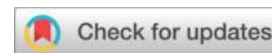


FREELANCE DIGITAL WORK AS A MECHANISM FOR THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN ALGERIA (A FIELD STUDY ON A SAMPLE OF WOMEN ENGAGED IN FREELANCE DIGITAL WORK)



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Abstract:

Our study aimed to explore the experiences of women engaged in freelance digital work, addressing the question of whether freelance digital work truly represents a mechanism for their economic and social empowerment. It also examined the factors contributing to their engagement in this type of work, as well as the main challenges they face. The importance of this topic stems from the research gap and the limited number of studies at the local level (Algeria).

To interpret and analyze the study, we adopted the descriptive method and used a questionnaire as a research instrument. The study sample consisted of a purposive sample of 30 women engaged in freelance digital work, who were surveyed through an online questionnaire. The study reached the following findings:

Freelance digital work constitutes a mechanism for economic and social empowerment. Most women indicated that they achieved financial independence and that their economic situation improved to some extent compared to their previous lives. This type of work also enhanced their social status within the family and the broader social environment.

Several factors influence women's engagement in freelance digital work, foremost among them the social factor, particularly work flexibility in terms of time and place (working from home). This is

followed by the desire to improve economic conditions and obtain personal income, especially among women who experienced unemployment.

Women face significant challenges and constraints, including social challenges such as psychological pressure and social isolation due to long working hours, as well as income instability. They also encounter technical challenges such as poor internet connectivity and limited digital skills.

Regarding their future perceptions of freelance digital work, the participants expressed a desire to continue in this field due to its temporal and spatial flexibility.

Keywords: Freelance digital work; Economic empowerment; Social empowerment; Women.

Introduction:

Over the past decade, the work environment has undergone significant transformations as a result of digital transformation and the growing use of technological media. This shift has contributed to the emergence of the platform economy, which has reshaped labor relations and economic activities, particularly by creating new job opportunities characterized by flexibility. Economic transactions are now conducted within a digital space where actors in the digital economy engage in buying, selling, skill exchange, and service provision through digital applications and websites such as YouTube, Facebook, Google Meet, and Zoom, among others.

This emerging digital professional dynamism, generated by digitalization, has brought about a qualitative shift in the structure, forms, and organizational dimensions of work. It has also contributed to the reengineering of functions and the creation of new professions that provide both material and symbolic gains to their practitioners.

As a result of this digital transformation in the work environment, new concepts have emerged, introduced by modern technology: online work, the platform economy, the gig economy, and freelance digital work. These developments have enabled job seekers and individuals aspiring to professional independence to create digital spaces that provide access to permanent or temporary jobs, which they can manage independently, as they require cognitive and technical skills.

Digitalization has thus generated new forms of work activities, enabling individuals to engage in digital freelance jobs such as providing services including transportation and delivery of goods and food. It has also expanded the fields of freelance digital work to include writing, programming, design, and other activities.

Despite the rapid growth of this type of work, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019, there are no official statistics accurately estimating its size. However, a World Bank study based on a global online survey covering 17 countries across six regions indicated that the number of online gig workers worldwide ranges between 154 million and 435 million (Chen, 2023), representing approximately 4.4% to 12.5% of the global workforce. These figures indicate that freelance digital work is a growing global phenomenon affecting both developed and developing countries, particularly due to its contribution to reducing unemployment.

Young workers constitute the majority in this field, especially those under the age of 30, who seek to earn income or acquire new skills and who possess the flexibility to combine their studies or formal employment with freelance digital work. Recently, women have increasingly entered the digital freelance economy. Freelance digital work represents an alternative and an opportunity for women who possess communication and technological skills. Females remain among the most marginalized groups in Arab labor markets, where their participation in the labor force remains significantly lower than that of males, with women's total income representing only 12.5% of men's income (International Labour Organization, 2024).

Freelance digital work is considered an important option and opportunity for many women around the world, particularly in Arab countries and especially in Algeria. It enhances their professional and social status and contributes to their economic and social empowerment, particularly as many women face challenges in balancing professional and family life.

Freelance digital work constitutes an important alternative to traditional employment. It is a flexible solution that enables women to achieve financial independence, self-confidence, and a change in societal perceptions. It also allows them to balance family life, as its advantages—such as flexibility in time and place—make it particularly attractive for women's participation on digital platforms, unlike traditional employment, which requires fixed working hours and daily physical commuting.

Our study aims to explore the experiences of women engaged in freelance digital work by identifying their sociodemographic characteristics, the factors influencing their entry into this field, the main challenges they face, and whether freelance digital work constitutes a mechanism for their economic and social empowerment.

1. Research Problem

Freelance digital work has experienced significant global growth, and women's participation in this field has become increasingly noticeable and worthy of study and investigation. However, Arab and local

studies on freelance digital work remain very limited compared to foreign research. Most available studies focus on women's general digital empowerment or their presence in educational and technical fields, while specialized studies analyzing women's experiences in freelance digital work or diagnosing the constraints and challenges they face on digital platforms are scarce.

This research gap has resulted in a limited understanding of women's participation in freelance digital work compared to foreign studies that have addressed this topic extensively. Hence, the importance of our study lies in attempting to bridge part of this gap by examining the local context and analyzing the participation and engagement of Algerian women in freelance digital work. This contributes to enriching academic knowledge and providing insights that may support policymakers and decision-makers in promoting and empowering women in the field of freelance digital work, helping them overcome challenges and integrate into economic development processes.

To what extent does freelance digital work constitute a mechanism for women's economic and social empowerment?

From this main question, the following sub-questions emerge:

- What factors contribute to women's engagement in freelance digital work?
- What is the nature of the freelance digital professions in which women are involved?
- What challenges and constraints do women face in freelance digital work?
- What are women's future perceptions of freelance digital work?

Research Hypotheses

- Freelance digital work constitutes a mechanism for women's economic and social empowerment.
- Economic and social factors influence women's engagement in freelance digital work.
- Women face multiple challenges in freelance digital work.

Significance of the Study:

The topic of freelance digital work is a contemporary and research-worthy subject that has emerged as a result of the digital transformation experienced by societies, particularly in Algeria. It encompasses an important sociological dimension—namely, women's experiences in freelance digital work, which many have adopted as a mechanism for economic and social empowerment aimed at transforming their stereotypical image in society.

3. Objectives of the Study

This study aims to:

- Identify the contribution of freelance digital work to women's economic and social empowerment.
- Examine the factors influencing women's engagement in freelance digital work.
- Analyze the nature of digital professions practiced by women on online platforms.
- Identify the main challenges faced by women engaged in freelance digital work.

4. Definition of Study Terms and Concepts

In this section, we address the key concepts related to the study and define them both conceptually and operationally to clarify their meanings and indicators.

Freelance Work:

Work managed by individuals who operate independently for their own account, commonly referred to as self-employed or independent workers (Wafi, 2023, p. 49).

Digital Work:

Any work that uses information and communication technologies (ICT). It is not limited to professions within the ICT sector, as there is growing demand for workers possessing digital skills outside this sector. Digital jobs are expanding across various industries, particularly freelance online work (Singh, February 2021, p. 05).

Freelance Digital Work:

Work conducted through online platforms where the worker is not formally employed by an institution. The platform acts as an intermediary between online gig workers and individuals or entities requiring specific tasks. These tasks may include paid services such as food delivery, transportation services via information technology, care services, photo editing, data entry, translation, design, software development, and other activities (Chen, 2023, p. 05).

Operational Definition of Freelance Digital Work Types:

Online freelance work includes various digital practices and activities performed by women, such as website and logo design, visual presentations, digital content creation, management of digital services (e.g., legal consulting, proofreading, data entry, marketing), software development, translation, and other related services.

Online Freelancing:

An activity conducted via the internet to complete tasks for companies or individuals, where payment is received according to an agreement between the worker and the client. Individuals can invest in various fields to access online freelance opportunities without physically commuting to a workplace. In this field, one acts as their own manager without direct administrative or operational authority over them (Al-Harazin, 2023, p. 10).

It may also be defined as project-based work with different clients worldwide, where the service provider typically specializes in a specific set of advanced skills within a particular domain, such as content writing, marketing, mobile application development, consulting, teaching, and similar activities (Al-Harazin, 2023, p. 13).

Technical Challenges:

Difficulties related to technical means, such as weak internet connectivity, frequent electricity outages, and lack of access to computers or smartphones.

Legal Challenges:

The absence of regulations, legal protection, or formal legal frameworks governing freelance digital workers.

Fields of Freelance Digital Work:

Design and creativity (e.g., web page design, advertising, production), programming and website development, content writing (advertising, educational content), e-commerce (buying, selling, delivery services), linguistic services and translation, writing and proofreading texts and articles, and remote training or distance education.

Operational Definition of Freelance Digital Work:

Women's practice of online freelancing by transforming their knowledge and technical skills in any field into virtual services offered through online freelance platforms.

Digital Economy:

A new form of economy that emerged with digital transformation, characterized by the commodification of information and services in textual, visual, or audio formats. Almost everything has become available for sale in virtual or digital free markets.

Empowerment:

A process that enables women to make strategic decisions that grant them power and control over their lives (Al-Muhsin, 2023, p. 17).

Economic Empowerment:

Refers to women's ability to access and control resources and to make informed choices and decisions that allow them to bring change at the personal, family, societal, and national levels—whether working in the public sector, private sector, or self-employed in the informal sector (Report, 2015, p. 89).

Operationally, economic empowerment refers to women working online possessing resources and the ability to utilize and manage them to achieve financial and personal independence.

Social Empowerment:

Refers to women's strength in their social roles within the family and society through participation in training programs that develop skills, knowledge, and capacities related to family and community contexts, enabling them to make decisions and engage in developmental and voluntary initiatives, thereby improving their social status (Qa'id, 2021, p. 31).

Operationally, social empowerment refers to women's social mobility and attainment of social status and recognition within both their internal (home) and external environments.

Previous Studies

In this section, we present a number of studies that addressed freelance digital work, highlighting the similarities, differences, and points of benefit between our study and related research.

5-1. Study by Rawoof, Saeed, & Karachi (2021)

The Role of Online Freelancing: Increasing Women Empowerment in Pakistan

This study aimed to analyze the role of online freelancing in enhancing women's economic empowerment while examining the impact of economic transformation in Pakistan. It also focused on the challenges women face in the labor market. The researchers adopted a field survey and an online questionnaire. The findings indicated that online freelancing provides youth—and women in particular—with opportunities that positively influence women's empowerment. The study also identified several constraints, including lack of knowledge about remote work methods and fear of failure.

5-2. Study by Al-Tayeb (2022)

Digitalization and the Economic Empowerment of Arab Women: Challenges and Stakes

This study sought to highlight the opportunities and constraints facing women's economic empowerment by examining how digitalization could help lift women out of vulnerability and poverty. The researcher posed the question: To what extent can digitalization serve as a facilitating factor for the greater

integration of poor and marginalized women into productive work? What are the main challenges and stakes associated with this process?

Using a descriptive-analytical method based on statistical data and real-life evidence, the study concluded that digitalization has primarily benefited privileged women, increasing their empowerment. In contrast, its role in empowering marginalized and disadvantaged women in the Arab region remains limited. Many women are still excluded from digitalization and its potential benefits due to structural conditions such as limited internet access, poor connectivity, high costs of services and smart devices, and income disparities.

5-3. Study by Al-Muhsin (2023)

Opportunities for Women's Social and Economic Empowerment in the Digital Labor Market

This study aimed to examine the role of the digital economy in empowering women and to identify the main fields that have created empowering opportunities for them. It also explored the social, cultural, and economic impacts of different forms of empowerment.

To achieve this, the researcher conducted 12 in-depth interviews with women engaged in the digital labor market across various sectors, including clothing sales, handicrafts, cooking, cosmetics, and education. The findings revealed that the digital economy contributed to women's social, cultural, and economic empowerment and fostered social mobility among a number of participants.

5-4. Study by Rahul (2025)

Invisible Labor in the Digital Age: Women and the Gig Economy

This study investigated women's roles in the gig economy to understand their participation, obstacles, and opportunities. It relied on data drawn from academic research and reports. The findings indicated that women's participation in gig work remains relatively low. The study also identified key barriers, including the precarious and informal nature of gig work, safety and privacy concerns, and difficulties in balancing work and family life.

5-5. Study by Laila (2025)

The Daily Digital: (Re)imagining Technology in Home-Based Women's Gig Work in Egypt

This study aimed to explore the daily digital context of Egyptian women working in the gig economy and how they mobilize their social knowledge and relationships to transform technology into a tool for overcoming structural, material, and social barriers.

Conducted between 2022 and 2023, the study involved 25 home-based online food vendors. The findings showed that the use of technology helped these women overcome material and social challenges and enabled them to achieve financial and personal independence.

5-6. Study by Lilia (2025)

The Digital Presence of Craftswomen in Virtual Spaces (Case Study: Bordj Bou Arreridj, Algeria)

This study aimed to examine the reality of the digital presence of craftswomen in virtual spaces by exploring where, how, and why they exist in these spaces. The research adopted a case study method involving seven craftswomen registered with the Chamber of Traditional Crafts and Handicrafts in Bordj Bou Arreridj (Algeria), selected purposively. Data collection tools included observation and semi-structured interviews.

The findings revealed that craftswomen established a presence on various digital platforms, including search platforms, communication platforms, social media platforms, content-sharing platforms, payment platforms, and retail sales platforms. Their digital presence manifested through text posts, text accompanied by images, logo-icon combinations, videos, live broadcasts, sharing features, hashtag use, reels, and stories. Their motivations for digital presence included content marketing, social self-fulfillment, staying updated with social trends, skill development, saving time and effort, and online browsing and shopping.

Fields of the Study

1. Geographical Scope:

The study was conducted in Algeria and covered several provinces across the country. The field of study is the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, located in North Africa. It is the largest country on the Mediterranean Sea and the largest by area in Africa (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020). Algeria comprises 58 provinces (wilayas) distributed over an area of 2,381,741 km².

2. Human Scope:

The study included all women engaged in freelance digital work through digital platforms in Algeria.

3. Temporal Scope:

The study was conducted from January 1, 2025, until the end of July 2025. This period was divided into two phases:

- **First Phase:**

During this phase, we collected theoretical material related to the topic from previous studies, books, and relevant documents. We developed the research problem and formulated the hypotheses. We also conducted preliminary field exploration through initial interviews that helped us design the questionnaire. Due to the difficulty of identifying a precise sample—given the absence of statistical databases on women engaged in freelance digital work—we designed an online questionnaire and distributed it to the participants.

- **Second Phase:**

We defined the distribution field of the online questionnaire within virtual groups of women engaged in marketing and online training pages on Facebook. Approximately 30 online questionnaires were collected during the period from June to mid-July 2025. The data were then tabulated, analyzed, interpreted, and the findings were presented and discussed.

7. Methodology and Research Tools

Every researcher, in order to analyze and interpret the data related to their hypotheses, relies on methodological steps that allow the transition from abstract conceptualization to concrete reality. To explore the experiences of women engaged in freelance digital work, we adopted the following:

1. Method:

To investigate the studied phenomenon and achieve interpretation and analysis, we relied on the descriptive method, which is suitable for this study. It is defined as a systematic scientific method of analysis and interpretation aimed at achieving specific objectives related to a social situation or research problem. It involves analyzing the issue, defining the scope of the survey, examining relevant documents, interpreting results, and ultimately reaching conclusions that can be used for local or national purposes (Al-Dhunibat, 2007, p. 139).

The descriptive method was used to characterize the phenomenon of freelance digital work, identify the characteristics of women engaged in this type of work, and analyze and interpret quantitative data.

2. Research Instrument:

We used the questionnaire technique, defined as a data collection tool constructed to subject individuals to a set of structured questions (Angers, 2004, p. 243). An electronic form was prepared containing various closed-ended questions with alternatives, organized into several sections:

- Personal data
- Factors influencing engagement in freelance digital work
- Nature of freelance digital work
- Economic and digital empowerment
- Challenges and women's future perceptions of freelance digital work

A link to the online questionnaire was created and posted in a group on Facebook belonging to an academy that trains women working in the digital field. A total of 30 respondents completed the questionnaire over approximately two months. The responses were then tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted.

Study Sample

The selection of the sample is closely related to the nature of the research topic. Since freelance digital work lacks official statistics or databases from which a probabilistic sample could be drawn, the topic "*Freelance Digital Work as a Mechanism for Women's Economic and Social Empowerment in Algeria*" falls under non-probability sampling.

We selected a purposive sample, defined as drawing a sample from the research population by intentionally selecting ideal elements that represent the phenomenon under study (Angers, 2004, p. 311).

Our objective was to examine specific patterns and characteristics present among women engaged in freelance digital work through digital platforms. The study sample consisted of 30 respondents.

8. Field Study

1. Sociodemographic Characteristics of Women Engaged in Freelance Digital Work

In this section, we seek to identify the social and cultural characteristics of women engaged in freelance digital work.

Table (01): Age Groups of Women Engaged in Freelance Digital Work

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
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Less than 20 years	05	16.66%
21–30 years	20	66.66%
More than 31 years	05	16.66%
Total	30	100%

The analysis of age characteristics indicates that young women represent the largest proportion of those engaged in freelance digital work. The 21–30 age group accounts for 66.66%, followed by equal proportions (16.66%) for those under 20 and those over 31 years old.

This can be explained by the fact that platform-based digital work is particularly attractive to younger age groups due to its flexibility and their greater proficiency in using digital media. The lower percentage among women over 31 years old may be attributed to the digital divide.

Table (02): Educational Level of Women Engaged in Freelance Digital Work

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Primary	—	—
Middle School	05	16.66%
Secondary	10	33.33%
University	15	50%
Total	30	100%

The analysis of educational level shows that the majority of participants hold a university degree (50%), followed by those with secondary education (33.33%), while 16.66% have a middle school level.

This indicates that digital work requires a certain level of cultural capital, reflected in educational attainment, university qualifications, digital knowledge and skills, and professional language competencies required in this type of work.

Table (03): Marital Status of Women Engaged in Freelance Digital Work

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	20	66.66%
Married	10	33.33%
Total	30	100%

The data show that the majority of women engaged in freelance digital work are single (66.66%), followed by married women (33.33%).

This suggests that digital work is more attractive to young single women, likely due to its flexibility and the absence of family responsibilities such as child-rearing and caregiving, which are more common among married women. This type of work requires time commitment and technical skills.

Table (04): Place of Residence of Women Engaged in Freelance Digital Work

Place of Residence	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Urban	25	83.33%
Rural	05	16.66%
Total	30	100%

The table shows that the majority of respondents reside in urban areas (83.33%), while only 16.66% live in rural areas.

This reflects the importance of the geographical environment—particularly urban residence—in facilitating engagement in freelance digital work. Urban areas offer better infrastructure, including stronger internet connectivity, access to training centers, and availability of technological equipment. Cultural openness and broader social networks in cities also encourage women’s participation in digital work, whereas women living in rural areas may face technical and social barriers limiting their engagement in this field.

Table (05): Professional Status of Women Outside Freelance Digital Work

Professional Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Unemployed	10	33.33%
University Student	15	50%
Employee	05	16.66%
Total	30	100%

The table shows that half of the respondents engaged in freelance digital work are university students (50%). This reflects that digital work represents a source of income for them, either as a primary income after graduation or as supplementary income while still studying. This type of work fosters financial independence and self-reliance. It also serves as an opportunity to gain experience in digital skills and expand their social networks.

For unemployed women, freelance digital work represents an alternative and an entrepreneurial opportunity. Meanwhile, 16.66% of respondents are salaried employees who engage in digital work to earn additional income and improve their economic conditions.

2. Characteristics of Freelance Digital Work

Table (06): Duration of Work on Digital Platforms

Duration of Work	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than one year	05	16.66%
One to three years	15	50%
More than three years	10	33.33%
Total	30	100%

The results indicate that half of the respondents (50%) have relatively recent experience in digital work, ranging from one to three years. Meanwhile, 33.33% have more than three years of experience, suggesting greater expertise and professionalism in dealing with digital tools and stronger digital competencies.

The 16.66% who recently entered this field appear motivated by the desire to explore digital work, improve their social and economic conditions, and achieve financial independence, although they may require further training and skill development.

Table (07): Type of Freelance Digital Work

Nature of Work	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Distance Education	03	8.57%
Page Design and Management	15	42.85%
Content Creation	15	42.85%
Other	02	5.71%
Total	35	100%

Note: The total exceeds the sample size due to multiple responses.

The results show that the dominant digital activities practiced by respondents are page design and management on digital platforms, as well as content creation (42.85% each). These fields require digital,

communicative, and professional skills and are among the most attractive activities for women due to their financial returns.

Additionally, 8.57% provide educational services such as online language teaching, digital skills training, or content creation training. The “other” category (5.71%) includes activities such as writing academic theses and graduation papers.

Table (08): Platforms Used for Work

Platform Used	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Instagram, Facebook, TikTok	11	35.48%
Facebook, TikTok	02	6.45%
TikTok	03	9.67%
Instagram	02	6.45%
Instagram, TikTok	02	6.45%
Instagram, Google Meet	06	19.35%
Educational Platform	05	16.12%
Total	31	100%

The table shows that the majority of respondents rely on social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok (35.48%). These platforms are characterized by flexibility, speed, and effectiveness, particularly in digital marketing, content creation, and client communication.

A proportion of 19.35% use Instagram and Google Meet, mainly for educational or training activities such as posting instructional videos or conducting interactive sessions.

Finally, 16.12% use dedicated educational platforms, reflecting the presence of freelance digital work in the field of distance education.

Table (09): Motivations for Women Engaging in Freelance Digital Work

Motivation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lack of job opportunities	04	13.33%
Working from home	25	83.33%
Other	01	3.33%
Total	30	100%

The table shows that the majority of respondents (83.33%) indicated that the flexibility of working from home was the primary motivation for engaging in digital work. This allows them to manage their time efficiently and balance family and professional responsibilities. It is also socially accepted within the family, thereby providing financial independence and serving as a form of social and economic empowerment.

Meanwhile, 13.33% turned to digital work due to the unavailability of other job opportunities.

Table (10): Dependence on Freelance Digital Work Income

Nature of Income	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Main income	25	83.33%
Supplementary income	05	16.66%
Total	30	100%

The results indicate that the majority of respondents (83.33%) consider digital work income as their main source of earnings, while 16.66% view it as supplementary income to improve economic conditions.

Thus, freelance digital work represents an alternative and an opportunity to reduce unemployment and improve the social and economic circumstances of the respondents.

3. Working Conditions of Women Engaged in Freelance Digital Work

Table (11): Working Hours on Digital Platforms

Working Hours	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 2 hours	05	16.66%
2 to 6 hours	05	16.66%
More than 7 hours	20	66.66%
Total	30	100%

The table shows that the largest proportion (66.66%) work more than 7 hours per day. Long working hours indicate that digital work is their primary source of income. However, prolonged work has negative effects on mental, physical, and social health, such as fatigue and social isolation.

Those working between 2 and 6 hours (16.66%) are mostly students, whose work is intermittent and differs from those managing pages or creating content, as their work often involves responding to client inquiries via platforms such as Facebook or Instagram.

Table (12): Receiving Regular Income

Regular Income	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	25	83.33%
No	05	16.66%
Total	30	100%

Most respondents (83.33%) report receiving regular income, enabling financial independence and economic empowerment. The remaining 16.66% experience income instability due to the lack of formal contracts and legal protections in this type of work.

Table (13): Achievement of Financial Independence

Financial Independence	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	25	83.33%
No	05	16.66%
Partially	-	-
Total	30	100%

The table shows that the majority (83.33%) achieve financial independence through digital work, granting them opportunities for economic empowerment and access to additional training to expand their activities. The remaining 16.66% have not achieved financial independence, likely due to being new to this type of work or limited working hours because of studies.

Table (14): Social and Economic Gains from Freelance Digital Work

Gains from Digital Work	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Expanding social network, time flexibility, skill development, achieving income	20	66.66%
Time flexibility, achieving income	05	16.66%
Skill development	02	6.66%

Achieving income, skill development	03	10%
Total	30	100%

The highest proportion (66.66%) indicated that they achieved all key gains: expanding social networks, flexible working hours, skill development, and financial independence.

This suggests that women engaged in freelance digital work achieve empowerment at economic, social, and cognitive levels. Some respondents emphasized that working from home allowed them to balance family responsibilities with professional tasks, benefiting from the time flexibility of this work.

4. Data on Challenges and Obstacles Facing Women in Digital Work

Table (15): Challenges Faced by Women in Digital Work

Challenges Faced by Women	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Psychological and social challenges	20	66.66%
Financial and legal challenges	10	33.33%
Professional and technical challenges	10	33.33%
Total	30	100%

The table shows that the highest proportion of challenges faced by women engaged in freelance digital work are psychological and social (66.66%), including family pressures, fatigue, feelings of isolation, and lack of recognition for their efforts. Financial, legal, professional, and technical challenges each account for 33.33%, such as delayed payments, absence of legal protection, insufficient technical skills, and digital divides affecting workflow.

These challenges impact women's empowerment and social integration. In the absence of legal protections and organizational measures, women engaging in freelance digital work need to develop themselves cognitively and technically to ensure continuity and growth in their work.

5. Future Perceptions of Women Engaged in Freelance Digital Work

Table (16): Change in Economic Status

Change in Economic Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	25	83.33%

No	05	16.66%
Total	30	100%

The majority of women (83.33%) reported that freelance digital work improved their economic situation, whereas 16.66% reported no change. This difference highlights how digital work enhances women's ability to make independent financial decisions and invest in their social lives. Those without change face limitations due to low income or family and academic responsibilities.

Table (17): Feeling of Social Empowerment

Social Empowerment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	29	96.66%
No	01	3.33%
Total	30	100%

The table indicates that most respondents (96.66%) feel socially empowered, evidenced by expanded social networks and increased contribution to household income, which leads to financial independence. Only 3.33% did not feel socially empowered, likely due to ongoing social and economic challenges.

Table (18): Desire to Continue Freelance Digital Work

Desire to Continue	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	29	96.66%
No	01	3.33%
Total	30	100%

Most respondents (96.66%) expressed a desire to continue working in digital freelancing. This reflects a strong link between the advantages of digital work and the desire for continuity, as it allows women to work from home, remove spatial constraints, and balance family and professional responsibilities comfortably.

6. Discussion of Study Results

From analyzing and interpreting the tables, the hypotheses were partially confirmed:

Hypothesis 1: Multiple factors influence women's engagement in freelance digital work.

Analysis shows that home-based work was the main factor (83.33%), enabling women to balance family and professional responsibilities. Economic factors, such as increased income, financial independence, and social status, were also significant.

Hypothesis 2: Freelance digital work has an impact on women's economic and social empowerment.

The data in Tables (11), (13), (14), (15), (17), and (18) confirm that digital freelancing contributes to material gains, financial independence, improved economic and social status, and social empowerment. These results align with prior studies: Rawoof et al. highlighted the positive role of online freelancing in women's empowerment, Mohsen showed the digital economy's contribution to social, economic, and cultural empowerment, and Leila's study in Egypt confirmed that digital work helps women overcome financial and material challenges and achieve personal and financial independence.

Hypothesis 3: Women face multiple challenges in freelance digital work.

Table (15) shows that women encounter psychological and social challenges (pressure and social isolation from long working hours), legal challenges (lack of protection), and technical challenges (digital skills gap), each at 33.33%. This aligns with Aisha Taib's findings on the limited empowerment of marginalized women in the Arab world due to technical constraints (poor internet connectivity and high subscription costs), Rawoof's study on Pakistani women, and Rahul's study on women in precarious and informal gig work, highlighting safety, privacy, and work-life balance concerns.

Therefore, freelance digital work is an important current alternative to reduce unemployment and empower women socially and economically. Attention to digital and legal empowerment, as well as time management, is essential to avoid social issues such as isolation and alienation.

Conclusion

Engaging in freelance digital work represents a qualitative leap in women's economic and social empowerment, offering flexibility in time and location. Our study shows that while this work provides perceived empowerment, actual empowerment is influenced by social, digital, and legal challenges. A comprehensive strategy is needed to support women who aspire to continue in this type of work, ensuring sustainable empowerment and protection.

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