*
4.	Awareness of job availability and job creation	4.24	4.09	4.32	4.261	0.015*
5.	Skills mismatch and job creation	4.10	3.96	4.04	2.541	0.081
	All items of the questionnaire	4.18	4.07	4.26	5.086	0.007*

* The mean difference is significant a 0.05 level

The results indicate that the respondents with Master or above have showed positive attitudes towards the fields of “Technology, Contacts and Awareness of job availability”. That can be attributed to the fact that higher educated freelancers with a higher knowledge of technology tools and a wide range network of contacts are fully aware of the importance

of these factors to become a successful freelancer. In this regard, the results agreed partially with (Beschoner, et al, 2015; Novits, 2015; Jian, 2013).

- **There are statistical differences at a significant level 0.05 among the responses' mean of respondents regarding the role of freelancing in job creation due to number of years in freelancing.**

Table (5.18) shows that the p-value (Sig.) is greater than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ for each field, then there is in significant difference among the respondents toward each field due to number of years in freelancing. The researcher can conclude that the personal characteristics' number of years in freelancing has no effect on each field.

Table (5.18): ANOVA test of the fields and their p-values for number of years in freelancing

No.	Field	Means			Test Value	Sig.
		Less than 3 years	3- 5 years	More than 5 years		
1.	Technology and job creation	4.12	4.19	4.27	1.813	0.166
2.	Skills and job creation	4.12	4.22	4.29	2.096	0.126
3.	Contacts and job creation	4.08	4.07	4.14	0.334	0.716
4.	Awareness of job availability and job creation	4.19	4.15	4.20	0.270	0.764
5.	Skills mismatch and job creation	4.02	4.00	4.05	0.152	0.859
	All items of the questionnaire	4.10	4.13	4.19	0.761	0.469

- **There are statistical differences at a significant level 0.05 among the responses' mean of respondents regarding the role of freelancing in job creation due to income from freelancing.**

Table (5.19) shows that the p-value (Sig.) is greater than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ for the fields “Technology and job creation”, “Skills and job creation” and “Skill mismatch and job creation”, then there is insignificant difference among the respondents toward these field due to income from freelancing. The researcher can conclude that the personal characteristics’ income from freelancing has no effect on these fields.

For the other fields, the p-value (Sig.) is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$, then there is significant difference among the respondents toward these fields due to income from freelancing. The researcher can conclude that the personal characteristics’ income from freelancing has an effect on the other fields.

For the other fields, The mean for the category " Less than 50%" respondents have the highest among the other income from freelancing category, then the researcher conclude that the category " Less than 50%" respondents is agreed much more than the other income from freelancing category.

Table (5.19): ANOVA test of the fields and their p-values for income from freelancing

No.	Field	Means			Test Value	Sig.
		Less than 50%	50% - 75%	More than 75%		
1.	Technology and job creation	4.21	4.16	4.17	0.389	0.678
2.	Skills and job creation	4.26	4.13	4.18	1.977	0.141
3.	Contacts and job creation	4.19	4.05	3.90	7.322	0.001*
4.	Awareness of job availability and job creation	4.26	4.09	4.08	4.257	0.015*
5.	Skills mismatch and job creation	4.07	3.96	3.98	1.478	0.231
	All items of the questionnaire	4.20	4.07	4.06	4.104	0.018*

* The mean difference is significant a 0.05 level

The results indicate that the respondents who earn less than 50% of their monthly income showed positive attitudes towards the fields of “Contacts, Awareness of job availability and Skills mismatch”. That can be attributed to the fact a wide range network of contacts and

awareness of job availability are important factors in getting a job and also highlights the importance of freelancing platforms in increasing the awareness of job availability and competing for available jobs. On the other hand, it shows the importance of developing the required skills for market demands. In this regard, the results agreed partially with (Novits, 2015; Siou Chew Kuek, et al, 2015; Jian, 2013).

- **There are statistical differences at a significant level 0.05 among the responses' mean of respondents regarding the role of freelancing in job creation due to typically work in freelancing.**

Table (5.20) shows that the p-value (Sig.) is smaller than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ for the field “Contacts and job creation”, then there is significant difference among the respondents toward this field due to typically work in freelancing. The researcher can conclude that the personal characteristics’ typically work in freelancing has an effect on this field.

For field “Contacts and job creation”, the mean for the category “60 hours and more” respondents have the highest among the other typically work in freelancing category, then the researcher conclude that the category “60 hours and more “respondents is agreed much more than the other typically work in freelancing category.

For the other fields, the p-value (Sig.) is greater than the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$, then there is insignificant difference among the respondents toward these fields due to typically work in freelancing. The researcher can conclude that the personal characteristics’ typically work in freelancing has no effect on the other fields.

Table (5.20): ANOVA test of the fields and their p-values for typically work in freelancing

No.	Field	Means			Test Value	Sig.
		30 hours and less	31 – less than 60 hours	60 hours and more		
1.	Technology and job creation	4.23	4.11	4.24	2.882	0.058
2.	Skills and job creation	4.24	4.16	4.23	0.796	0.453
3.	Contacts and job creation	4.15	3.96	4.21	6.240	0.002*
4.	Awareness of job availability and job creation	4.21	4.09	4.26	2.641	0.074
5.	Skills mismatch and job creation	4.00	3.97	4.12	1.928	0.148
	All items of the questionnaire	4.16	4.06	4.21	4.179	0.017*

* The mean difference is significant a 0.05 level

The results indicate that the respondents who work 60 hours and more on monthly basis showed positive attitudes towards the field of “Contacts”. That can be attributed to the fact a wide range network of contacts help more in availing additional number of jobs or big projects that need extra work hours. In this regard, the results agreed with (Novits, 2015).

Chapter Six

Conclusions &

Recommendations

Chapter Six

Conclusions & Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the main findings and will be separated into three parts: The study conclusions which summarizes the main conclusions of the study based on findings, the study recommendations highlight the main steps to be taken to advance the freelancing work and finally, future research ideas that will help in better understanding the freelancing and how to enhance it.

6.2 Conclusions

In this section, the findings of the study are presented in light of literature review, previous studies and some interviews and discussions held with expert freelancers working online.

The results found the study variables: technology, skills, contacts, awareness of job availability and skills mismatch are important factors for any person who works or intended to work as freelancer. These variables contribute to the success of freelancers in getting jobs and performing these jobs.

The most notable conclusions can be summarized as follow:

- The study results show that the freelancing is considered new in Gaza strip where most of freelancers have been working for 3-5 years as freelancers. These freelancers get nearly half of their income from their work as freelancers and work between 31- less than 60 hours every week. Freelancers in Gaza choose to freelance for different reasons including augmenting their income and developing new skills.
- The respondents agreed that technology plays an important part and affects in a positive way in job creation in Gaza strip. The increased awareness of technology use, the more opportunities can be obtained by the freelancer. Due to the nature of the

freelancers work as most of them work in IT-related jobs, this assures on the important role technology is playing.

- The respondents positively agreed that skills have a positive impact on job creation and the ability to freelance. The variety of high level skills lead to be hired by employers and getting higher wages. Skills building is very important for to-be-freelancers as freelancing is not an easy job that anyone can do.
- The study concludes that contacts are critical part in job creation. The results shows that as the contacts increase, then the opportunities that a freelancer gets are increased also. The results also highlighted the importance of online freelancing marketplaces in getting jobs for freelancers as most of the freelancers agrees about its important role in searching, finding and getting jobs.
- The study results indicates that respondents agree that awareness of job availability has an impact on job creation. The respondents search and apply for jobs that match their skills and experiences as soon they know about a job listing. Job boards plays an important role for these freelancers to find and apply for jobs whereas the online freelancing marketplace and platforms offer other good opportunities for these freelancers in getting a work opportunity.
- The study shows an agreement of the respondents that building and developing skills is very important to job creation and become successful freelancers. Through their answers, the respondents show agreement that the lack of skills affects their performance in freelancing jobs. They also positively responded that freelancing is not an easy job that everyone can do where it needs skills and experience to ensure success.

6.3 Recommendations

In light of the results and conclusions of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

- Creating free learning resources for those involved in freelancing and those who want to become freelancers. These resources to help in increasing the awareness of freelancing, skills and tools to become successful freelancers.
- Connecting the freelancing with the high education institutes so that students are being prepared for the freelancing work and marketplaces when they graduate from their colleges.
- Creating promotional campaigns in Palestine that would promote the freelancing and shows its feasibility in creating more jobs.
- Providing a payment method for freelancers so that they can get the income they earn without delays or higher exchange rates.
- The government to take its part be facilitating the work of freelancers through providing an open place for freelancers freely or with minimum rent rates to overcome the problems of electricity cuts and low internet connections.
- Establishing partnerships with expected employment organizations to outsource the Palestinian freelancers and helping these freelancer to develop their skills to earn acceptable level of income.

6.4 Proposed mechanisms of application

In light of the recommendations of the study, the researcher proposes the following intervention mechanisms to support freelancing in Gaza Strip. Each mechanism can be dealt with as a single project with different activities, target group and stakeholders:

Mechanism One: Creating free learning resources

Activities	<p>1- Developing educational portal that provides the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Step by step articles that provide guidance to freelancers.- Recorded videos on how to work as freelancers.- Providing free access to all those interested in freelancing.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highlighting the most demanded skills and providing online training for these skills. - Guidance on how to register in freelancing platforms and write a winning proposal.
Target group	University graduates, Job seekers, Academic professionals.
Stakeholders	Education institutions, Ministry of Labor, NGOs.

Mechanism Two: Connecting the freelancing with the high education institutes

Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Including the freelancing and online work topics in the educational institutions study plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparing unified materials to be included in study plans for all concerned institutions. - Updating the material annually and enhancing it with updated techniques and skills. - Providing training on freelancing by successful freelancers. 2- Training academics to best deliver the materials and creating meetings and trainings with expert freelancers.
Target group	Students, Academics
Stakeholders	Ministry of Higher Education, Universities, Academics

Mechanism Three: Creating promotional campaigns

Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Promoting for freelancing in universities, social media and other advertising tools. 2- Success stories talks and discussions to reflect the bright image of freelancing and its benefits. 3- Roadshows in universities to promote freelancing for students.
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	4- Participation in exhibitions or other activities related to job creation.
Target group	Students, graduates, freelancers, job seekers, job boards.
Stakeholders	Freelancers, Project team, universities.

Mechanism Four: Providing a payment method for freelancers

Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Contacting the most popular online payment platforms to make it easy for Gazans to deposit and withdraw their money. 2- Banks to provide payment options for freelancers. 3- Banks to facilitate the issuance of specific deposit cards for freelancers.
Target group	Freelancers, clients.
Stakeholders	Online payment platforms, Banks, Project managers, Ministry of Economic.

Mechanism Five: The government to take its part be facilitating the work of freelancers

Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Ministry of Education to support the preparation of materials that help students better understand freelancing. 2- Ministry of Education to ask universities to include the freelancing related materials in their study plans. 3- Ministry of Education to support the training of academics. 4- Ministry of Economic to facilitate the process of providing suitable payment methods with banks. 5- The government to adapt a freelancing project and consider freelancers in some of its tasks.
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	<p>6- The government to promote for freelancing and encourage students and graduates to develop their skills and start freelancing.</p> <p>7- Government to find agreements on possible partnerships that might support freelancers by availing online work to Palestinian freelancers.</p> <p>8- Providing a work place for freelancers to overcome the problems of electricity cuts and low internet connection.</p>
Target group	Students, Academics, Employers.
Stakeholders	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Economic, Government, Universities, Banks

6.5 Research Limitations

The researcher through this study was able to answer the research questions through proposing mechanisms of application to implement a successful freelancing programme in Gaza. The researcher also was able to highlight some of the most suitable job types of freelancing, however; this part still needs more research and analysis of skills available and match it with demanded skills in freelancing market. In terms of the research objectives, the researcher succeeded to achieve the objectives of the research but faced some difficulties due to the limited number of previous studies about freelancing in Palestine.

6.5 Future Researches

- Studying deeply the obstacles that face Palestinian freelancers and the ways to overcome these obstacles.
- Study that draws a model of freelancing best practices and how to become successful freelancers through in-depth research to learn more about graduates awareness and skills.
- Analyzing the successful freelancers' characteristics, techniques and recommendations to identify the key factors that lead to successful freelancing.

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Appendices

Appendix (A): Questionnaire in English

Islamic University – Gaza

Dean of Postgraduate Studies

Faculty of Commerce

Department of Business Administration



Topic: Questionnaire

Dear Mr. /Mrs.

Peace and blessings be upon you all,

The researcher is conducting a field study entitled (**The role of Freelancing in Job Creation in Gaza Strip**). The study aims to identify the level of contribution that freelancing might provide in creating new job opportunities in Gaza strip.

The study is a requirement for the fulfillment of the Master of Business Administration degree from the Islamic University of Gaza.

Kindly requesting you to cooperate and fill the questionnaire neutrally and accurately because your opinion is vital and very valuable to the researcher and the topic of his study. Your information will be used for research purposes only.

Thank you for your cooperation,

The researcher

Yousef Bashir Matar

Mobile: 0597920209

Email: (you.mat@gmail.com)

First: demographic information:							
Are you?	Female	Male					
How old are you?	_____						
Your education level:	Secondary school or less	diploma degree					
	Bachelor	Master or above					
Your field of work:	Web, mobile and Software Development	Design and Creative					
	Content Writing	Sales and Marketing					
	Admin Support	IT and Networking					
	Translation	Engineering & Architecture					
	Customer Service	Medical					
	Other, please specify:_____						
What's the number of years have you been freelancing?	_____ years						
Approximate percentage of your income comes from your freelancing:	_____ %						
How many hours do you typically work in a week as a freelancer?	_____ hours						
Why do you freelance?							
	1 = not relevant	5 = extremely important	1	2	3	4	5
1	Augment my income						
2	Do what I love						
3	Better work / life balance						
4	Develop new skills						
5	Unable to find traditional work						
6	More flexibility						
7	Like being my own boss						
8	Control my own schedule						
9	Earn more than in a traditional job						

Please choose a rating (1= don't agree and 5= strongly agree)

Second: Technology and job creation						
		1	2	3	4	5
1	I continuously follow the required technological development that help me accomplish the required tasks.					
2	My awareness of technology means use increases my opportunity to become a successful freelancer.					
3	My freelancing work is dependent on the available communication and technology equipment.					
4	The fast growing technology sector helps me search and find jobs.					
5	I use my computer or mobile phone to do my work anywhere.					
6	My awareness of online freelancing platforms increases my opportunity to get a job.					
7	The higher the internet speed, the more tasks I can do in a more efficient and effective way.					
8	Technology helps me in finding more online jobs other than the traditional jobs.					
Third: Skills and job creation						
1	I have the communication skills that enable me to get and do work online.					
2	I can work in a team structure and contribute to this team tasks.					
3	I am good at decision making and solving problems I face to ensure good application of my assigned tasks.					
4	I can manage my time and complete tasks as scheduled.					
5	I always have the technical knowledge related to the job I apply for.					
6	I am able to plan, organize and prioritize work.					
7	Training and skills help me to develop my full capacities and seize employment opportunities.					
Fourth: Contacts and job creation						
1	I use my contacts network to search for freelancing jobs.					
2	The more contacts I have, the more freelancing jobs I get.					

3	I get my work as a freelancer by Word of mouth / client referrals					
4	I get my work as a freelancer by referrals from other freelancers.					
5	I get my work as a freelancer by direct outreach to current and/or prospective customers/clients					
6	I get my work as a freelancer by a former employer					
7	I get my work as a freelancer online freelancing marketplaces (Elance, oDesk, Freelancer, etc.)					
8	I get my work as a freelancer by social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, blogs)					
Fifth: Awareness of job availability and job creation						
1	Being able to search for a job helps me get one.					
2	Online freelancing marketplace provides me with an easy way to search for jobs.					
3	When I see or hear about a suitable job, I apply for it and sometimes get it.					
4	I lost many suitable jobs or tasks because I didn't hear about.					
5	Technology helps me know more about available jobs and apply for.					
6	I search for skills to match the expected future job trends.					
7	I follow job boards to find jobs that suit my skills and experiences.					
Sixth: Skill mismatch and job creation						
1	I think that employers prefer freelancers with low level skills.					
2	My special skills help me to obtain a freelancing job.					
3	Availability of skills affects my performance as a freelancer.					
4	I need to pay much for developing required skills which I can't afford sometimes.					
5	I think that there is a lack in development tools and places related to my freelancing work					
6	I face uncertainty in moving from education into decent work due to lack of skills.					
7	Focusing in one skill is better than having different skills.					

Appendix (B): List of the Questionnaire Referees

Appendix (B): List of the Questionnaire Referees

	Name	Work Place
1.	Dr. Sami Abu Al Rous	The Islamic University of Gaza.
2.	Dr. Rushdi Wadi	The Islamic University of Gaza.
3.	Dr. Khaled Dehliz	The Islamic University of Gaza.
4.	Dr. Nafez Barakat	The Islamic University of Gaza.
5.	Dr. Sami Abu Naser	Al Azhar University-Gaza.
6.	Dr. Ahmad Mahmoud	Al Azhar University-Gaza.
7.	Dr. Wafiq Al Agha	Al Azhar University-Gaza.
8.	Dr. Bilal Al Bashiti	Al Azhar University-Gaza.
9.	Dr. Mohammad Al Madhoun	Politics & Management Academy