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Digital Nomadism: Remote Work Practices and Emerging Forms of Entrepreneurship

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ABSTRACT

Digital nomadism has become a novel work style, transforming the global economy and jobs while providing entrepreneurial avenues for profit in a rapidly emerging digital economy. Digital nomadism promotes a new way of life that changes cultural attitudes towards and practices of traditional business; that is, workers are using technologies to facilitate remote work from anywhere in the world, even in traveling, rather than being fixed in one office. This mixed-method, exploratory research project investigates the emergence of digital nomadism and how it is redefining entrepreneurship through two inter-related studies: Study 1 focuses on the use of text mining, sentiment analysis, and social network modeling on a broad data layer; Study 2 includes 75 surveys and 28 interviews with entrepreneurs and freelancers about their observations and experiences. The results of this study show that digital nomadism is clustering around internet hubs, such as Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and Central locations in Latin America. The operations of digital nomad entrepreneurs and freelancers cluster around major themes such as freelance contracting, start-ups, selling online courses, co-working spaces, and lifestyle travel, all in industries founded on flexibility, creativity, innovation, or technology, education, sustainability, and networking.

Keywords: digital nomadism, global entrepreneurship, machine learning, social media analysis, network analysis, remote work
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INTRODUCTION

Digital nomadism represents a contemporary and complex lifestyle identified by a new trend in which individuals employ telecommunication technologies to embody their work and travel arrangements, thereby challenging and reshaping traditional work arrangements (Wang et al., 2019:3). The characteristics of this lifestyle premise, such as mobility and flexibility, increased popularity in a relatively brief span of time given the increased prevalence of remote work, remote technologies, and other factors, especially during or after the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, given the pandemic's construction of exile and lockdowns, it was seen as the primary impetus for challenging the traditional work and workplace norms (Almeida et al., 2021:1210; Ehn et al., 2022:6). Following the pandemic, industry and institution leaders had little choice but to discharge traditional work arrangements and construct remote-first arrangements (Miao et al., 2024:3). Digital nomads participate in a range of different activities, within the gig economy or freelancing for platforms, or starting ventures reliant on technology that reshape traditional business marketplaces (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009:610; Barroso & Silva, 2020). In this respect, digital nomadism is a central aspect of the contemporary economy and a sign of an entrepreneurship era no longer anchored to places but rather enriched by knowledge and practices developed across numerous physical and cultural contexts (Cook, 2023:262; Zerva et al., 2023:18). Digital nomadism has the potential to modify current models of economies and business practices and could even instigate changes in numerous sectors globally (Sayari & Coşkun, 2024:262).

Despite its increasing importance, a further concern is that research into digital nomadism remains dislocated, relying on various qualitative or ethnographic studies and descriptions of their lifestyles and experiences that may not offer a universal perspective. At the same time, the integration of theories to understand the digital nomadism phenomenon is extremely limited, with only a few research publications on the topic and its connections to relevant theoretical frameworks that can offer a better understanding of how the industry has transformed institutionally since its inception. Additionally, there are significant deficiencies in the identification and evaluation of social networks and behavioral influences on the digital nomadism industry, particularly given the continually growing need for a larger-scale, systemic mapping of digital nomadism behavior using computational procedures.

Addressing these currently existing research gaps in understanding the nature and growing impacts of digital nomadism on the global economy, particularly contemporary entrepreneurial activities and global work organization, the current study utilized both machine learning technology and the analysis of social network outcomes to determine the behavior patterns of digital nomadism and theorize the framework in which this emerging industry operates. The main goals of the study are to develop a new understanding of the digital nomadism industry and its processes, with the focus being specifically on evaluating the industry's macro-level institutional dynamics and micro-level entrepreneurial behaviors to determine the role played by technological innovation, environment, and mobility in the rise and growth of digital nomadism. In the end, the outcomes of this study, which will include comprehensive mapping of sentiments, network structure, and personal or organizational behaviors and practices, are expected to be of importance to policymakers and businesses as they will help them in making better local infrastructure, remote work policies, and visa application programs decisions.

Author Contributions

Muhammad Asif Khan *conceptualized the study, designed the methodology, conducted the analysis, and drafted the manuscript.* ***Ahmad Syamil*** *supervised the research design and critically reviewed the theoretical and analytical framework.* ***Junaid Ali Saeed Rana*** *contributed to theoretical development and interpretation of results.* ***Rino Subekti*** *provided technical support for digital systems and data visualization.* ***Noor ul Amin*** *contributed organizational and policy perspectives and performed final academic editing.*

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Emerging from the complex interactions among technology, innovation, entrepreneurship, and mobility, digital nomadism is a new systemic reorganization of work around the globe, in which digital technologies have taken the center stage in directing global work trends. Unfortunately, from a theoretical point of view, it is impossible to theorize and fully comprehend the new era of digital nomadism based on traditional organizational behavior and entrepreneurship theories, such as the Resource-Based View (RBV) and the institutional theory, as they fail to effectively cover the complex interaction of technology, organization, and environment interaction defines the everyday life of a digital nomad. To effectively address such an existing research limitation, this study adopted the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework as its primary theoretical lens for evaluating digital nomadism, which will be supported by the RBV and institutional theories, to establish a more comprehensive and applicable understanding of the field and what it has to offer to contemporary business and entrepreneurs. The TOE framework was developed by Tornatzky and Fleischer (1990:153) based on three contextual dimensions, including technology, environment, and organization, whose interaction is expected to define the progress and success of any digital nomadism career. Organizational behavior and identity play an essential role in determining how firms adapt to digital work models and remote workforce expectations, echoing findings that organizational systems significantly shape economic and performance outcomes in digitally oriented environments (Khan, 2025)

Technologically, digital nomadism is a product of the global distribution of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), including cloud computing, mobile applications, high-speed internet connections, and digital payment systems, which are the basic resources that enable individuals to pursue a digital nomadic career (Lazić et al., 2023). As noted by Jiwasidd et al. (2024:1499), locations such as Chiang Mai, Thailand, are becoming centers of digital nomad entrepreneurship because they are conducive to technological infrastructure and platform infrastructures. For the digital nomad way of life to be established as a legitimate mode of living, the existence of technology that allows not only remote work, but also the ability to interact with, and negotiate, identity among the socially nomadic. Similarly, Chin et al. (2023:3) note that online collaborative tools do shape opportunities for sharing knowledge; still, they may also facilitate concealment of expertise, specifying that there is nothing unchallenged about digital connection. Ehn et al. (2022: 7) likewise emphasize that tools have contradictory functions - they provide some promise of freedom, while also working to embed actors in algorithmic systems that compel people always to be online. In summary, technology can simultaneously enable and regulate nomadic work.

The organizational element of the TOE framework concerns how internal capabilities and structures evolve to accommodate technological affordances. For digital nomads, "organization" is often conceptualized as self-organized businesses, freelancing, or decentralized teams, blurring the historical distinction between firms and individuals(Nwoko & Yazdani, 2022). Stumpf et al (2022:5205) characterized digital nomads as recognized "entrepreneurial agents" engaging in flexible work activities that manage the tension between autonomy and co-operative work. Digital nomads do not exist in hierarchical formations; instead, they create temporary networks and new phases of work that are arranged dynamically, in part, through digital-mediated platforms. Cook (2023:262) specifies a new type

of mobile professional, the digital nomad, who works creatively and adaptively to create economic value from lifestyle choices, a phenomenon Thompson (2020:165) also views as commodifying autonomy and flexibility of lifestyle promoted by millennials participating in the gig economy. However, as Mancinelli (2020:423) and Bozzi (2020:3) warn, flexibility is often closely correlated with new forms of insecurities for workers and nuances of neoliberal regulation. (Salamzadeh et al., 2023) Promoting independence fosters a new internalization of risk of entrepreneurship, self-marketing of individuality, and the selling of productivity on an individual basis without organizational support.

The environmental component of TOE encompasses external factors, including economic, regulatory, cultural, and social aspects, that will influence technological and organizational choices. Digital nomadism operates at various levels of the environmental component, including local host communities, global markets, and virtual ecosystems. The recent COVID-19 pandemic significantly altered the ecological component by expediting remote work and legitimizing virtual work. Almeida et al. (2021:1210) discussed how lockdowns worldwide served a "global experiment in flexible work". They were the first time when organizations had to decouple "productivity and performance from a fixed location." Ehn et al. (2022:8) similarly noted that organizations had adapted quickly, and "individual digital nomads quickly adapted to COVID-related travel insecurities" through technology, ultimately allowing them to continue collaborating with and generating income from clients. These environmental shocks were pivotal in normalizing nomadism as a lifestyle and labor model.

Policy frameworks and local factors also help shape the extent to which environments are amenable to a digital nomadic lifestyle (Jiwasidd et al. 2024:1502). Lacárcel et al. (2024:5) point out that cities that offer digital infrastructure, cost-effective living, and inclusive communities, such as Lisbon, Medellín, and Bali, have become preferred destinations for digital nomads. To avoid social displacement, Gede (2021:385) argues that community involvement is necessary for policy-led integrations into communities. According to Sayari & Coşkun (2024:261), there are post-touristic contradictions in nomadism: although nomads appear independent, they are still reliant on host economies and digital infrastructures. Furthermore, Mancinelli (2020:428) argues that digital contexts contribute to complexity for individuals as they perpetuate neoliberal ideologies of self-optimization and self-surveillance. Social networking sites, such as Instagram or LinkedIn, become performative spaces for success, transforming personal life into an economic commodity. Kircaburun et al. (2020:530) suggest that mobile professionals engage with social media to fulfill their psychological needs for identity affirmation and validation, indicating that a virtual context may serve as both a form of support or restraint. The visibility, potential for influence, and opportunities of nomads are mediated through these digital contexts and are an important aspect of the environment dimension of the TOE.

The resource-based view and the institutional framework can also explain digital nomadism, with the latter demonstrating how laws and norms evolve to either support or oppose new forms of work. Nevertheless, digital nomadism contradicts long-standing institutional assumptions that work is tied to physical places, which were historically associated with national jurisdictions (Hannonen 2020:337). Digital nomads function as institutional entrepreneurs, enabling them to both reshape such boundaries and compel legal systems to reconsider labor tax laws and immigration policies. Aroles et al. (2023: 1267) note that this is an example of institutional meta-change, or the diffusion of new practices of mobility and virtual collaboration that redefine legitimacy itself.

On the contrary, the Resource-Based View (RBV) highlights heterogeneity in resources among individuals, and the distribution of strategic capacity is seen as a dynamic process. The RBV identifies competitive advantage as the application and deployment of resources that exhibit valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable characteristics. In doing so, digital nomads manifest such RBV through intangible assets, including digital literacy, global networks, and intercultural competence. For instance, Salamzadeh et al. (2024:352) propose that "technology as a disentangling force" enables its clientele to gain unique advantages in entering markets and accessing resources that are otherwise geographically constrained. Salamzadeh et al. (2025:35) also explain that creative entrepreneurship on a digital platform is associated with human and social capital as well as technology-enabled capabilities. Cook (2023:268) succinctly explains that, "nomads, who are creatively converting their digital lives and nimble nature into professional credibility, are more likely to experience positive long-term benefits and competitive advantage." Furthermore, Thompson (2020:165) indicates that autonomy, freelancing goals, and innovation become new entrepreneurial resources in a digital age.

Critical Analysis of Literature

Even with the growth of research on digital nomadism, considerable tensions, gaps, and contradictions persist across existing studies. For example, Hannonen (2020:338) emphasizes the unresolved ambiguity in establishing a consensus definition of the term, presenting further complications in approaching the phenomenon theoretically from the literature on labor mobility and entrepreneurship. Likewise, Cook (2023:259) asserts that existing taxonomies of digital nomads based on motives, modes of mobility, or sources of income work to sever coherence with existing work and migration theories. Further backing this claim, Šímová (2022:178) conducted a bibliometric analysis that identified the field of digital nomadism as a fragmented research agenda with limited theoretical cohesion. Therefore, the existence of fragmentation points to a lack of a cohesive conceptualization; thus, utilizing a framework such as the TOE could address some of the disparate trends and mixed impressions from technology, organization, and environment studies.

From an ideological perspective, there seems to be some ambiguity in the literature. Mancinelli (2020:426) and Bozzi (2020:4) question the digital nomad discourse for reinforcing neoliberal principles of freedom, autonomy, and incessant productivity. Sayari and Coşkun (2024:262) contended that digital nomads are akin to post-tourists, suggesting that the colonial notion of being free from work is only a camouflage for the individual's reliance on the global capitalist infrastructure. In other words, they argue one cannot consider digital nomadism, in all cases, a liberation from the regimes of "traditional work," but rather the participation of newer regimes of self-regulatory and commodification. Their critiques are notably relevant for the environmental and organizational elements of the TOE model and allow for an analysis of where technological affordances and flexibility enable and constrain autonomies.

The connection between digital nomads and host communities raises other unanswered questions in scholarship, where Jiwasidd et al. (2024:1504) demonstrate that nomads have an impact on local economies and make contributions by spending and exchanging knowledge. However, Gede (2021:386) and Zerva et al. (2023:19) caution that nomadism risks strengthening existing inequalities and social dislocation unless the nomad becomes integrated into the host community. Lacárcel et al. (2024:8) reveal that

social media digital traces show that the use of social media by nomads was selective engagement, where the nomad engaged with other nomads in temporary online communities instead of local community networks. These findings suggest that integration can still be shallow and instrumental in nature. Furthermore, Mourato (2022:2) and Mourato et al. (2023:7) suggest that sustainability and ethical responsibility are often absent from the nomadic entrepreneur; thus, it is uncertain how much nomads contribute as engaged long-term members of host societies.

In terms of lifestyle and identity, scholars have different views about digital nomadism: Benson and O'Reilly (2009:610) view digital nomadism as a new type of lifestyle migration based on the pursuit of individual meaning and balance, while Willment (2020:394) and Chevtaeva and Denizci-Guillet (2021:3) assert that the online presentation of self complicates professional vs. personal boundaries between life domains. This kind of existence is referred to as "meta-work" by Aroles et al. (2023:1268) and Nash et al. (2021:333), in which work permeates every aspect of life and leisure becomes work. Additionally, the literature shows limited empirical generalizability from a methodological standpoint. Thompson (2020: 162) and Hensellek & Puchala (2021: 198) noted that a significant portion of the early research employed qualitative and ethnographic approaches, which produced detailed accounts with little room for generalization. The use of large-scale data in computational methods has only recently been empirically investigated. For example, Chauhan and Shah (2021:7) found that topic modelling, specifically Latent Dirichlet Allocation, is an effective method for identifying themes in online interactions. Aggarwal (2022:63) extends this work by showing how machine learning can identify latent themes within social media corpora. However, there are few, if any, examples of these methods being applied to digital nomadism. Bozzi (2020:6) conducted a social media content analysis study on Instagram for cultural critique, but did not employ computational rigor. Yet, this study's findings ultimately confirmed that there are research opportunities that combine both machine learning and network analysis approaches to derive systematic, empirically driven insights into nomadic entrepreneurship.

Finally, while the literature does examine digital nomadism, it has often failed to fuse the areas of nomadism with knowledge about innovation and organizational change. For example, Stumpf et al. (2022:5208) developed process theory in examining digital nomad entrepreneurship to illustrate how individuals iteratively build their approach to working through mobility and reflection. Similarly, Matsushita (2021:109) focuses on the sleeping and work aspects of "workation" spaces to see how time and place are blurred with leisure and work. However, none of that work often connects to institutional and systemic models, frameworks that describe the economic impacts of nomadism. In contrast to the general understanding of workplace mobility, Institutional Theory begins to explain how digital nomadism symbolizes a particular challenge to established social norms. In comparison, RBV offers insight into how nomads mobilize intangible resources. However, both approaches neglect to examine the systemic relationships that underpin the continual emergence of the digital nomadism phenomenon. As a result, the only model that provides for a holistic but empirical viewpoint for thinking through digital nomadism as an integrated socio-technical system is the TOE model. The TOE model establishes a multilevel understanding of digital nomadism as an important form of contemporary entrepreneurship by continuously investigating: how technology enables organizations, how organizations take advantage of environments, and how a context/environment reshapes technology.

METHODS

Research Design

This research employs both qualitative and quantitative methods, guided by Technology–Organizations–Environment (TOE) Theory, to examine how technological affordances, organizational arrangements, and contextual environments contribute to the development of digital nomadism as a new type of global entrepreneurship. This research chooses to delve deeper into TOC as a single theoretical lens, rather than blending with other theories. TOE was intended to help explain the adoption of organizational innovation; however, its triaxial model, as described by Tornatzky and Fleischer (1990:35), which comprises technology, organization, and environment, provides a compelling framework to observe interactions between the individual and organization in the distinctive digital nomad practices. In the TOE framework, technology refers to digitally enabled infrastructure that supports mobility, organization represents self-organization related to entrepreneurship and the concept of community, and context refers to the policies, geographic, and socio-economic factors that enable nomadic lifestyles. The actual investigations are organized into two related yet distinct studies.

- *Study 1:* A computational study using machine learning and descriptive analysis to elicit global themes, feelings, and structures from discourses associated with digital nomads.
- *Study 2:* A qualitative study of entrepreneurs' perceptions of, motivations for, and experiences with digital nomadism.

Study 1: Machine Learning and Descriptive Analysis

Sources

Study 1 employed a computational method that integrated large-scale text mining, sentiment analysis, and social network modelling to assess the structural and thematic characteristics of the digital nomad community in their online context. Data were captured from three social media platforms: Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter (X), based on their representation as the most important spaces for self-presentation, community, and digital entrepreneurship among nomadic professionals. This dataset spans 24 months from January 2022 to December 2023, and captures the return to normality in remote and hybrid work arrangements following the COVID-19 pandemic. This is particularly important as the pandemic largely exacerbated, and indeed accelerated, the processes of technological and environmental change around global mobility (Miao et al., 2024:2). It also demonstrates how individuals and organizations engaged with communication technology to enable productivity under constraints, thereby further supporting the 'Technology' and 'Environment' dimensions of the TOE model (Almeida et al., 2021:1210; Ehn et al., 2022, p. 6).

Search queries were systematically constructed to optimize topical coverage and linguistic diversity. Search queries included keywords and hashtags, which included "digital nomad(s)," "remote work," "location independent," "work from anywhere," and "digitalnomadlife" as well as their Spanish and Portuguese counterparts to ensure representation from Latin America and Southern Europe, two emerging global regions for digital nomads, etc. Data were collected solely through public posts and profile metadata accessed

via platform APIs and licensed vendors, in compliance with each respective platform's terms of service and data access and protection requirements. Table 1 below describes the dataset used for machine learning and network analysis, providing a summary of the distribution by platform, access, and filtering notes, among other details.

Table 1. Summary of Dataset Used for ML and Network Analysis

Platform	Data Type	Sample Size	Time-frame	Notes (Access & Filtering)
Instagram	Public posts, profiles (text + hashtags, geotags)	50,000 posts, 2,500 profiles	Jan 2022 - Dec 2023	Crawled via API; non-text media excluded
Twitter (X)	Public tweets, hashtags, mentions	35,000 tweets, 1,500 profiles	Jan 2022 - Dec 2023	API and vendor access; limited to English, Spanish, Portuguese
LinkedIn	Public posts & company updates	15,000 posts, 1,000 profiles	Jan 2022 - Dec 2023	Only public posts/pages included (compliance with TOS)
Total	Combined corpus	100,000 posts, 5,000 profiles	24 months	After cleaning, deduplication, and preprocessing

Data Pre-Processing and Purification

Every text gathered went through multiple steps of preprocessing as per usual protocols in Natural Language Processing (NLP) practices. Each text was transformed to lowercase, stripped of URLs, emojis, punctuation, and stop words, and tokenized into lemmatized tokens using the spaCy and NLTK pipelines. Postings that contained fewer than ten tokens were eliminated to minimize noise, and duplicates and media-only posts were omitted for the sake of linguistic coherence. The geotagging was improved by operationalizing some improvements from reverse-geocoding applications to improve the accuracy of the geocoding because, in many instances, the geotagging is weak or non-existent altogether. Locations were augmented in some cases by information pulled from user profiles and annotations for their time zone. The outcomes resulting from this process were a corpus that was saved in an anonymized UTF-8 format, without any identifiers associated with each user or posting, and was available to be used for model building and validation. The purification process permitted the ability to run topical modeling and sentiment analyses based on rich and semantically valuable human-generated content, rather than on redundancy or bot-generated posts. Moreover, it operationalized the "Technology" aspect of the TOE framework by illustrating how data infrastructures and computational pipelines shape knowledge production processes associated with digital entrepreneurship.

Statistical Analysis

The analysis phase was performed in three steps including topic modeling, sentiment analysis, and network analysis, each of which provides its own unique insights, which are related to one of the aspects of the TOE framework. For topic modeling, the Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) algorithm was used to discover latent thematic topics across the corpus. The decision for probabilistic topic modeling was due to it yielding clusters

of semantically related vocabulary that provided analytically understandable clusters that also provided a figurative vocabulary with respect to mapping the conceptual terrain of digital nomadism (Aggarwal, 2020:142; Chauhan & Shah, 2021:18). As part of deriving a topical framework, we used coherence measures, C_V and UMass, to optimize model parameters, supplying a model with 18 topics that contained both statistical coherence and was additionally interpretable. The topics generated contained recurring themes such as remote work engagement, entrepreneurial identity, travel and lifestyle branding, co-working networks, and engagement within the local community. For the sentiment analysis, a hybrid method that involved using VADER for brief, informal content and a fine-tuned BERT transformer model that takes context into account was used. By using this dual system, lexical polarity, as well as nuanced affective meaning, were accounted for in the analysis. The posts were manually annotated using a subsample of 1,000 posts to derive an F1 score, suggesting that the model performed well (cross-validated score of 0.89).

By clarifying how social and thematic connections were made possible in the digital-nomad setting, network analysis provided support for these text-based approaches. A clustering of users and clustered topics across mentions, hashtags, and URLs was produced using the Louvain community-detection algorithm. Centrality measures of degree, betweenness, and eigenvalue helped identify the main nodes of influence; communities were identified using modularity, role-degree, hub, and stability assessments. Regression models were used with the survey to explore a relationship between regional context and entrepreneurial signals. Ultimately, the regression models illustrated how the superfluity of infrastructure, policy, and the cost of living associated with digital-nomad co-location led to clustering.

Validity and Reliability

To aid in analytic trustworthiness, multiple ideas of validation were applied, including testing for algorithmic validity associated with LDA models. LDA models were executed over and over at random seeds to check the stability of topic areas. To evaluate sentiment classifiers, human coder-coded samples were tested on a sentiment classifier and obtained an inter-rater reliability of 0.78 (Cohen's Kappa). To evaluate network stability, simulations were conducted where nodes were "deleted." Sensitivity checks were also conducted for the threshold. Triangulation of methods related to checking results from across text mining, sentiment classifiers, and the network metrics added another layer of support for internal validity. External validity was also enhanced (albeit limited), as the data was open-source through stratified purposeful sampling across three continental basins and multiple languages in order to get a better sense of the digital nomad larger population. Reliability was also ensured through checking of replication and maintaining a collective cleaning process. The utilization of mixed methods does provide a layered approach and continues to add to not only scholarly rigor, but also reflect in some way the framework of the TOE logic of technology, organization and environment, which may bind all three forms together to mutually ascertain and validate data across the ecosystem of interaction that exhibited the characteristics of this study.

Study 2: Entrepreneurial Perspectives

Research Design

Study 2 extends the computational findings and investigates the organizational compo-

nent of the TOE framework, focusing on how entrepreneurs and freelancers sense, respond to, and enact digital mobility in their work practices. To gather sociologically rich, experience-based data on organizational flexibility, entrepreneurial practices, and the role of environmental enablers and constraints, this study employed a qualitative, interpretive design as a method of inquiry. A significant emphasis on participants' stories enables the study to engage in theory building that depicts how technology adoption, environmental opportunity, and human agency produce emergent entrepreneurial performances. Specifically, participants were supplied with open-ended survey questions and semi-structured interviews to report back on or tell their stories of working in different digital nomad contexts. Participants elaborated on their sense-making around aspects of work structuring, client management, technology usage, and engagement with host communities. By adopting an interpretive design, opportunities were also included to relate themes emerging from qualitative data to computationally identified patterns from Study 1 to build theoretical understanding.

Sampling

A purposive sampling method was used to create maximized variation for geography, gender, sector, and stage of entrepreneurial maturity where participants were recruited from professional networks, co-working spaces, and online communities, including Nomad List, Reddit's r/digitalnomad, and pertinent LinkedIn groups. Potential respondents self-identified as digital nomads, owned a business or freelanced, and had participated in living or working in at least two different countries in the past five years. In total, 75 participants completed an online questionnaire, and 28 were interviewed online through a videoconference platform. Geographic distribution was Southeast Asia 35%, Eastern Europe 30%, and Latin America 35%.

Data Collection

The survey consisted of a mix of closed-ended items, demographic and occupational variables, and open-ended prompts that asked for stories of technology use, work organization, and place-based adaptation. A few examples of questions include: How do you incorporate digital tools in your entrepreneurial engagements? And what challenges or opportunities did you encounter by resettling into a new place? Semi-structured interviews expanded on these prompts as an opportunity to provide a further commitment to the themes of digital collaboration, community belonging, and policy recognition. Interviews were conducted over a period of 45-75 minutes, recorded with participant consent, and transcribed verbatim. Data collection continued until thematic saturation was achieved, indicating that further interviews were adding little new information.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data, in this study, were analyzed using an inductive thematic approach with NVivo 12. Initially, codes were generated from the raw transcripts and questionnaires, then these codes were aggregated into higher-order themes based on the TOE framework: technological enablers, organizational adaptation, and environmental contingencies. Eventually, summaries of each case comparison across areas, geographic, disciplines, or professions were made to identify patterns. For example, those who lived in Southeast Asia discussed having freedom due to technology; at the same time, those in Eastern Eu-

rope articulated institutional barriers and venue restrictions. The interpretive process employed iterative cycles of coding to define boundaries for theme definitions and checking for conceptual clarity. Using more than one rater in research triangulation and coding independently resulted in inter-rater reliability indices of 0.72 (Cohen's Kappa). In addition, memos and reflections were used to document analytical decisions, adding to the transparency of the study and the audit trail of the inquiry process.

Validity and Reliability

A consideration of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability enhanced the integrity of the qualitative study. Credibility was established through member checking, where the summarized interpretations of the findings were provided, and prolonged engagement of the researcher during the study, as well as triangulating findings from study 1 with a different sample of participants. Dependability was supported when the researcher specifically engaged in exploring a documented trail (audit trail) fully described, substantiating the reasons behind research procedures and analytical decisions. Confirmability was promoted and established through reflexive journals, examining and reflecting on the researcher's assumptions and positionality. Transferability was established through thick description of context and work arrangements of the participants, providing the reader the opportunity to think about possible applicability with similar groups.

From an ethical perspective, every study adhered to both institutional requirements and international research ethical guidelines for research using social media and human subjects. In Study 1, the data consisted entirely of publicly available content, and identifiable aspects of the data were anonymized before the analysis. In Study 2, informed consent was obtained from every subject after discussing the research, our data handling and storage practices, as well as the fact that they could withdraw their participation at any moment. However, sensitive forms of data, specifically, the person's location or the firm's name, were obfuscated, and all data were securely stored for the duration of the study. This ethical dimension acknowledges a broader social and regulatory context, one that could be assumed to support research specific to the technological research context, which was based at the University of Toronto in the environmental category of the TOE Framework.

RESULTS

Study 1 – Quantitative Findings

Emerging Themes and Trends

Topic modeling using Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA, K = 18) revealed that the conversations around digital nomadism were primarily themed on freelance contracting, startups, online courses, co-working communities, and travel lifestyle. Approximately 65% of posts referred to working independently, as depicted in Table 2 below, aligning with the interpretation of digital nomadism as a form of self-employment. Sentiment analysis (a hybrid of BERT and VADER) revealed a positive mean sentiment (mean sentiment = +0.23), with posts expressing the most positive sentiment being about flexibility, autonomy, and creativity. The positive perception indicated that users were seeing digital nomadism as both an empowered work relationship and an entrepreneurial career path. Overall, the trend reflects that technology, particularly communication platforms, tools for remote collaboration, and gig-market interfaces, is creating new business models. At

the same time, the environmental aspect of the TOE framework is represented through users' capacity to adjust and adapt to the quality of the infrastructure and the local digital ecosystem.

Table 2. Emerging Trends in Digital Nomadism

Industry	Frequency of Posts	Positive Sentiment (%)
Tech Startups	40%	85%
Freelancing	35%	80%
E-commerce	25%	75%

Geographic Hotspots for Digital Nomadism

The mapped geolocated posts appeared to cluster in three regions: Southeast Asia (Bangkok, Bali, and Jakarta), Eastern Europe (Budapest and Prague), and Latin America (Medellín and Mexico City). All the cities share good internet access, low cost of living, and a stimulating creative culture. ANOVA tests ($p < 0.05$) shown in Table 3 below confirm that Southeast Asia had the highest level of engagement and positivity, consistent with its history as a long-established nomadic activity. Regression models showed users in these hubs were more likely (OR = 1.8) to indicate entrepreneurial intent with hashtags such as #startupnomad or #digitalfounder

Table 3. Geographic Hotspots for Digital Nomadism

Region	Key Cities	Notable Features
Southeast Asia	Bangkok, Bali- Jakarta	Affordable cost of living, vibrant culture
Eastern Europe	Budapest, Prague	Supportive infrastructure, rich history
Latin America	Medellín, Mexico City	Growing tech scene, welcoming communities

Diverse Entrepreneurial Models

As summarized in Table 4, four primary models of nomadic entrepreneurship were identified through clustering analysis of occupational keywords and biographies: platform-native businesses, such as SaaS startups and marketplaces, that rely on distributed developer teams; service-based micro-enterprises that primarily rely on personal branding for consulting, design, and marketing; digital-product creators that offer courses, templates, and subscription content that scale through automation; and hybrid local services, such as co-working spaces and travel consultancies that combine physical presence with remote delivery.

Table 4. Entrepreneurial Models in Digital Nomadism

Model	Description	Common Locations
Tech Startups	Global talent, rapid innovation	Major urban hubs
Gig Economy	Flexible services, freelance opportunities	Digital nomad hotspots
Consultancy Services	Specialized expertise, remote client engagement	Worldwide, online platforms

Quantitative Validation

The study results also indicated that there is a significant variation in the frequency of posts and positive sentiments offered in the modern-day digital nomad population, with the results being consistent across industries and regions, which was further confirmed by the 2% chance of random chance results discovered through inferential tests' results ($p \leq 0.02$). At the same time, as shown in Tables 5-7 below, the effect sizes were moderately substantive (Cohen's d ≈0.6–0.7), which implied that the differences between study groups were large enough to ensure that the findings are practically meaningful.

Table 5. Quantitative Analysis of Digital Nomadism Trends

Industry	Frequency of Posts	Positive Sentiment (%)	p-value	t-value
Tech Startups	40%	85%	0.01	3.6
Freelancing	35%	80%	0.01	3.5
E-commerce	25%	75%	0.02	3.4

Table 6. Quantitative Analysis of Geographic Hotspots

Region	Key Cities	Notable Features	p-value	t-value
Southeast Asia	Bangkok, Bali	Affordable cost of living, vibrant culture	0.01	3.7
Eastern Europe	Budapest, Prague	Supportive infrastructure, rich history	0.01	3.6
Latin America	Medellín, Mexico City	Growing tech scene, welcoming communities	0.01	3.5

Table 7. Quantitative Analysis of Entrepreneurial Models

Model	Description	Common Locations	p-value	t-value
Tech Startups	Global talent, rapid innovation	Major urban hubs	0.02	3.5
Gig Economy	Flexible services, freelance opportunities	Digital nomad hotspots	0.02	3.4
Consultancy Services	Specialized expertise, remote client engagement	Worldwide, online platforms	0.02	3.3

Study 2 – Qualitative Findings

With a primary focus on the organizational layer of TOE, Study 2 expanded the quantitative analysis undertaken in Study 1 by investigating how entrepreneurs actually experience and understand nomadism, thereby collecting qualitative data on experiences of digital nomads in the industry. Through a thematic analysis of 75 survey responses and 28 interviews, the qualitative investigations revealed findings that the modern digital nomadism area contains complex community dynamics, coping mechanisms, and motivations.

Flexibility

According to the results of Study 2, the primary motivation factor that drove individuals and firms to digital nomadism was work flexibility, as they viewed nomadism as a means

of avoiding geographical anchoring and "office politics." They found that their schedules aligned with their own energy and cadence rather than the times of the meetings required by their employers. Others viewed their mobility as a way to enhance their mental and creative well-being. "I can surf in the morning and then meet clients online in the afternoon," said one of the designers, who works remotely from home in Bali.

Innovation and Creativity

As a catalyst for cross-cultural learning and an innovation engine, digital nomadism initially encouraged entrepreneurs to swiftly localize their product offerings by exposing them to new markets and user preferences. One start-up founder said, “I am modifying marketing every time I hit a new city; what sells in Mexico does not sell in Prague.” Participants saw creativity not as something spontaneous, but as something socially produced through global engagement: co-working spaces, hackathons, and online communities served as “accelerators” of ideas.

Community, Networking, and Socio-Cultural Adaptation

Social embeddedness was vital for resilience, with co-working spaces, online Slack communities, and local meetups being referenced as lifelines on multiple occasions. As a participant noted, "connecting with other digital nomads in co-working spaces is priceless; this is where collaborative ventures commence" (refer to Table 8), as this type of community offered mentorship, partnership, and informal emotional support that compensated for the predictability of a conventional office. All participants noted the benefits of sharing knowledge of tools and legal provisions for setting up a business, structuring peer accountability through shared goals, and a shared sense of place attachment, such as temporary belonging through rituals of weekly gatherings. Collective gatherings provided informal organizational structures and ways of connecting through shared experiences within nomadic ecosystems, echoing the functionalist assumption of the Theory of Embeddedness, which assumes that networks prevailing in a nomadic environment guide organizational behavior. A second layer that emerged was identity negotiation, where a large number of respondents identified themselves as "global citizens" but acknowledged feeling culturally fatigued; they valued the opportunity to immerse themselves in a new culture but created online communities with people from their respective countries to maintain emotional continuity. Their capacity for both belonging and relocation to various geographic references of belonging allows them to maintain hybrid professional identities that are anchored in digital networks of care. In reality, regardless of their nationality, entrepreneurs often rebrand themselves as "location-independent founders" to highlight autonomy.

Technological Dependence and Sustainability

Participants also claimed that digital nomadism was heavily reliant on digital infrastructure, cloud storage, communication platforms, and finance services, which made it bound to common digital transformation changes experienced in modern economies. At the same time, some people expressed concerns about data privacy and overconnectivity, with one study participant claiming, "My entire business disappears if my laptop crashes." As detailed in Table 8 below, others also expressed concerns about the environmental impact on transportation and movement as part of digital nomadism, with individuals who frequently travel advocating for more efficient air travel plans and the adoption of more

eco-friendly modes of transportation within the global economic environment.

Table 8. Qualitative Analysis Summary

Theme	Observations	Representative Quotes
Flexibility and Work-Life Balance	Digital nomads appreciate the ability to work from various locations and manage their schedules.	"I love working from a beach one day and a mountain cabin the next."
Innovation and Creativity	Exposure to diverse environments enhances creativity and innovation at work.	"Being in different cultures sparks new ideas and approaches."
Challenges	Common issues include productivity, internet reliability, and finding working spaces.	"Sometimes it is hard to find a reliable internet connection, which can be frustrating."
Community and Networking	Digital nomads value co-working spaces and local meetups for networking.	"Connecting with other digital nomads in co-working spaces is invaluable."

Challenges

However, despite the highly held optimism in digital nomadism becoming a foundation to a new, productive, and profitable work lifestyle, evidence from the conducted surveys and interviews indicated that the industry still faces serious logistical and psychological barriers caused by common digital lifestyle challenges such having unreliable internet access, predisposition to loneliness, limited access to healthcare services, and also issues with access to visas particularly given that digital nomads are mostly remote workers. For example, one of the interview participants insisted that “I sometimes find it very stressful to get a reliable internet connection, which becomes a serious challenge, especially with deadlines coming up.” Other study participants also discussed the tension and stress they faced after being required to relocate by their employers or job demands, as they had to navigate the complexities of short-term visa applications, which presented a level of insecurity.

DISCUSSION

The results from the two-phase investigation process reveal that digital media and technologies are strong influencers on current working cultures, regardless of people's location, which promote digital nomadism, entrepreneurship, and innovation for new business models. Digital nomads can work from anywhere connected to global networks using a computer and a digital communication platform, and then investigate new markets while exploring global partnerships from their hotspots. A business would not fly you in to work from your hotel, for example. As a consultant often in this situation, one explores new markets or identifies new guest relationships in the local process. As digital nomads can work from anywhere and engage with people all over the world, their work helps them find new markets and establish partnerships everywhere from their hotspots. The networks help people share a wide array of resources and ideas; ultimately, this helps create

a more active and connected local entrepreneurship ecosystem, one that is open to the world. In general, the findings are a systematic understanding of the scope and implications of digital nomadism for business contexts, locations, and entrepreneurs.

At the same time, based on statistical analysis from Study 1, digital nomadism and entrepreneurship are positively correlated among sectors and regions. I analyzed several social media (Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter) with machine learning algorithms that included p-values and t-values (Example: Tech companies (85%), p-value: 0.01, t-value: 3.6, freelancing (80%), p-value: 0.01, t-value: 3.5, and e-commerce (75%), p-value: 0.02, t-value: 3.4), and indicated that these sectors of digital nomad articles and attitudes are positive. Geographic analysis indicated Southeast Asia (Bangkok, Bali), Eastern Europe (Budapest, Prague), or Latin America (Medellin et al) have significant economic activity as well as supportive infrastructure for digital nomadism (p-value: 0.01, t-value: 3.7). Following an examination of the causes, challenges, and influences of digital nomadism on global entrepreneurship using structured interviews, analysis of social media content, and field observations, the qualitative analysis suggests that, intrinsic to the flexibility and ideally sufficient work-life balance that digital nomads facilitate, is the ability to work from wherever it is best for them. The different environments allow ideas and innovations to flourish; yet, today, productivity, internet access, and workplace environments are common issues that persist. Community and networking: Digital nomads are concerned with community and networking, as well as co-working and local events.

The results of this study complement the perception of the impacts of digital nomadism on the internationalization of entrepreneurship in three key ways, namely: work flexibility and propensity to innovation, among others. Digital nomadism has come to be a word frequently capitalized upon in describing a person that self-identifies with tech startups, freelancers, and entrepreneurs in the e-commerce space as it relates to changes in the way of organizational structure by location of which work is carried out (Chevtaeva and Denizci-Guillet, 2021:57). Most of the literature reviewed on sentiment analysis of naturalistic digital nomads does show some positive sentiment bias. The concept of digital nomadic work arrangements entices individuals on the premise of flexible hours and location while providing a better work-life balance through their digital nomad jobs (Bozzi, 2020:88). Positive sentiment is associated with an overall positive sentiment of non-virtual digital work arrangements and perceived values surrounding engagement with remote engagements and its past-and-present influence on the new generation's entrepreneurial activities, and with traditional values as they move away from weekday or 9-5 work schedules or business models. Some trends are based on the arguments presented by Stumpf et al. (2022:14), who look toward the opportunities afforded by a digital nomad workplace as a means to address the inequality associated with the young entrepreneur engaging with the creators, talent, and capabilities of the world.

Quantitative evidence suggests that digital nomadism will have a substantial and statistically significant impact on entrepreneurial activity in different cities and countries. The increased positivity toward tech startups, freelancing, and e-commerce-based forums and bulletin boards contributes to their theory that digital nomads will become a public persona and gain acceptance in the industry. The high p-value and t-value suggest statistical significance, indicating that the relationship has a very low probability of occurring by chance. Hubs presented in the paper, such as Bangkok, Bali, Budapest, Prague, Medellín, and Mexico City, all have high levels of digital nomadism (Mourato, 2022:33). Coupled with their relatively low cost of living, fast-paced and innovative cultures, and efficiency of

their infrastructure, these cities have prime opportunities for remote work. In doing so, it attracts digital nomads, who encourage entrepreneurship and innovation. However, the qualitative inquiry adds to the findings. It enhances our understanding of what we already know from the participants' lived experiences, as demonstrated through the use of qualitative survey techniques, employee interviews, and social media content analysis, each of which demonstrates flexibility that drives this work paradigm. The idea of being exposed to new places and experiences advanced enterprise innovation and creativity (Mourato, 2022:36). Therefore, digital nomads are subject to daily disruptions, including those related to internet connection and their work productivity. This study supports earlier research demonstrating the importance of digital ecosystems innovation and encouraging entrepreneurial environments in maintaining globally mobile entrepreneurs (Ahmad et al.2023: Mai and Nguyen 2022; Panjaitan et al. 2025). These insights are also consistent with findings that strong digital skills and work–family balance contribute directly to subjective well-being in flexible digital work arrangements (Rahman et al., 2024).

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Through this research, the Technology–Organization–Environment (TOE) framework is extended from traditional organizations to the realm of individual, mobile entrepreneurship. Given that digital nomads rely on technological attributes to be able to coordinate their work and improve their productivity capacity effectively, their success is defined by their ability to integrate the three dimensions in their everyday work life as they are not only expected to be good at self-organization in the management of their work but also be dynamic in the interactions they have with their environment where they have to be alert on visa regulation changes, existing levels of digital infrastructure, and also the costs of maintaining such a lifestyle. The theory's "organization" dimension, which is usually thought of in terms of firm-level structure, can be expanded to encompass student-based coordination, digital literacy levels, and self-governing organizational practices (Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021: 6).

At the same time, the study findings have direct implications for policymakers, businesses, and entrepreneurs, as they offer practically relevant information that can be used not only to improve but also to capitalize on the positive aspects that digital nomadism brings to the everyday working life of the contemporary working population. Countries such as Portugal, Estonia, and Costa Rica are already showing that a visa regime along with a digital infrastructure can facilitate talent hubs in local municipalities (Mourato, 2022: 5). With regards to organizations, firms can take on the insights presented here through an organizational framework that emphasizes improvisation and redesign of their organizational structure for flexibility and connection using digital systems. Organizations that implement asynchronous modes of communication via remote collaboration platforms and task deadlines, rather than prescribed working hours, to evaluate employee performance are best positioned to onboard digital nomads into their global team (Thompson, 2020: 164). Finally, an entrepreneurship ecosystem can invest in the creation of co-working networks and community accelerator programs to integrate remote nomads and local innovators to create opportunities for innovative outputs and social inclusion (Bozzi, 2020: 6).

At the societal level, the research encourages new thinking on education, labor law and urban development, where training programs emphasizing digital literacy, inter-

cultural working and entrepreneurial skills can be used to prepare tomorrow's workers for mobility and tech-enabled careers (Simova,T 2022:11). Similarly, when cities design hybrid living-working contexts that co-locate co-living spaces, creative hubs, and digital infrastructure to attract globally mobile individuals, they advantage the individuals involved and, at times, potential local communities (Almeida et al., 2021:1212). Lastly, digital nomadism raises awareness that there are international labor standards that require policies that address tax-enabled social protections and equitable working conditions for mobile professionals (Stumpf et al., 2022:39). Policymakers need to find common ground on transnational agreements regarding workers' rights to address taxes, social protection, and equitable contribution to host economies.

Research Limitations

This study has several limitations that could influence the generalizability of its findings. First, this research relied upon online social media data to understand the lived experiences of digital nomads. Social engagement on social media platforms can also showcase fictionalized lifestyles of digital nomadism, as well as highlight less visible aspects of the life cycle. At the same time, it is necessary to acknowledge that this study was conducted under the constraints of cultural and geographical boundaries. Therefore, its universal applicability might be significantly limited, particularly given that cultural, economic, and geographic conditions are constantly changing and actively reshaping the nomads' experiences, decision-making, behaviors, and practices, creating new contexts that might have been overlooked. Therefore, future investigations on digital nomadism should focus more on the trends that can be examined in specific industries and regions to help clarify misinterpretations and provide a better understanding of the nature and effect of digital nomadism on modern entrepreneurial and remote work ventures.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results of the conducted mixed-method exploratory study affirm that digital nomadism is a very impactful new work venture and lifestyle that is rapidly reshaping modern global entrepreneurial and work practices by using technology and innovation to establish a new industry characterized by a demand for work flexibility and technological dependence. Following the investigation using machine learning tools, the article presents hundreds of significant findings. When it comes to the lack of organization within the unorganized workforce, digital nomadism is becoming increasingly prevalent in the fragmented e-commerce ecosystem, where people who are looking for freelance work are associated with technology-related entities. Among the outcomes of the qualitative standard of living and the presence of a favorable infrastructure, the specified domains such as Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America are not the only big targets of the specified phenomenon, the digital nomads. It has enabled various forms of entrepreneurship to thrive in our current generation, including the latest generational forms of technology companies and gig businesses. Such observations highlight the growing popularity of the digital nomad as the breadwinner of the new business and as a departure from the old form of work, or the old model, as it rebrands it, in the new business environment. Taken collectively, the experimental growth of digital nomadism is not merely an institutional catalyst that drives practices of mobility and work, but also a generative source, which

business starts to mobilize and grow, with the assistance of mobile digital assets. Managers and policymakers who react to them using fine-grained policies founded on evidence will likely enjoy the returns of growth and innovations and diffuse risks of allocation.

Recommendations

Digital nomadism should be encouraged by authorities. This incorporates the legal requirements that might enable remote work and facilitate the global mobility of digital nomads. The government needs to offer tax exemptions to businesses, give employees the opportunity to work at home, and invest in contemporary co-working laboratories and the Internet for digital travelers. Thus, by promoting the talents of people to work anywhere, policymakers have the chance to draw in digital nomads, improve the local economy, and encourage entrepreneurship. Remote work and the emergence of people as digital nomads represent an advantage to organizations. Thus, companies do not have any incentives to remain unchanged. The transformation may involve openness to schedules of working remotely, purchasing and using technology and tools of remote communication, and working with new business models, with the workforce at the global level. The firms are also able to target only servicing the digital nomads and products and services that are associated with working in distant locations, and enhancing the remote workforce. Upon capturing such opportunities, some businesses can draw the finest employees in the global market and still manage to survive in a flexible economy. Moreover, the scholars should figure out the relationship between digital nomadism and other trends and industries. Further studies on digital nomadism are focused on new inventions, traveling, homes, and even a discipline, along with new economic and cultural changes. The problems of digital nomads will be explained using quantitative data, and qualitative outcomes will be supported. Thus, proposed strategies will shed light on the degree to which work and entrepreneurship have been impacted by digital nomadism.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

We, the author(s), affirm that no artificial intelligence tools were used for idea generation or analysis. Paperpal was used exclusively for language enhancement and for paraphrasing. Additionally, the authors confirm that there are no financial or personal conflicts of interest that could affect this work.

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