Most working mothers seek freelance jobs, says survey

Mostly worried about the cost of living, 77% of working mothers have been seeking freelance work. This is based on survey findings made exclusively available to Sunday Star from the LinkedIn Opportunity Index report.

As challenging as it is to juggle duties at home and the office, 33% of working mothers regularly pursue freelance gigs to make ends meet.

Another 44% occasionally look for such opportunities.

One such lady who adds on freelance jobs to her workload is a mother of two. Her name is Liyana, 37.

She works as a social media manager for a company, but also takes up freelance writing jobs to supplement her household income.

"These days, it is impossible to only depend on the husband to work and provide a comfortable life for the family."

"This is especially true for those who live in the city like me," she says.

"Earning that major concerns for working mothers are the cost of living and security, she says she also struggles to find work-life balance.

"Such a situation is difficult to achieve as most companies or entities do not offer flexibility in terms of timing and work arrangements," she adds.

It is because of this that Liyana started working from home five years ago, but she still has to go to her office three times a week.

"I took a chance and decided to work from home to better manage my time and to have that balance."

"I don’t think I would be able to do that if I were to work a 9-to-5 job."

But while many women have made it to the top of the organisation, she agrees that gender bias at work is not completely gone.

"There are times when women are bypassed for leadership roles."

"This is especially true because they are thought to be more emotional and will be less effective in their duties due to family commitments."

"It doesn’t help that they aren’t allowed flexibility in their work schedules," she says.

Another working mother, who wants to be known only as Melissa, 35, is open to taking on freelance work.

"I wish that I could have a flexible job where I could work from home."

"It would be good if the government could offer us some allowance for childcare as the standard of living is so high now," she says, adding that babysitter fees take up most of her expenses, followed by formal milk.

She currently pays about RM1,000 a month for her baby to be cared for while she and her husband are at work.

"People can’t even afford to buy a house, what more to subscribe to a few months’ nursery till Melissa adds.

"She also hopes fathers out there will help out more at home to lighten the load of working mothers."

"Having a childcare centre at your place would be so much more convenient, as I could go check on my little one at any time."

"But as it is, there are very few of them," she laments.