Work, Lifestyle and Location: An Exploratory Study on the Motivations of Digital Entrepreneurs

by

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Abstract

At the nexus of alternate ways of working and living, a new type of entrepreneur has emerged. With varying degrees of flexibility over how, when and where they work, Digital Entrepreneurs (DEs) are a potentially significant breed of online business owner about which little is known. This thesis explores the motivations of DEs in creating their businesses, how they balance work with lifestyle domains and the role of location in their lives. Digital entrepreneurship is a highly topical yet under researched phenomenon. Employing a qualitative multiple case study research approach, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with thirty-six digital entrepreneurs in Australia and Bali. The aim of this approach was to gain insight into the subjective experience of DEs and a broader understanding of how they work and live. Motivational theories inform the study's theoretical framework, with Push-Pull Theory being the most prominent. While a significant body of literature exists in relation to the motivations of traditional entrepreneurs, the digital landscape provides an alternative context for business ownership and allows a new degree of temporal and spatial flexibility.

Five key themes emerged from the research findings through thematic analysis of the data. Each of these five themes provide potentially significant insights into the DE phenomenon and they are discussed and explored in light of relevant literature. These themes are synthesised into a model which presents the key motivational forces for digital entrepreneurship, informed by Push-Pull Theory, in the context of the digital landscape and broader economic and sociocultural environment. In view of DEs' temporal flexibility, the findings provide insights as to the different approaches DEs take to balancing work with other life domains. Also presented are the work, lifestyle and community factors that emerged as significant for DEs in choosing where to base themselves. Further, in the absence of a widely accepted definition of the term "Digital Entrepreneur" this study proposes a definition based on the research findings. This research has practical implications for regional and tourist areas looking to attract DEs, for the coworking spaces that support them and for those considering digital entrepreneurship.

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Statement of Authorship

By submitting this thesis for formal examination at CQUniversity Australia, I declare that it meets all requirements as outlined in the Research Higher Degree Theses Policy and Procedure.

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Signed…………………………..

Angela Bancilhon

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In conducting this study, I formulated the research questions and conducted the literature review. I was responsible for recruiting and interviewing research participants, as well as the collection, management and analysis of data. I authored the draft publication. (85%)

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My Co-Authors, Dr Geoffrey Chapman, Dr Stephanie Macht and Professor Julian Teicher helped shape the direction of the manuscript and critically reviewed it. They assisted in editing the manuscript and provided guidance in preparing it for submission. (15%)

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Candidate's Declaration

I declare that the publication above meets the requirements to be included in the thesis as outlined in the Research Higher Degree Theses Policy and Procedure.

Angela Bancilhon   25/03/2020

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List of Acronyms

3D………………………………………….Three Dimensional

BPNT……………………………………...Basic Psychological Needs Theory

CAQDAS………………………………….Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software

DE…………………………………………Digital Entrepreneur

EET………………………………………..Entrepreneurial Event Theory

GEM………………………………………Global Entrepreneurship Monitor

ICT…………………………………………Information and Communication Technology

QLD………………………………………Queensland, Australia

SDT………………………………………Self Determination Theory

TPB………………………………………Theory of Planned Behaviour

UK…………………………………………United Kingdom

US…………………………………………United States

USA………………………………………United States of America

VA…………………………………………Virtual Assistant

WA………………………………………...Western Australia

Prologue

Research is, in many respects, about passing through an alchemical crucible leading to deeper understandings of self and the world

-   Welch (2004, 207).

My experience of the research journey has been personal and profound. For some time, I stood hesitantly, on the precipice of undertaking a PhD, unsure whether to dive in or walk away. I'm satisfied that my intellectual curiosity (or perhaps doggedness) won out. This section presents a brief personal reflection of the research journey. It has been one of the most mentally challenging and enriching endeavours I have pursued. While memories of the late coffee fuelled nights, collegial conversations and moments of inspiration may fade, the PhD journey is one I will always remember fondly.

I started my research journey with one university but a change in job role led me to transfer my candidature to another. Working with two supervisory teams over the course of this project, has provided alternate academic perspectives on the topic and allowed me to learn from a number of experienced researchers, which I feel has been of benefit for both my personal learning and the project overall. My interest in the topic of this research began some years before I applied to a doctoral program. I was working in the resources sector and completing my MBA when I developed an interest in digital entrepreneurship. In 2009, on holiday in Bali, I read a copy of *The Four Hour Work Week* (Ferriss, 2007) and became intrigued with the idea of being able to live and work anywhere, funded by digital business ownership. It seemed a world away from the lengthy commute, long days and work-family life juggle of my experience at that time. Fast forward several years and I had left my previous role and was combining consulting work with lecturing at a local university. Inspired by my colleagues, I toyed with the idea of undertaking a PhD but it seemed such a huge undertaking, requiring a significant input of time and resources. After much internal debate my curiosity and love of learning won out and I began to search for a topic that I felt significantly passionate about to maintain the sustained effort required.

It took many months of toing and froing to finally commit to the topic of this research. In hindsight, it was an obvious choice and digital entrepreneurship is an area that continues to fascinate me. After significant inquiry, I presented my research proposal to a room of peers as

part of the confirmation process and one of my reviewers expressed the serendipitous nature of research. I remember feeling excited to embark on the next phase of the project and curious as to where the research would lead me. The purposive snowball sampling approach used, led me to research participants close to home, to the other side of Australia and to Indonesia. Throughout the interview process, it was a privilege to be granted access to DEs' personal stories and I felt an overwhelming need to present their perspectives as accurately as possible.

One of my early supervisors referred to the PhD journey as a process. During challenging times, I tried to remember that I don't need to have all the answers, just take the next step. Other advice provided by supervisors has been to *'let the data speak to you'* and '*write your way through it'*, which proved integral to the sense making process. The opportunity to undertake a PhD is significant and I am fortunate to have had a dedicated supervisory team and the necessary time and resources required to commit to this journey. Overall, the experience of undertaking a PhD has been profound both personally and professionally and one for which I am eternally grateful.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Overview

This thesis sets out to examine the Digital Entrepreneur (DE), an emerging type of entrepreneur about who little is known. The digital entrepreneur is a digital business creator, thought by some to differ significantly from the traditional entrepreneur. The unprecedented changes caused by globalisation and digital disruption are transforming the economic, social and environmental fabric of societies (Kenney, Rouvinen & Zysman, 2015; Griffin, 2015; Wilpert, 2009). Researchers posit that, as well as challenges, this disruption presents opportunities for business (Skog, Wimelius & Sandberg, 2018). This study explores an emerging type of entrepreneur seizing new opportunities and creating online businesses that lack the geographical limitations faced by traditional bricks and mortar enterprises.

As advances in technology create new opportunities for entrepreneurs (Kraus, Palmer, Kailer, Kallinger & Spitzer, 2019), digital entrepreneurship is garnering increasing researcher attention (Bandera, Helmy & Shehata, 2016; Bancilhon, Chapman, Macht & Teicher, 2019; Hafezieh, Akhavan, & Eshraghian, 2011; Nambisan, 2017; Sussan & Acs, 2017; Van Horne, Dutot & Zhang, 2016). Despite strong interest, digital entrepreneurship research is in its infancy and there is little academic literature in the area (Kraus et al., 2019, Zaheer, Breyer & Dumay, 2019). Researchers acknowledge that academic research has not always kept pace with practice and tends to be explanatory in its approach (Zaheer et al., 2019).

There is little is consensus in defining the digital entrepreneur (Zaheer et al., 2019), although there are varying interpretations of the term (Kraus et al., 2019). Hull, Hung, Hair Perotti and DeMartino (2007) discuss digital entrepreneurship as a "subcategory of entrepreneurship in which some or all of what would be physical in a traditional organization has been digitized" (p. 5). Nambisan (2017) discusses digital entrepreneurship as being at the intersection of digital technologies and entrepreneurship but does not proffer a definition as such. Le Dinh, Vu and Ayayi (2018) reconcile digital entrepreneurship with traditional entrepreneurship in terms of the new ways of creating and doing business possible in the digital era. In the absence of a widely accepted definition, for the purpose of this study a DE was defined as "an individual who creates an online business(es)". This working definition was kept deliberately broad given the exploratory nature of this research, which aims to provide insight into the motivations of DEs in creating their online businesses, and the interplay of work, lifestyle and location in their subjective experience.

This chapter begins with a summary of the background which frames the research (section 1.2). This section discusses the changes transforming the world of work and the modern workplace, with new technologies and globalisation creating an environment for the DE to emerge. This is followed, in section 1.3, with a summary of the rationale for the study and its aims. The research questions are framed to provide new insights into the DE phenomenon in the context of work, lifestyle and location. As an emerging area of research, theoretical foundations are required and the findings of this study have practical implications given the potential significance of this group of entrepreneurs (discussed in section 1.4). Lastly, section 1.5 provides a guide through the thesis, chapter by chapter, for ease of navigation.

1.2 Background to the Research

The rapidly changing world of work forms the background to this thesis and is presented in further detail in chapter 2. This section provides an overview of the transformation that is occurring in the world of work. These changes have seen increasingly flexible forms of work emerge along with new opportunities for business creation. Online business ownership does not necessarily entail the financial commitment and risk associated with traditional business, as will be explored. Lower barriers to entry have potentially made entrepreneurship in digital space more accessible (Schjoedt & Shaver, 2007) and provided the conditions for the DE to emerge. Changing societal attitudes and the growing significance of leisure (Pyöriä, Ojala, Saari & Järvinen, 2017; Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman & Lance, 2010) and travel (Reichenberger, 2018) are also thought to play a role in the rise of the DE phenomenon.

The future of work and the workplace have been the subject of much academic study (for example, Davis & Blass, 2007; Griffin, 2015; Jones, 2005; Kenney et al., 2015; Makimoto & Manners, 1997; Wilpert, 2009). In the wake of the rapid changes transforming work, it has been challenging for the literature to keep pace. Researchers assert that new information technologies are "promoting and speeding up globalisation" (Wilpert, 2009, p. 728) and unprecedented disruptions are changing existing business models and the nature of organisational design (Levin, 2017). It is widely accepted that as industries are disrupted, work is becoming increasingly knowledge intensive (Vesala & Tuomivaara, 2015). Simultaneously, the cultural, technological and economic forces that once governed the workplace are changing (Wilpert, 2009).

In research conducted by Davis and Blass (2007), the future workplace was imagined as "hi-tech, virtual and global, diverse, competitive but autonomous, and people will be organising their own work patterns to fit their desired lifestyle" (p. 50). Aspects of this vision are becoming

more evident, with many workplaces embracing new technologies and leveraging workplace diversity to gain competitive advantage; organisations can search for managerial, operational and cultural talent around the globe (Cascio & Boudreau, 2016). Workplace flexibility is also on the rise, as technology-aided work practices take work beyond the traditional workplace and terms including smart working and agile working (Lake, 2016) become part of the vernacular (discussed further in section 2.4). While traditional office hours remain typical in many organisations, information and communication technologies (ICT) are enabling a new type of worker to work away from the "well-worn highways and paths of the conventional organisation" (Harmer & Pauleen, 2012, p. 439). Researchers claim that digital connectivity allows people to work from virtually anywhere (Pauleen et al., 2015). Describing those "who swap their financially secure nine-to-five jobs for a location-independent and self-determined life", the term "digital nomad" has gained popularity (Muller, 2016, p. 344). Digital nomads are claimed to be a growing group, congregating in coworking locations around the globe, including Chang Mai and Bali; they are often painted as remote workers employed in technology fields (Reichenberger, 2018; Thompson, 2019). This phenomenon is explored further in section 2.10. As well as facilitating new opportunities for geographical flexibility in relation to work, technology has also created opportunities for business owners and budding entrepreneurs.

For many traditional entrepreneurs, there are significant start-up costs to business ownership, which may include plant and equipment, premises, fit out, and/or stock. However, according to a new generation of motivational and "how-to" books, technology and the internet have made business ownership more accessible than ever before. In *The $100 Startup*, Guillebeau (2012) advises readers how to create an online business for less than $US100 and highlights the flexibility and freedom of digital entrepreneurship. Ferriss's (2007) *Four Hour Work Week* portrays online business ownership as a means of balancing lifestyle and economic goals by creating the freedom to move to more congenial locations and work fewer, more flexible hours, with the subtitle, "escape 9 to 5, live anywhere and join the new rich". The book showcased an alternate paradigm of working and living and spent more than four years on The New York Times Best Seller List. It has been translated into more than 35 languages worldwide and sold in excess of 1.35 million copies ("Human Window", n.d.). The idea of leaving traditional employment and experiencing increased temporal and spatial flexibility appears to have resonated across the globe.

More accessible business ownership together with spatial and temporal flexibility appear to present convergent opportunities for the digital entrepreneur, who has attracted growing researcher attention over recent decades (Hafezieh et al., 2011, Harmer & Pauleen, 2012;

Hull et al., 2007; Makimoto & Manners, 1997). Given the flexibility that online business allows, DEs are not restricted to living in large cities or commercial centres; they can elect to base themselves in tourist or regional locations or like digital nomads, forego a base for life on the move. The nature of online business provides DEs with the potential to be location independent, given their business portability. Provided they have a mobile device and reliable internet access, researchers suggest that for a new generation of entrepreneurs, work can be performed from anywhere (Müller, 2016; Harmer & Pauleen, 2012). Further, as working hours are no longer restricted within the boundaries of the nine to five work day, DEs have additional choice in designing their work-leisure fusion. Research suggests this new era of flexibility and mobility "blurs the boundaries between leisure and work, and home and away" (Sun & Xu, 2017, p. 64).

It appears that changing societal norms regarding leisure and travel have also facilitated this interest in mobile working (Nash, Jarrahi, Sutherland & Phillips, 2018). Some researchers suggest that leisure has been increasing in importance and younger generations are wanting more leisure than previous generations (Twenge et al., 2010). Other researchers posit that it is not only younger generations who seek more leisure time, as leisure has seemingly gained increasing significance with older generations, as well as Millennials (Pyöriä et.al., 2017). Manovich (2016) asserts that digital platforms, such as Instagram, can provide a window into the shared identities of a young global generation connected through such platforms. The growing significance of leisure and travel appears to be evidenced through Instagram feeds with in excess of 100 million images using the popular hashtag "travel" (Manovich, 2016, p. 89). Digital entrepreneurs appear to be embracing the opportunities globalisation and new technologies make possible in creating and operating their online businesses.

1.3 Rationale, Aims and Research Questions

This section presents the rationale for this study and its aims, which underpin development of the research questions this thesis seeks to address. In exploring the motivations of DEs, this study takes a holistic approach, examining the interplay of work, lifestyle and location in the lived experience of the research participants. According to literature, research into entrepreneurs has been largely based in economics (Anderson, 2015; Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Peters, Frehse & Buhalis, 2009). This is understandable, given that entrepreneurship was introduced into academic literature by economists and has long been associated with free enterprise and capitalism (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004). Entrepreneurial activity has been encouraged in view of the benefits it brings to the economy (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004; Mair & Marti, 2009; Schumpeter, 1934) and community (Low & MacMillan,

1988). Such benefits are well documented as including new job creation, economic development and innovation (Faggio & Silva, 2014; Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004; Mair & Marti, 2009; Schumpeter, 1934).

The motivations of entrepreneurs have been the subject of much research, also largely from an economic perspective (Low & MacMillan, 1988; McClelland,1961; Wach, Stephan & Gorgievski, 2016). In recent decades, researchers have called for a focus on the broader context of reasons that individuals engage in entrepreneurship (Welter, Baker, Audretsch & Gartner, 2017) in order to create a more complete picture (Kuratko, Hornsby and Naffziger, 1997). Measuring entrepreneurship from an economic standpoint has a number of benefits, one of which is ease of measurement. However, some researchers have criticised the economic view of entrepreneurship as being narrow and allowing little room for the subjectivities of entrepreneurship practice (Anderson, 2015). Consequently, the study of alternate contexts of entrepreneurship, that include measures of entrepreneurial success beyond financial measures, is warranted (Anderson, 2015; Berglund, 2007; Stirzaker & Galloway, 2017). In addition to the economic role entrepreneurs play, there is growing interest in entrepreneurship as a social, cultural and historical phenomenon (Pittaway & Tunstall, 2016). In tandem, entrepreneurship is being practiced in new ways by populations including digital entrepreneurs, lifestyle entrepreneurs (Marchant & Mottiar, 2011), digital nomads (Makimoto & Manners, 1997) and "offroaders" (Harmer & Pauleen, 2012, p. 439).

In view of the opportunities that globalisation and emergent technologies bring to business ownership, an exploratory approach to researching digital entrepreneurship as a phenomenon is required. As a new topic of research, comprehensive, exploratory studies are needed for distinctive theories and concepts to emerge and lay the foundations for future studies (Zaheer, Breyer, Dumay & Enjeti, 2019). It is anticipated that some DEs may be pioneers of new ways of combining business ownership with lifestyle and travel. The purpose of this exploratory research is to develop new understanding of DEs, their motivations for starting an online business and how they combine work with travel and other lifestyle domains.

The study adopts a constructivist paradigm and considers the subjective meaning that DEs create for their work and personal lives. In addressing the study aims, this approach allows the researcher to get close to participants and develop an understanding of their internal reality (Shaw, 1999). When the goal is to generate understanding of the human experience within a certain context, qualitative inquiry is the preferable approach (Malik, 2017). This method was adopted to facilitate an in-depth exploration of how DEs construct their individual reality. Using a case study approach the research themes of work, lifestyle and location are explored to

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inform the aims of this research and provide insight into the motivations of individuals pursuing an online business. To generate understanding of the DE phenomenon this thesis addresses the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What motivates an individual to pursue an online business?

There are key distinctions between traditional and digital business, with researchers claiming these differences include the ease of entry into online business and reduced costs (Hull et al., 2007; Schjoedt & Shaver, 2007). However, lower barriers to entry are only part of the equation; digital business also offers flexibility and the potential to work from anywhere (Pauleen et al., 2015). Given such distinctions, DEs are a potentially significant group, who can provide insight into new ways of working and living. An understanding of the motivational factors driving and incentivising DEs' behaviour is required. While this new knowledge is pertinent in the creation of programs that foster entrepreneurship and innovation, these insights may have broader implications in relation to the future of work within a globalised economy. In view of DEs' temporal and spatial flexibility, their motivations may include factors yet to be considered within the body of literature on entrepreneurial motivations. The motivational theories that have emerged from and underpin studies of traditional entrepreneurs are presented in chapter three and form the framework for this study. However, what is unknown is how these theories apply to this newer form of entrepreneurship.

Research Question 2: How do DEs balance their work and lifestyle domains?

The differences between traditional entrepreneurship and digital entrepreneurship indicate that standard business hours may not be relevant for DEs. It is unknown what impact the virtual shopfront, automation software and other digital tools will have on DEs' work schedules. Further, provided their temporal flexibility, of interest is how leisure and other activities fit with operating their online businesses. Studies suggest that younger (Twenge et al., 2010), as well as older (Pyöriä et al., 2017), generations are placing increasing importance on leisure. DEs may exhibit alternate ways to combine work and other lifestyle activities, including leisure, enabled by technology. Alternately, the virtual shop front could bond DEs to their technology aided devices, leaving little room for other pursuits. The approaches that DEs take in balancing work and other life domains may provide useful insights and contribute to the body of literature in this area. Insight into alternate contexts of combining work and leisure may have practical implications for technology aided workers and unveil avenues for research not previously considered.

Research Question 3: How does location play a role in the work and life of DEs?

Researchers suggest that digital workers, including digital entrepreneurs, have the ability to work from anywhere with a mobile device and reliable internet connection (Müller, 2016; Pauleen et al., 2015). However, this study could not identify any published research on how online business ownership is affected by living in regional or tourist areas. Traditionally, access to a major city has been critical for many types of businesses in accessing resources, staff and suppliers. For small businesses, customer markets have been largely based in the same locale as the entrepreneur. However, digital business owners can access an international marketplace from virtually any location (Zaheer et al., 2019). There is no known research on how location impacts digital entrepreneurs or their business. Dutot and Van Horne's (2015) study of French and Emirati digital entrepreneurs examined entrepreneurial intentions but the discussion did not extend to include lifestyle or location. Likewise, Malik's (2017) study of women digital entrepreneurs in the U.S. (explored further in section 3.10), which considers flexibility in relation to work but does not explore other lifestyle factors or location.

In this study participant selection is bounded by location. Research participants are based in regional and tourist areas and of interest are the implications of this for their businesses. Further, in view of their spatial flexibility, of significance are the factors that draw DEs to a particular location. Certain tourism destinations, including Bali, are becoming geographical 'hot-spots' for digitally enabled workers to congregate (Thompson, 2018, p. 6) including DEs, yet there is little research on this phenomenon. As this phenomenon continues to grow, governments may attempt to attract digital workers, including DEs. The contribution of entrepreneurs may assist local sustainability, particularly in tourist and regional areas (Crnogaj, Rebernik, Bradac Hojnik & Omerzel Gomezelj, 2014). Entrepreneurs also play an important role in building connected communities (Mottiar, Boluk & Kline, 2018). Understanding the lifestyle factors that attract DEs, and the infrastructure and services they require to conduct their businesses and their lives, will therefore gain increasing importance.

To address the research questions and explore the broader issues surrounding this emergent group, a qualitative case study methodology was the preferred approach. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews with DEs were conducted, with a view to capturing their narratives. Thirty-six interviews took place with DEs based in parts of Australia and Bali, with each location forming a case boundary. The Australian case study encompasses the south west of Western Australia and the Northern Queensland coast. The Bali case study is mainly centred around two coworking locations, in Canggu and Ubud, on the island of Bali, Indonesia. The criteria for selection of participants were that they had started their own business, were highly digitally

connected to that business and physically located in the areas determined by the case boundaries.

1.4 Implications

This study has implications from both theoretical and practical viewpoints. Digital entrepreneurship is a new area of research in which theoretical foundations are required. The findings of this study will help lay these foundations and inform both researchers and policy makers about this way of working and the factors that motivate digital entrepreneurs in the creation of their businesses. The digital business trend is set to continue as digital disruption and globalisation transform industries. In the retail sector alone, economic activity is shifting away from bricks and mortar retail; in Australia, this is evidenced by media reports of growing retail vacancy rates, particularly in regional areas, as shopping expenditure moves online (Terzon, Parsons, Ruddick, 2018). Online spending on consumer goods increased 24.4% in 2018, reaching $AU27.5 billion (Australia Post, 2019). This presents significant opportunities to those seeking to start online businesses in the retail sector, whether for economic or lifestyle reasons or a combination of the two. While major strides have been made in advancing the currency and relevance of entrepreneurial research, further focus is needed on "the role of context in motivating people to engage in entrepreneurship and endure the challenges" (Zahra, Wright & Abdelgawad 2014, p. 480). This highlights the significant need for research on entrepreneurial motives in the context of the digital space, with the DE phenomenon currently under researched.

Australian government policy proposes that transformation in the way people live, work and communicate, driven by unprecedented technological change, has created a need to embrace new ideas, in science and innovation, to facilitate a new age of economic prosperity (Commonwealth of Australia, 2015). The rationale for such policy is job provision and increased living standards and a sustainable economic future. In the digital age, governments are recognising that entrepreneurship and innovation are important components of maximising a nation's competitiveness in a global environment. Governments and policy makers require understanding of the entrepreneurial motivations that drive an innovative business and their requirements in doing so (Beaver & Prince, 2002). Despite strong interest in digital business, there is little research as to the opportunities, success factors, and challenges of digital entrepreneurship (Kraus et al., 2019). Further insight into the challenges that could hinder digital business growth and sustainability is needed (Van Horne et al., 2016), for example, gaining better understanding of the business support services, internet infrastructure and social networks that are required by DEs in the operation of their businesses.

The qualitative approach used in conducting this research provides a view into DEs' lived experiences and their perspectives in relation to work, lifestyle and location. Their unique perspectives, together with commonalities in the sample group, can provide insight into this phenomenon with broader implications. Given DE's potential flexibility, of significance are the locational factors that appeal to them in electing where to base themselves. Gaining an understanding of this emerging phenomenon has practical implications for regional and tourism areas looking to attract DEs and draw them away from Central Business Districts and metropolitan areas. In Australia, this is particularly relevant as the country is sparsely populated with a large land mass of about 7.692 million square kilometres. Further, in order to foster innovation, local communities need to attract and/or develop entrepreneurial capability. This study will also inform aspiring DEs, providing insight into the realities of digital business ownership and the work and personal challenges associated with this lifestyle. Insight into this phenomenon may also influence the design of business education courses and public discussions of changing work patterns and entrepreneurial trends.

1.5 Overview of the Thesis

To fulfil the aim of this study and provide insight into the research questions outlined, the chapters are structured as follows:

Chapter Two – Literature Review: The Evolving World of Work

Chapter Two presents an overview of the literature in relation to the evolving world of work and the relevant economic and sociocultural forces at play. The effects of digital disruption on the standard employment model and the evolution of new ways of working, such as those enabled by third party online platforms, are discussed. The rise of flexible work, largely facilitated by ICTs, is also examined. The literature on the social drivers for change in relation to work and leisure are explored as these drivers help create the landscape in which new ways of practicing entrepreneurship have become possible. Discussion then centres on the rise in self-employment, influenced by the transformation of work. The review explores entrepreneurship and its role in the economy, including from a government perspective. Following this, the digital entrepreneur is introduced, with several topics relevant to this new form of entrepreneurship discussed. The factors used to measure entrepreneurial success take on a new dimension when lifestyle factors, travel and mobility are combined with business. This review helps set the context in which the digital entrepreneur has emerged.

Chapter Three – Theoretical Framework: Motivational Theory

Motivational theory forms the study's framework with Push-Pull Theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986) the principal theory informing the research. This chapter commences with a discussion of human motivation and moves through significant motivational theories including Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory, McClelland's (1961) Need for Achievement Theory, Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964), Personality Trait Theories (Rotter, 1966; Bandura 1977; McCrae & Costa, 1987), The Model of the Entrepreneurial Event (Shapero & Sokol, 1982), Azjen's (1985) Theory of Planned Behaviour and Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), The chapter then focusses on Push-Pull Theory, which is well established in studying entrepreneurs (Anderson, Harbi and Brahem, 2013; Giacomin Guyot, Janssen & Lohest, 2007; Gilad & Levine, 1986; Kirkwood, 2009; Segal, Borgia & Schoenfeld, 2005). Digital entrepreneurship is a new research frontier, and the chapter closes with discussion of the research aims and the rationale for the study. There is limited understanding of the motivations of DEs and how such motivations may differ from those of traditional entrepreneurs. DEs' flexibility, in relation to when and where they work, presents an alternate context for entrepreneurship. This research offers theoretical and practical insights not previously considered, as the world of work continues to transform.

Chapter Four – Research Methodology

The framework used in conducting this exploratory research is presented in chapter four. Adopting a constructivist view and using a qualitative case study methodology, this study addresses the three research questions outlined in chapter one and reintroduced in chapter three. The rationale for a qualitative approach is set out in this chapter together with the reasons a multiple case study was assessed as the preferred research method. Consideration of case selection and bounding is presented, followed by the approach taken to sampling and research participant selection. Data collection involved semi-structured in-depth interviews, with the researcher conducting pilot interviews, as well as field interviews, during this phase of the study. Finally, the study's ethical considerations are outlined as the chapter closes.

Chapter Five – Data Analysis

The data analysis phase of the study is presented and discussed in chapter five. It commences with a description of the two cases that are the subject of this research. Data management considerations are then discussed, and the analysis framed. Data collected during the project was analysed thematically. The phases of thematic analysis, used to find patterns and themes within data, are presented, together with the rationale for data-based decisions in relation to coding and theme construction. Validity and reliability required consideration to ensure the

process of analysis was both rigorous and transparent. The chapter concludes with discussion of the limitations of the process adopted during this study.

Chapter Six – Findings

Chapter six introduces the findings, which were revealed through detailed analysis of the data. This chapter has two parts, the first of which presents the five key themes that emerged from the data relevant to the research questions posed. In presenting these findings, reference is made to the broad data set as well as to individual research participant responses. Quotes provide implicit and/or explicit evidence to support theme development and offer new insights from the perspective of the research participants, in view of the research purpose. The second part of the chapter presents the study's additional findings. First, a Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship is introduced, combining the study's key findings in response to the first research question. Second, as there is no widely accepted definition of the term 'Digital Entrepreneur', the chapter proposes a definition. This definition takes into account four key factors, based on the subjective interpretations of research participants. Finally, the chapter outlines the main challenges of digital entrepreneurship, as revealed by the study findings.

Chapter Seven – Discussion

Chapter seven provides an interpretation of the research findings, as they relate to the research questions. The literature (presented in chapter two) and motivational theory (chapter three) are discussed as relevant to each of the findings and further literature introduced where it enhances the discussion. The two case studies are also compared and contrasted in relation to study findings. This chapter includes discussion of the study's additional findings, with the Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship examined in view of relevant nascent literature and motivational theory. A definition of the term "Digital Entrepreneur" is proposed based on current research and the subjective perceptions of the participants. Finally, the challenges of digital entrepreneurship are discussed.

Chapter Eight – Conclusion, Implication and Limitations

The final chapter of the thesis provides the conclusion to this study, along with the study implications and limitations of the approach taken. Firstly, the research questions are revisited and answered explicitly based on the study's findings and discussion. This research has several implications from both theoretical and practical perspectives. The study's contributions to knowledge, including those to motivational theory, are outlined followed by the practical implications of this research. The limitations and delimitations of this research are then reported and further avenues for research identified, followed by a summation of the thesis.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review: The Evolving World of Work

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the environment in which the DE has been conceived and the converging economic and sociocultural factors at play in the growth of this phenomenon. In exploring the motivations of digital entrepreneurs, economic and sociocultural factors provide context for the decision to pursue digital entrepreneurship (central to the first research question). The work and lifestyle factors identified in Figure 2.1 and discussed within this chapter, are not an exhaustive list but present some of the considerations that may factor in the decision to pursue entrepreneurship. It is recognised that motivations can be work or lifestyle related (or both) and that digital entrepreneurship may provide an opportunity to combine these motivations (linked to research question two). The spatial flexibility that digital entrepreneurship can allow provides an environment within which these dual motivations may be satisfied (research question three).

Economic and Sociocultural Environment

Work Factors

Lifestyle Factors

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Globalisation

Changing Employment Models

Rise of Self Employment

Workplace Dissatisfaction

The Rise of Flexible Work

Digital Entrepreneurship

Lifestyle and Location

Leisure

Travel
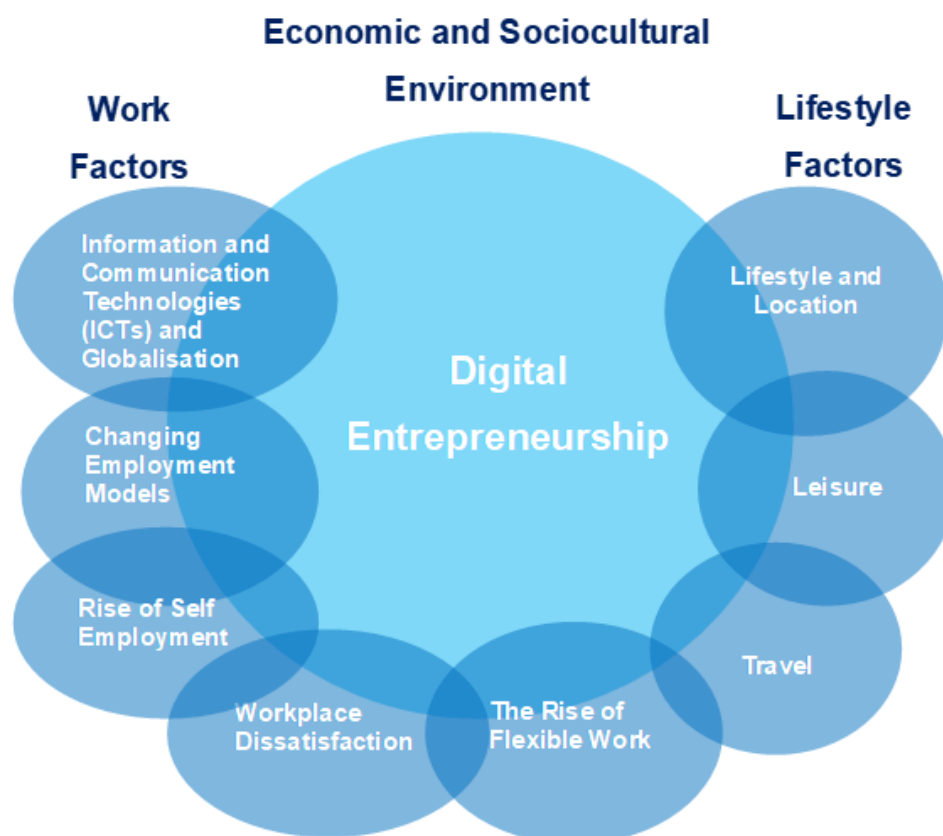
Figure 2.1 Digital Entrepreneurship - Economic and Sociocultural Environment

Researchers discuss Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as advancing globalisation (Wilpert, 2009) and transforming the world of work with significant implications for the economic, social and environmental fabric of societies (Davis & Blass, 2007; Griffin, 2015; Makimoto & Manners, 1997), discussed in section 2.2. This is presenting new business opportunities (Skog et al., 2018), including those for digital business creation. In industrialised nations, the digitisation of the economy has seen some organisations collapse or struggle to reinvent themselves (Lucas & Goh, 2009). Simultaneously, the labour market has experienced a downward shift of the standard employment model and a rise of 'non-standard' work arrangements (section 2.3). Along with changes to the form of employment, new ways of working are becoming more prevalent. Flexible work, discussed in section 2.4, is reflected in terms such as teleworking (Bailey & Kurland, 2002), smart working and agile working (Lake, 2016). The challenges with navigating between work and other domains, influenced by ICTs, has drawn increasing researcher focus (Di Domenico, Daniel & Nunan, 2014; Ezzedeen & Zikic, 2017; Pauleen et al., 2015). In section 2.5, social drivers for change including workplace dissatisfaction, changing attitudes to leisure, longer life spans and emerging trends in self-employment are also considered.

An overview of the entrepreneurship literature is presented in section 2.6, with ICTs facilitating entrepreneurship in new ways (Kraus et al., 2019). In an increasingly competitive international marketplace, government policy is both an enabler and potential blocker of entrepreneurial activity (Beaver & Prince, 2002). In section 2.7, the focus moves to the digital entrepreneur, who is central to this study. With little known about the DE, and their motivations for digital business creation, this section provides a synopsis of nascent literature in the area. In exploring entrepreneurship, economic growth and material wealth are part of the equation (Stirzaker & Galloway, 2017) but there is more to be being an entrepreneur than economics. Morrison (2006) asserts that there are a myriad of reasons tied to culture, values and beliefs that drive people to pursue their own business, as is explored in 2.8. For example, the lifestyle benefits of business are not often reported in entrepreneurship literature (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000). The phenomenon of "lifestyle entrepreneurship" and the significance of location are discussed in section 2.9. Communications technology also creates new opportunities for people to mix business with travel. Section 2.10 explores travel and mobility as an evolving context for the practice of entrepreneurship. The literature review concludes with a summary of the chapter and what is currently known in relation to digital entrepreneurship that will inform this study (section 2.11).

2.2 ICTs and Globalisation

This section explores issues resulting from the rise of digital technology, specifically in relation to work and employment. Digital disruption refers to the impact on business as a consequence of digitisation of the economy (Weill & Woerner, 2015; Valenduc & Vendramin, 2017). The World Economic Forum (2016) suggests that business models in all industries are being disrupted as socio-economic and demographic factors interact with the 'fourth industrial revolution'. The fourth industrial revolution denotes the convergence of digital, physical and biological technologies that are transforming the way products are manufactured and used (Maynard, 2015). The standard employment model appears to be disappearing (Fudge, 2017) and giving rise to non-standard working arrangements (Gandini, 2015; Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017), including short-term contracts and third party platform enabled task based work (Leighton, 2016). In tandem, the cultural, technological, and economic forces that once governed how, where, and when work could be performed are changing (Wilpert, 2009). These transformations, arising with the digitalisation of the economy, are now discussed.

Digital disruption has had implications in many industries; in order to survive in an evolving technological environment, organisations must be able to adapt and transform. Researchers suggest that when new technologies allowed Netflix to stream video content over the internet, a failure to respond effectively led to Blockbuster's demise (Christensen, Raynor & McDonald, 2015). Kodak invented and patented many of the components of digital photography but underestimated its potential reach, experiencing a significant loss of their workforce and near crippling share market fall (Lucas & Goh, 2009). Some organisations have had more success with disruptive technologies; financial trading organisation, Charles Schwab, successfully moved into online trading in the late 1990's (Obal, 2013). As the cases of Kodak and Blockbuster illustrate, failing to anticipate the impact of technology can have significant consequences. To survive and prosper, within an increasingly unpredictable environment, organisations are required to be adaptable (Levin, 2017). The World Economic Forum (2016) predicts advanced robotics, artificial intelligence and biotechnology will have significantly impacted industries and business models by 2020 ("The Future of Jobs Report", 2016). Researchers claim these impacts are already being seen in the health care, transport and customer service industries (Smith & Anderson, 2014). Maynard (2015) asserts that while the fourth industrial revolution brings the promise of social, economic and environmental advances it comes with potential cyber "insecurity" and other risks beyond those considered within existing governance and regulation frameworks (p. 1005). This is relevant to the digital entrepreneur, in that working online allows spatial flexibility and it is not known how existing regulation frameworks will cater for internationally mobile business owners, earning an income online.

Digital disruption and the fourth industrial revolution are central drivers transforming the labour market. As industries are disrupted, algorithms and databases are automating certain types of work (Kenney & Zysman, 2016) and work is becoming increasingly knowledge intensive (Vesala & Tuomivaara, 2015). While job losses have been felt in areas including administration, service and sales (Griffin, 2015), researchers assert that the technological advances that displace workers have historically created more new jobs than they destroy (Smith & Anderson, 2014). New categories of job roles are emerging, as others wholly or partially disappear ("The Future of Jobs Report", 2016). With the rise of digital media, new jobs that have been created or transformed include those in production, marketing, administration and technical support (Kenney & Zysman, 2016). In addition to technology, demographic and socioeconomic changes are expected to have a major impact on employment creation. The World Economic Forum (2016) cites the rising middle classes in emerging markets, the changing role of women in the economy and, longevity and aging populations in advanced economies, as major drivers of employment creation, as explored further in section 2.5.

The ability to respond quickly is critical in contexts of environmental turbulence and change (Breu, Hemingway, Strathern & Bridger, 2002) and researchers posit that in a fast-changing world, rigid labour markets are not a good fit (Martes, 2016). One of the ways that organisations can be agile is to focus on their key strengths and outsource non-core functions. Outsourcing is referred to as the "acquisition of services from external service providers" (Grover, Cheon & Teng, 1994, p. 34). Holtgrewe (2014) asserts that within the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector, restructuring, outsourcing and offshoring have been common practice for years. This is relevant to the digital entrepreneur and provides an illustration of the new opportunities available. Researchers posit that specificities of the digital sphere, provide the DE with "a better sensibility to risk, creativity or agility" (Van Horne et al., 2016, p. 296). DEs are not typically bound by rigid corporate structures and researchers claim that reduced bureaucracy and lower cultural barriers in small firms and start-ups, can provide a form of competitive advantage (Slevin & Covin, 1998), allowing increased agility in responding to environmental change. Corporate outsourcing creates opportunities for DEs, who may be a position to provide services to other organisations or alternately outsource their own non-core business activities.

2.3 Changing Employment Models

Abraham, Haltiwanger, Sandusky and Spletzer (2018) discuss how the accelerated pace of change in the organisation of work is impacting both businesses and workers. This section

discusses changing employment models and new forms of non-standard work, such as those available in the 'gig economy'. This discussion provides relevant background as to the emergence of new opportunities for work in the digital economy, together with the potential challenges of such.

In the 20th century, the standard employment relationship was the normative model of employment in industrialised democracies (Fudge, 2017). According to Leighton (2016), standard employment brought stability and predictability to the workplace and afforded certain rights and protections to the employee. Standard employment was tightly regulated by legislation and largely dictated that people worked certain hours, for which they were paid a regular rate (Sargeant, 2017). In Australia, many researchers argue that the most significant change in the industrial relations system was deregulation of the labour market and the shift toward enterprise bargaining, including single employer contracts outside of award regulation (Macdonald, Campbell & Burgess, 2001). Fudge (2017) highlights the steady shift away from the standard employment model, with transformation of the labour market resulting in a rise of non-standard work arrangements across many industries (Gandini, 2015; Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017). Working arrangements have also been shaped by changes in production technologies, as well as demographic changes, such as the increased representation of women in the labour force (Venn, Carey, Strazdins & Burgess, 2016).

Researchers claim that once secure jobs are increasingly being replaced by short-term contracts and other precarious or contingent forms of employment (Inoue, Tsurugano, Nishikitani, & Yano, 2010). Short-term contracts, workforce casualisation and part-time work arrangements are continuing to rise (Griffin, 2015), together with freelance work and other precarious forms of employment (Rodino-Colocino, 2012). The term "precarious" describes short-term, insecure, at will and freelance work (Rodino-Colocino, 2012, p. 22). While seemingly a new development, Quinlan (2012) suggests that precarious employment has been a labour market feature since the first industrial revolution, particularly in industries such as construction and agriculture. According to research, non-standard forms of employment can result in misclassification of employment status and inadequate protections for those who are essentially employees but falsely classified as self-employed (Sergeant, 2017). Fudge (2017) posits that the institutions and political alliances that support the standard employment relationship have weakened and irregular work arrangements may fall outside the scope of labour laws and associated standards and regulations, such as collective bargaining. The evolving economy places pressure on regulators who are operating within existing labour and taxation frameworks (Maselli, Lenaerts, & Beblavy, 2016). Further, there is polarisation in relation to non-standard work between casual, part-time and temporary workers in precarious

employment and 'elite' professional contractors (McKeown, 2005). Professional contractors have been identified as operating their own businesses through which they are independently contracted to perform services for others (McKeown & Cochrane, 2012). Despite the often-cited view of professional contractors as being "elite", McKeown's (2005) research uncovered a continuum of arrangements ranging from contracting as "a trap associated with job insecurity" to a desirable career option (p. 291). Overall, evidence emerged that professional contracting can be just as precarious as other types of non-standard work.

Another form of non-standard employment is the emerging and rapidly growing trend that has been informally coined the 'gig economy' (Leighton, 2016), within which workers are paid via online third party platforms (Parigi & Ma, 2016). Besides the gig economy, terms such as the on-demand economy, sharing economy (Maselli et al., 2016) and access economy have entered modern vernacular (Kalleberg & Dunn, 2016). Within this new economy, workers are paid for a specific task or tasks. Performance of "one off jobs" can provide an alternate way to create an income (Sergeant, 2017, p. 2). These workers supply labour on a short-term basis via third party platforms, such as Uber, Airbnb and Task Rabbit, and generate income by sharing and/or selling goods and services (Lobel, 2017; Parigi & Ma, 2016). Virtual platforms and apps create a hidden infrastructure connecting the supply and demand of services and facilitating business and customer interaction (Aloisi, 2015). Work on demand allows firms to channel traditional working activities, such as clerical work, through mobile apps (De Stefano, 2015).

While for some, gig employment may provide a secondary source of income, supplementing traditional employment (Abraham et al., 2018), there is evidence that many gig workers are frustrated with low levels of pay and lack of steady, reliable income (Berg, 2015). Sergeant (2017) suggests that the rise in non-standard employment may reflect an attempt by employers to avoid regulation. As can be the case with other forms of non-standard work, the on-demand economy is typically unregulated, or minimally regulated (Berg, 2015; Leighton, 2016). There are contrasting views of independent gig workers from "empowered" to sell their skills to "exploited" by the corporations operating the platforms (Sergeant, 2017, p. 4) and worse off in terms of worker protection (Aloisi, 2015). Kalleberg and Dunn (2016) postulate that there needs to be deeper understanding of the dynamics at play in the gig economy and claim that gig workers need a safety net, of insurance and retirement benefits, in order to protect themselves. In the Australian context, researchers suggest that an increasing number of gig workers look to face working conditions, compensation and insecurity that most Australians would consider unacceptable (Stewart & Stanford, 2017). It appears that it may be necessary for governments to step in and enforce labour standards in what is essentially a

platform regulated market (Berg, 2015). Stewart and Stanford (2017) claim that labour regulation requires innovative strategies in order to embrace the positive potential of digital technologies and improve human welfare.

Despite ongoing changes, in the U.S. the largest share of work is still attributed to traditional employment (Abraham et al., 2018). Yet, the future working life for today's teens seems impossible to predict. There is polarisation between those who foresee the future world of work as filled with boundless possibilities and those who envisage massive job market displacement ("The Future of Jobs", 2016). In any case, it seems likely that permanent positions will experience further decline (Bauman, 2004) and lifetime jobs will continue to disappear (Parigi & Ma, 2016). Yet, the new economy and non-standard forms of working will continue to create opportunities with claims that of children entering primary school today, sixty five percent will end up working in job types that do not yet exist ("The Future of Jobs Report", 2016). Some of the newer roles created include those in digital and social media marketing, app development and video production (Kenney & Zysman, 2016). Mulcahy (2016) claims that those whose talents are in high demand may design their own working futures and be well compensated for their efforts, while the low skilled can potentially have greater flexibility and more autonomy in relation to their work. It seems unlikely all will benefit from the gig economy. However, in relation to the future of work one thing does seem certain, those who are self-directed in creating their own opportunities, will be less at the peril of the environmental forces at play. Digital entrepreneurs appear to be doing just that and experiencing a new era of flexibility as a result.

2.4 The Rise of Flexible Work

Evolving technology aided work practices are taking work and workers beyond the conventional workplace (Lake, 2016). 'Flexibility', within the context of the labour market, is largely grouped into three broad categories - functional, numerical and wage or reward flexibility - and is often referred to in disparate ways within the literature (Michie & Sheehan, 2005). Within the context of this research, 'flexibility' refers to when and where work is performed. In practically every industry, technology has transformed where work is done, giving rise to flexible work, remote work and on-demand work ("*The Future of Jobs Report*", 2016). While foreseen in the 1950s, telework did not become widely feasible until personal computers and modems became available in the 1970s (Hill, Hawkins & Miller, 1996). Since then it has evolved from home-based telework to global e-outsourcing, a trend that is seen as accelerating (Standen & Sinclair-Jones, 2004). From an organisation's perspective, remote workers can have significant benefits including cheaper labour, a larger pool of workers to

draw from and access to new geographical markets (Standen & Sinclair-Jones, 2004). Telework studies indicate that such benefits can improve firm performance (Martínez-Sánchez, Pérez-Pérez, Vela-Jiménez, & de-Luis-Carnicer, 2008).

As knowledge workers become increasingly untethered to traditional working spaces, working from home can be an attractive alternative. Working from home reduces commuting time and may provide the opportunity to fulfil family responsibilities in tandem with work. However, while work and family may support each other, they also compete for finite resources in time, money and energy (De Rosenblatt, deMik Anderson & Johnson, 1985). The growing penetration of ICTs into everyday life, particularly with the prevalence of mobile devices, have made the separation of home from work increasingly difficult and more porous (Di Domenico et al., 2014; Gold & Mustafa, 2013; Pauleen et al., 2015).

Navigating between the digital and physical worlds is an area which is drawing increasing researcher focus (Ezzedeen & Zikic, 2017; Pauleen et al., 2015) and particularly relevant to the second research question, which explores DE perceptions of balance between work and lifestyle domains. A number of concepts emerged as relevant to this question including boundary setting and mental mobility which are explored in this section. In a study of digitally connected freelancer workers, Gold and Mustafa (2013) discussed the requirement for temporal flexibility and the setting of temporal boundaries in relation to the separating of work and home tasks. They considered monochronic time, which is linear and emphasises schedules, as opposed to polychronic time in which multiple things happen at once. Polychronic time, during which completion of home and work tasks takes place in irregular succession or simultaneously, can tend to dissolve the temporal boundaries that exist between work and home (Gold & Mustafa, 2013). Combining childcare activities with work, as an example, could allow one to fulfil these roles simultaneously.

Di Domenico et al., (2014) revisited Becker's (1930) work on mental mobility and theorised the process by which individuals navigate overlapping home/workspaces and physical and digital spheres. They conducted in-depth inductive research, interviewing twenty-three home-based online entrepreneurs. Their findings indicate feelings of "betwixt and between" in relation to interviewees' mental mobility; "neither fully occupying one state/place nor another, yet simultaneously residing in both", creating tensions they must deal with (Di Domenico et al., 2014). It appears the physical freedom possible through using ICTs does not equate to mental freedom. Further, it can be difficult to distinguish between work and leisure especially given the blurred lines between work time and free time (Reichenberger, 2018).

Boundary theory postulates that the boundaries between work and personal life can be managed through segmentation and/or integration of these domains (Bulger, Matthews & Hoffman, 2007). Nippert-Eng's (1996) seminal research suggests that, in relation to home and paid work, a separation-integration continuum exists within which individuals are likely to fit. Those on the separation end of the continuum construct boundaries separating their personal and work domains; on the opposite end of the continuum, work and personal domains are integrated to varying degrees. The essence of boundary theory is that individuals create and maintain boundaries to simplify their lives; such boundaries may be physical, temporal, cognitive, emotional and/or relational (Ashforth, Kreiner & Fugate, 2000). Qualitative research studies have explored entrepreneurs' subjective experiences with boundary management and work life balance. Ezzedeen and Zikic (2017) interviewed twenty two individuals who had created new ventures in the Canadian technology sector. They found that research participants moved between two work-life discourses, one highlighting the importance and desirability of balance and the other denying its feasibility and applicability. Those research participants desiring balance used segmentation strategies to separate work from other life spheres, while those who denied the significance of balance integrated work into other domains. In this study, this discussion is particularly relevant to the second research question.

Balance as a subjective concept was a finding of Pauleen et al.'s (2015) study exploring the impact of mobile technologies on the integration of private and work roles. They interviewed thirty four mobile technology users in Australia, New Zealand and the United States, who were employed a variety of positions in professional and technical fields. Their findings indicate that in the competing domains of work and private life, mobile technology provided the means by which additional work was achieved, often at the expense of family relationships and private time. The flexibility offered by ICTs does not necessarily facilitate or enhance subjective interpretations of balance.

While mobile technologies can increasingly enable work based activities to be performed from home, researchers suggest that for a variety of reasons working from home can be suboptimal (Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017). Digitally enabled workers, a subset of mobile technology users which includes digital entrepreneurs, may choose to utilise other spaces, separate from the work-home domain, including third-party spaces, such as coffee shops, hotels, trains and libraries (Di Domenico et al., 2014). For those with spatial flexibility, such spaces may also facilitate human connection outside the home-work space. Local coworking spaces, telecentres or rented offices can provide other alternatives to working from home. Around the world, coworking spaces have flourished (Bouncken, & Reuschl, 2018). Waters-Lynch, Potts, Butcher, Dodson and Hurley (2016) describe coworking as "involving a shared physical

workspace and (often) intentional cooperation between independent workers" (p. 2). The coworking trend can be seen in the growing popularity of working hubs, coworking spaces, incubators and similar developments (Spinuzzi, 2012). Coworking spaces can allow independent knowledge workers, potentially working in different fields, to share office space and collaborate (Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017). Coworking space users can learn from others, form social bonds, share ideas and even create new businesses together (Bouncken, & Reuschl, 2018; Johns & Gratton, 2013). Global coworking enterprise WeWork, founded in 2010, provides members access to workspace, community and services in countries around the world. It appears that the rise of flexible work practices and the burgeoning of collaborative workspaces is not just technology driven. Societal values also appear to be shifting as evidenced by the growing interest in leisure (discussed in section 2.5) and travel (section 2.10).

2.5 Social Drivers for Change

As technology continues to impact the employment landscape, some believe it will create an opportunity to reassess society's relationship to employment itself and the potential for people to spend more time with family or on leisure activities (Smith & Anderson, 2014). As the fourth industrial revolution and digital disruption continue to impact work, generational needs and aspirations are also changing. The term digital natives refers to "a generation of young people born into the digital age that are assumed to be inherently technology-savvy" (Wang, Myers & Sundaram, 2013, p. 409). For digital natives, born after 2002 and just now entering the workforce, digital connectivity and new technologies are an expectation; for digitally connected teenagers, in industrialised nations, the absence of Wi-Fi can seem like a breach of their basic human rights. For older generations, particularly those who are not comfortable with ICTs, the emerging world of work can bring increased levels of job insecurity (Buzzanell & Lucas, 2013). Yet, for those willing and able to embrace change, the future may present new opportunities, including those to pursue self-employment. In this section, workplace dissatisfaction, changing attitudes to leisure and the rise of self-employment are discussed.

2.5.1 Workplace Dissatisfaction

In a fast changing organisational environment, those with standard employment arrangements have not necessarily remained unscathed, with researchers discussing increasing employee workloads, employment insecurity and work-life imbalance. Company downsizing and continuous restructuring, while aiming to improve efficiency can, in effect, increase employee

workloads (Holtgrewe, 2014). Stead (2009) suggests that economic uncertainty can negatively impact employee morale and efficiency, yet managers face increasing pressure to reduce costs and increase productivity. In an increasingly competitive global environment, where many companies are streamlining, employees may be pushed to be more productive in order to keep their jobs (Hall & Richter, 1988; Wilpert, 2009) Rodino-Colocino (2012) postulates, in relation to workers in the United States, that the twenty-first century has been "brutal" (p. 22). Industrial flexibility can create "a game of hire and fire with very few rules" (Bauman 2004, p. 28). Work-life imbalance, negative attitudes toward management, increased absenteeism and rising attrition rates can follow (Hughes & Bozionelos, 2007).

Over a decade ago, Davis and Blass (2007) canvassed 800 management school alumni and business professionals, in the United Kingdom, on the nature of current organisations and the future of work. Their findings indicated the workplace was "in a state of flux" and not a "happy" place, subject to extreme challenge and fast change (p. 50). For survey respondents, the future looked brighter, with globalisation and digitisation bringing increased flexibility, more autonomy and work patterns organised to fit a desired lifestyle. However, emerging research indicates that the temporal flexibility facilitated by ICTs can be a double edged sword (Pauleen et al., 2015). There is a growing body of international research into the effects of long or irregular working hours and the new era of flexibility on employee health (Quinlan, 2012). The technology and communication networks that could liberate employees from their cubicles can end up making them always contactable (Harmer & Pauleen, 2008; Makimoto & Manners, 1997), potentially leading to overwork (Pauleen et al., 2015). The impacts on health and quality of life can be substantial, but workers can continue to put in long hours, fearing the consequences of taking time out for themselves or their families (Bourne & Forman, 2014). Further, for employees enjoying the "concession" of flexible working there could be sacrifices in terms of pay and career advancement (Leighton 2016, p. 862). Of significance for this study is how digital entrepreneurs manage their work with their personal lives, given their reliance on ICTs in the operation of their businesses.

2.5.2 **Leisure**

Author Ciulla (2000) asserts that some individuals fanatically pursue their careers as though good employment were the key to happiness, whether through the goods and services that wages buy or via the status of the job role itself. However, there is more to life than work; Buzzanell and Lucas (2013) suggest there is a need for research on how societies can encourage leisure, particularly in environments which support capitalist values like economic

growth, competition and consumption. Researchers posit that leisure can help people deal with work related stress (Trenberth & Dewe, 2002) and positive links have been established between engagement in leisure and mental and physical health (Cassidy 1996). In the Western world, many workers of the Baby Boomer generation have a tendency to wait until retirement to make leisure time a priority (Twenge et al., 2010). In Australia, this includes "grey nomads", travelling the country in retirement or semi-retirement (Higgs & Quirk, 2007). But research suggests younger generations may not be willing to wait until retirement to prioritise leisure. Twenge et al. (2010) conducted a study examining the work values of high school seniors. Data collected in 1976, 1991 and 2006, represented multiple generations - Baby Boomers, Gen X and Gen Y. Their most significant finding was the increased value placed on leisure by subsequent generations. For younger, Gen Y, workers the desire for leisure and work-life balance commenced long before having families.

Conversely, a study by Pyöriä et. al. (2017) found that regardless of age, over the past three decades, leisure and family life have gained increasing importance for older age groups, as well as Millennials. Their study compared the attitudes of wage earners aged 15 to 29 with older age groups (30-64) when they were the same age. Analysis of Finland's Quality of Work Life Surveys, collected from 1984 to 2013, indicated that while the value placed on work has remained consistently high, that placed on family life and leisure have gained increasing significance (Pyöriä et. al., 2017). Researchers claim leisure and enjoyment can facilitate engagement, well-being, creativity and spirituality (Buzzanell & Lucas, 2013). Emerging generational needs and aspirations, in relation to life and work, may provide incentives for online business creation, as this study explores.

2.5.3 The Rise of Self-Employment

Employees in a search for more meaningful work and greater quality of life may seek alternative careers (Marcketti, Niehm & Fuloria, 2006). For some, this can involve a more enterprising way of life in which they self-create a work role through business ownership (Kaczmarczyk 2008; Van Gelderen, 2010). For others, business creation may be the result of new opportunities created by technology. Powell and Bimmerle (1980) claim that it is not unusual to see an executive leave their position due to a dispute over future technology only to subsequently start a new business around such technology and become a competitor with their former employer. Starting one's own business can also provide an attractive income generation alternative to other forms of employment in an increasingly precarious labour market (Stirzaker & Galloway, 2017). Where standard employment options are restricted

based on age or other factors, self-employment can be a refuge (McKeown, 2005). Neff (2012) considers that within a climate of uncertainty, peoples' notions of job security are changing, and they have a greater willingness to accept and even welcome risk. As people age, their attitudes towards risk, work, finances and independence change, as do their abilities, which can impact career choice and the desirability of self-employment (Lévesque, Shepherd & Douglas, 2002). This will be reflected in the type of business they choose to create and their motivations in doing so.

Gratton (2016) asserts that of those choosing self-employment, some will create transient structures, aimed at utilising a block of time rather than building a corporate asset. The emphasis with such businesses will be on the activity itself, the engagement with work, as opposed to the outcome. Longer life expectancy has led to people working much longer and researchers claim that the traditional three stage life of education, then work, followed by retirement will no longer be sustainable in a 100-year life (Gratton & Scott, 2016). In a changing employment market, any new roles created are likely to require further training and upskilling (Davis & Blass, 2007; Griffin, 2015; Smith & Anderson, 2014). Lifelong learning, coupled with a changing job market, is likely to see education span a broader time frame as individuals change careers with increased frequently (Gratton & Scott, 2016). Greater emphasis on leisure may predict an increase in sabbaticals and mini retirements interspersed throughout one's working life (Gratton & Scott, 2016). Self-employment may enable an individual to engage in "independent self-supporting, productive work" at any stage or stages throughout their working years (Gratton, 2016, p. 751). Among the opportunities for self-employment that exist are those in digital business creation, explored further in the discussion of digital entrepreneurship in section 2.7. However, before exploring the concept of digital entrepreneurship, section 2.6 will discuss the more traditional foundations of entrepreneurship.

2.6 Entrepreneurship

For simplicity's sake, the terms business owner, self-employed and entrepreneur are often used interchangeably to describe someone who creates their own employment (Best, Ribeiro & Alahmadi, 2016). Levine and Rubinstein (2017) suggest that those self-employed individuals with incorporated businesses demonstrate stronger entrepreneurial capacity, than those with unincorporated businesses, in that they tend to engage their non-routine cognitive skills more often. To add further complexity, the terms small to medium enterprise owner and micro, or nano, business owner and solopreneur are also used frequently. In the current study, no such distinction is made. Some researchers disagree with this view; for example, Isenberg (2010)

submits that self-employment and entrepreneurship should not be placed in the same category and that the distinction lies in the high level of aspiration and ambition of the entrepreneur. In this research, and in view of the fact that the motivations of the research participants are considered not purely based on economics, the term entrepreneur will also be used to describe those who are self-employed. However, it is recognised that some individuals will exhibit more traits associated with entrepreneurship than others (described in section 3.6).

Gartner (1990) claimed that entrepreneurship is a broad concept that is not always clearly defined. This view is still relevant, with researchers, in the field of entrepreneurship, claiming it is hampered due to challenges in defining what makes an entrepreneur and identifying who they are (Faggio & Silva, 2014; Hechavarria & Reynolds, 2009). "Entrepreneur" is derived from the French, *Entreprendre*, meaning "to undertake" (Bridge, 2017, p. 35) and can be traced back to Economist Richard Cantillion who used the term to describe those who create new enterprise (Anderson, 2015). In terms of what constitutes entrepreneurial activity there is large variation (Virtanen, 1997). Kuratko and Hodgetts (2004) define an entrepreneur as someone who "undertakes to organise, manage and assume the risks of running a business" but suggest that the activities of the entrepreneur have evolved to warrant a broadening of this definition (p. 5). Within their broadened definition the entrepreneur is viewed as an innovator or developer, who recognises opportunities, converts them into marketable ideas, implements them and realises the rewards of such efforts. This aligns with Eftekhari and Bogers' (2015) more recent definition of entrepreneurship as new wealth creation through innovative activities.

A theory of entrepreneurship can be defined as a set of principles that either explains or helps to predict entrepreneurial behaviour (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004). Historically, the entrepreneurship literature has been dominated by theories imported from other areas (Fisher, 2012). A common theoretical framework or universal theory does not apply; rather, it consists of differing approaches including sociological, economic, psychological and anthropological perspectives (Virtanen, 1997). Of these approaches, the economic perspective is dominant within the literature; this is not surprising given the history of entrepreneurship research and the early influence of economists including Adam Smith (1776). Entrepreneurship was introduced as a topic for discussion by economists in the eighteenth century and by the twentieth century was closely connected with capitalism and free enterprise (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004).

Economist Adam Smith (1776) first emphasised the link between entrepreneurial activity and improved living standards. In the 1900's, Schumpeter (1934) argued that in creating new

goods, services and processes, entrepreneurs drive economic growth. Campbell (2004) makes reference to 'economic man' as an ideal underlying the construction of entrepreneurial identity, associated with discourses of individuality, masculinity and heroics. Anderson (2015) claims that this position is based on the admirable outcomes of entrepreneurship. In wealthier countries, there is increased demand for differentiated consumer goods and studies claim the resultant business opportunities lead to higher rates of business start-ups (Fernández-Serrano & Linan, 2014). In the twenty first century, entrepreneurs have been described as the "heroes of free enterprise" (Kuratko & Hodgetts 2004, p. 29). In responding to perceived needs and creating new market opportunities, the entrepreneur disrupts the economic status quo (Smilor, 1997).

Initiating change is pivotal to entrepreneurship and perceiving the entrepreneur as an innovator was first attributed to Schumpeter (1934) and considered a breakthrough in entrepreneurship research (Hébert & Link, 2006; Mair & Marti, 2009). Discussion of the entrepreneur's role in economic development and wealth creation has continued to dominate extant literature (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004). Anderson (2015) posits that traditional research sought to explain entrepreneurship in view of the economic benefits due to the appeal of measurability; however, this has led to relative neglect on the focus of understanding entrepreneurship as a social phenomenon. Datta and Gailey (2012) claim that entrepreneurship can be viewed as a social change activity resulting in a variety of outcomes. This will be explored further in section 2.9, which discusses entrepreneurial success.

In a discussion on entrepreneurship, within the changing world of work, government policy needs to be considered given governments' role in job creation and economic growth. Both early management researchers and recent studies have identified a positive link between entrepreneurial activity, economic growth and wealth creation (Faggio & Silva, 2014; Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004; Mair & Marti, 2009; Schumpeter, 1934). Within the evolving world of work, technology start-ups have been acknowledged as a key source of innovation and economic growth (Eftekhari & Bogers, 2015). Government policy is a potential enabler of new enterprise and as such, in anticipation of further change, some governments are seeking to develop sustainable economies by attracting entrepreneurs and innovation. In Australia, the government's National Innovation and Science Agenda aims to foster business growth and innovation as critical to the prosperity of Australia's economic future ("National Innovation and Science Agenda", 2018).

In the US economy, researchers posit that most new employment is created by new and smaller firms with fast growing businesses, or "gazelles" with at least twenty percent yearly

sales growth, making up the majority of companies responsible for new job creation (Kuratko & Hodgetts 2004, p. 10). The significant role the entrepreneur has to play cannot be underestimated. In the United States and the United Kingdom, government policy makers have set up institutions and put programs in place aimed at stimulating business start-ups and entrepreneurship (Faggio & Silva, 2014). In the US, the Babson Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Project (BEEP) is aimed at developing a model to foster entrepreneurship and generate employment, sustainability, innovation and vibrancy in regions (Isenberg, 2010). The key learnings from the project include that creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem is a holistic endeavour requiring government direction and private sector entrepreneurial competence.

To remain competitive, businesses are required to anticipate and respond to future trends more than ever before (Levin, 2017). The role of innovator in developing new technologies, creating new products and markets is well recognised (Beaver & Prince, 2002; Eftekhari and Bogers, 2015; Hébert & Link, 2006; Smilor, 1997). The 2010 Australian Innovation Report outlines Australia wide programs driving the innovation agenda. However, governments can send mixed signals to business. Beaver and Prince (2002) claim governments demonstrate a commitment to encouraging innovation on one hand and require business to navigate complex taxation systems on the other. Entrepreneurs can be hampered by ambiguous regulations and policy obstacles while lacking the resources for professional advice and assistance (Sun, Anderson & Fang, 2015); small business owners can struggle to juggle business taxation and legal requirements while attempting to survive in a fast changing environment. The irony is that within this environment, entrepreneurs are key, given the role they play in the development and commercialisation of new technologies (Eftekhari & Bogers, 2015).

2.7 Digital Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship has been transformed by the digital revolution and the emerging field of technology related entrepreneurship research has been challenged in keeping pace with the digitisation of society and the economy (Giones & Brem, 2017). Zimmermann (2000) refers to the digital economy as based on the digitisation of information combined with the respective ICT infrastructure. For aspiring entrepreneurs, the digital economy brings new opportunities for business creation (Hafezieh et al., 2011; Kraus et al, 2019). This has created an environment for digital entrepreneurship and as an emerging concept (Van Horne et al., 2016), a clear definition for the term DE is yet to be widely accepted. Zaheer at al. (2019) claim the interchangeable use of various terms to describe digital entrepreneurship (such as internet entrepreneurship and e-entrepreneurship) has been a source of confusion (p.1). Researchers claim there is a "paucity of research on digital entrepreneurship" (Nzembayie, Buckley &

Cooney, 2019, p. 1) and acknowledge consensus of definition is required in order to advance the field's contribution (Bandera et al., 2016; Zaheer et al., 2019). In this section, nascent literature in relation to the term is discussed, and a comparison between digital entrepreneurship and traditional entrepreneurship is provided. It is worth noting that research in this area is limited; Kraus et al. (2019) in their review of key topics and methods in the digital entrepreneurship literature conclude, "given the upward movement of digital entrepreneurship, minimal research has addressed this topic and literature on digital entrepreneurship is quite scarce" (p.2).

The term "high tech" has been used to describe a range of concepts, including a certain type of entrepreneur engaged with digital technology (Bandera et al., 2016). Bandera et al. (2016) as part of their ongoing research propose that digital entrepreneurship considers three dimensions: "(1) physical or digital offering, (2) product or service, and (3) mass produced or custom" (p. 5). Alternately, Van Horne et al. (2016) discuss digital entrepreneurship as associated with the characteristics of traditional entrepreneurship but "with specificities of the digital sphere" (p. 296). Nzembayie, Buckley and Cooney (2019) discuss "pure digital entrepreneurship" as where the business ideas are the digital artefacts and/or platforms themselves (p. 1). Other researchers refer to the concept of "completely digital entrepreneurship", where the internet and information technology affect the process of creating and managing the e-Business, as well as the e-Business itself (Asghari & Gedeon, 2010, p. 70). They discuss ICT and the internet as impacting all phases of the e-Business value chain through pre-seed, seed, start-up and expansion. On the other end of the spectrum, Sussan and Acs (2017) claim it can be argued that service providers using third party platforms, such as AirBnB renters and Uber drivers, are business owners using digital technology but not digital entrepreneurs as they are "not doing anything creative" as opposed to digital entrepreneurs using multisided platforms (p. 56). Using this approach, gig economy workers cannot be classed as digital entrepreneurs.

Hull et al. (2007) define digital entrepreneurship as "a subcategory of entrepreneurship in which some or all of what would be physical in a traditional organisation has been digitised" (p. 5). They classify digital entrepreneurship into three types, depending on the degree of digitisation. *Mild digital entrepreneurship* involves supplementing traditional business models by venturing into the digital economy. *Moderate digital entrepreneurship* focusses significantly on digital products, digital delivery or other digital components. *Extreme digital entrepreneurship* refers to a venture that is digital in all aspects from the goods and services themselves through to distribution and marketing (Hull et al., 2007, p. 9). While the above definitions are useful, given the exploratory nature of this research, a digital entrepreneur is

defined broadly as "an individual who creates an online business(es)". The key differences between digital entrepreneurship and traditional entrepreneurship are expressed by Hull et al. (2007) as:

- *Ease of entry* – refers the limited time required to set up a business online (i.e. creating a commercial website);
- *Ease of manufacturing and storing* – digital products offer benefits in terms of reduced costs for manufacturing and storage and can be produced as needed ('just-in-time' production);
- *Ease of distribution in the digital marketplace* – products can have global reach quickly and cheaply;
- *Digital workplace* – ability to have employees and partnerships worldwide;
- *Digital goods* – ease of modification and innovation of products;
- *Digital Service* – may involve simply running an automated routine; and
- *Digital commitment* – may be more challenging to develop organisational commitment in virtual contexts (p.10).

Lower barriers to entry are a key defining feature of digital business (Hull et al., 2007; Schjoedt & Shaver, 2007). Zaheer et al. (2019) consider that contemporary research on digital entrepreneurship has moved to discussion on the digital ecosystem, which presents significant opportunities for the digital entrepreneur. Sussan and Acs (2017) suggest that the Digital Entrepreneurial Ecosystem framework is made of four key components of which digital entrepreneurship is one. The other components are digital infrastructure governance, digital marketplace and digital user citizenship. Digital entrepreneurial ecosystems fit with the intersection of digital ecosystems and entrepreneurial ecosystem (Sussan & Acs, 2017) and offer entrepreneurs a platform through which to test new ideas (Kraus et al., 2019). Currently, a Facebook business page, linking to a virtual shopping cart with the capacity to accept payment, can be created in under an hour with no upfront cost. Website hosting platforms, such as Wordpress, Weebly and Squarespace, can allow web users to create their own websites even with limited technical skills. Alternatively, using third party platforms such as Upwork, Elance and Crowdsource, internet users can outsource tasks that require a high level of expertise from website development to content creation (Goncalves, Feldman, Hu, Kostakos & Bernstein, 2017). On Fiverr.com, for example, logo creation or video editing can cost as little as $5. Features of digital business, such as automation and outsourcing, can allow the entrepreneur to effectively leverage their working time and provide increased opportunities to pursue other activities.

An advantage of digital entrepreneurship worth highlighting is that the digital economy can allow entrepreneurs to co-create their product or service offering with their customers and pivot or adjust their offer in response to customer feedback. Hull et al. (2007) refer to this feature as ease of modification and innovation. Customers and potential customers may know what they want and how products and services can be augmented to create additional value (Lee, Olson, & Trimi, 2012). In addition, digital environments provide a key source of information, and entrepreneurs can exploit this data to analyse the preferences of potential customers (Kraus et al., 2019). This allows DEs to enter the online marketplace with a minimum viable product and obtain customer feedback, via social media and third party platforms. These same platforms can then provide an already established customer base through which to market the product or service. Dutot and Van Horne's (2015) study of digital entrepreneurs found they relied heavily on social media tools and this was a key factor in recognition of opportunities and agility in responding.

Further, enabled by the internet, emerging business models can minimise any locational advantage (or disadvantage) by overcoming the traditional restrictions of space, time and distance (Lee et al., 2012). Digital connectivity can allow people to work from virtually anywhere, with a mobile communication device and internet connectivity (Pauleen et al., 2015). Entrepreneurs have increasing flexibility in where they choose to base themselves, without restricting their business growth (Di Domenico et al., 2014). They also have access to international markets; developments in ICTs have made internationalisation more feasible, even for firms with limited resources, by "increasing the quality and speed of communications and transactions and decreasing their cost" (Reuber & Fischer, 2011, p. 660). While the internet allows global market accessibility, a potential downside is increased competition in the online space. From the time their websites go live, DEs meet global competition (Hull et al., 2007). The reduced barriers to entry in the digital marketplace open the gates for newcomers.

Despite differences with traditional entrepreneurs, DEs are nonetheless entrepreneurs. In referring to home based online business entrepreneurs, Di Domenico et al. (2014) stress that they are "first and foremost *entrepreneurs* – self-employed, autonomous, self-managing actors using their extant resources, their own homes, to establish and operate their online businesses" (p. 3). The identification and exploitation of business opportunities is fundamental to entrepreneurship and also the case for the digital entrepreneur (Hafezieh et al., 2011). Di Domenico et al., (2014) posit that within the complexity of defining entrepreneurship, considering how the individuals view themselves is useful in better understanding the

entrepreneur and their enterprise. In defining the digital entrepreneur, for the purposes of this study, interview participants' subjective interpretations of the term were explored and are considered as part of the additional findings of this research (section 6.8).

2.8 Entrepreneurial Motivations and Determinants of Success

The flexibility of digital business may provide opportunities for entrepreneurs to combine their economic and lifestyle and/or social motivations. Motivational theory, as it relates to the study of entrepreneurs, frames this study and is the focus of chapter 3. This section opens the discussion and looks at alternate ways entrepreneurial success may be considered. The drive to create a new venture and the willingness to sustain such a venture is directly related to an entrepreneur's motivation (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004). Hessels, Van Gelderen and Thurik (2008) claim that is it vital for policy makers to understand individual entrepreneurial motivations and aspirations and how this correlates with factors within their sphere of influence. Entrepreneurial motivation has been the subject of much research, largely from an economic perspective, as new firm creation is viewed as critical to economic growth (Low & MacMillan, 1988). Media images of highly successful, empire-building entrepreneurs like Bill Gates, Steve Jobs and Mark Zuckerberg tend to glorify entrepreneurship (Claire, 2012). This focus on a group of elite entrepreneurs, neglects the everyday activities of being enterprising (Anderson, 2015). Hessels et al., (2008) highlight the view that an individual does not start a business in order to innovate, create jobs or facilitate economic growth nationally. People's desires tend to be much more individual, such as autonomy or personal profits or lack of other available options (Hessels et al., 2008).

Quantitative studies heavily dominate the research on entrepreneurial motivation (Stephan, Hart & Drews, 2015) and tend to focus on economic indicators of success (Wach et at., 2016). Yet capturing entrepreneurial success in purely financial terms fails to fully capture differing views of success (Wach et al., 2016). Stephan et al. (2015) suggest that, given the multidimensional nature of entrepreneur and firm goals, alongside traditional measures of success such as business growth and financial performance, other aspects require consideration, for example entrepreneurs' satisfaction with autonomy as facilitated through entrepreneurship. There is evidence that people who work for themselves have greater job satisfaction than those who work for others, even if they earn less money and work more hours (Arora, 2014; Kuratko et al., 1997). Ateljevic and Doorne (2000) suggest entrepreneurship research is in need of a revolutionary reorientation that recognises entrepreneurs may be motivated by psychological and social goals as much as commercial goals. Coulson (2012)

discusses the outcomes sought by entrepreneurs as including sustainability, constant learning, quality of life and cooperative relationships.

Entrepreneurial motivations are likely to change over time and researchers need to be cognisant of and take into account these dynamic aspects (Hessels et al., 2008). Environmental factors, age and stage of life and economic conditions can influence the motivations and desires of those carving out an entrepreneurial path. For example, Marchant and Mottiar (2011) found surf tourism entrepreneurs, who moved to the west coast of Ireland for its lifestyle, initially became entrepreneurs due to a lack of alternative job opportunities. The rapid growth in tourism created demand that then led some to expand their businesses, even though growth was not their initial intention.

Bredvold and Skalen (2016) postulate that the decision to start a business is part of "a complex web of desires, values, goals and motives" (p. 98). Underlying cultural motivations, values and aspirations are key factors contributing to entrepreneurial behaviour (Morrison, 2006). While an in-depth discussion of cultural theories is beyond the scope of this study, they warrant brief consideration given the recognized link between cultural values and entrepreneurial motivations (Aramand, 2012; Morrison, 2006). Inglehart (1997) described culture as a "system of attitudes, values, and knowledge that is widely shared within a society and is transmitted from generation to generation" (p. 15). Hofstede's (2011) shorthand definition of culture is "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others" (p. 3). As well as national culture, personal background including the education, travel and experience of the entrepreneur, have gained importance to researchers (Aramand, 2012). The majority of research in relation to the influence of culture on entrepreneurship, from an empirical viewpoint, has been based on Hofstede's (1984) identification of five cultural dimensions of individualism, uncertainty avoidance, power-distance, masculinity and long/short-term orientation (Fernández-Serrano & Linan, 2014; Vinogradov & Kolvereid, 2007). A sixth dimension, later added by Hofstede (2011), is indulgence verses restraint, related to gratification as opposed to control of basic human desires.

Aramand (2012) claims that individuals exposed to different cultures may adopt cultural dimensions that are not based on that of their national culture. For example, somebody from a collectivist country, who has travelled a lot, may exhibit more individualistic behaviour. As such, some entrepreneurship researchers are paying more attention to an individual's cultural orientation than to their national culture (Aramand, 2012). Foley's (2004) comparative case study of Indigenous Australian and Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs examined cultural values

underlying economic and lifestyle motivators. Foley (2004) referred to Chinese-Hawaiian study participants as displaying a combination of drivers indicative of "consumer driven capitalist American society" and those of a "relaxed, laid-back Pacific lifestyle of Hawaii" (p. 180). While Foley's (2004) case study findings indicated financial reward was a major motivator for both Indigenous Australian and Hawaiian entrepreneurs, the context differed. For the Indigenous Australian subjects, money was referred to as a means to an end, an escape from abject poverty. For the comparative group, Foley (2004) considered the approach to wealth accumulation to be more "holistic", as including the well-being of extended family and staff (p. 182).

Stephan et al., (2015) also make cultural distinctions in discussing entrepreneurial motivation. They submit that in developed economies, like the UK, independence motivation is an important driver of entrepreneurial activity. As business growth ambitions are positively linked with wealth-oriented motivation this may present a challenge in the scaling up of enterprise (Stephan et al., 2015). Such could also be the case for social entrepreneurs who, Lukes and Stephan (2012) claim, exhibit low wealth seeking motivations. There has been increasing discussion on social entrepreneurship, which has been referred to the "harmonisation of social and commercial interests" (Kostetska & Berezyakb, 2014, p. 576). Social entrepreneurs can be driven toward creating sustainable economies and improving access for disadvantaged sectors of society. While difficult to measure, the social benefits of entrepreneurship are reported to be significant (Kostetska & Berezyakb, 2014). For digital entrepreneurs, the social benefits may include the ability to combine their business and lifestyle goals, in a location of their choosing.

2.9 Lifestyle and Location

DEs have potential flexibility in relation to when (temporal flexibility) and where (spatial flexibility) they work, facilitated by ICTs. Also possible is the combining of work and leisure in new ways; this is particularly relevant to this research and the second and third research questions on how DEs balance their work and lifestyle domains and the role of location. Studies of entrepreneurship are largely focused through an economic lens and studies of entrepreneurs' lifestyle goals are in the minority (Marchant & Mottiar, 2011; Marcketti et al., 2006). Yet, the phenomenon of lifestyle entrepreneurship has increasingly drawn researcher focus (Bredvold & Skalen, 2016; Carson, Carson & Eimermann, 2018; Marchant & Mottiar, 2011; Marcketti et al., 2006; Peters et al., 2009).

Lifestyle entrepreneurship considers those with motivations centred on a desired lifestyle, often linked to location (Marchant & Mottiar, 2011; Marcketti et al., 2006; Williams, Shaw, & Greenwood, 1989). Lifestyle entrepreneurs are thought to pursue an income in a way that allows them to achieve their lifestyle goals (Marchant & Mottiar, 2011). Bredvold and Skalen (2016) point to research suggesting that lifestyle entrepreneurs are less focussed on profit and growth and may start a business to realise a balance of social, economic and family factors. Lifestyle entrepreneurs' economic motives may be equal to or even secondary to lifestyle motives (Williams et al., 1989) and they may not be willing to sacrifice their quality of life for business growth and profit maximisation (Peters et al., 2009). In developed countries, with an aging population, lifestyle entrepreneurs are considered a growing demographic (Dalgish, 2008). However, it is not only older generations who may consider entrepreneurship for lifestyle reasons as studies demonstrate (e.g. Carson et al., 2018; Marchant & Mottiar, 2011). As generational values and aspirations transform, and younger generations adopt a preference of working to live rather than living to work (Twenge et al., 2010), entrepreneurship may provide the means to fund an alternate lifestyle to standard employment (Marchant & Mottiar, 2011; Marcketti et al., 2006; Stirzaker & Galloway, 2017). ICTs are now a major enabler of lifestyle entrepreneurship, freeing work from its historical connection to specific times and places. New technologies and social drivers have enabled entrepreneurship in ways previously unavailable (Gratton, 2016; Kraus et al., 2019).

Significant numbers of entrepreneurs have long been attracted to operate businesses in locations with an apparent "nice life" close to beaches, attractive parts of the city or mountain regions (Peters et al., 2009, p. 397). Williams et al., (1989) found that less than one third of the 288 owners of small, privately-owned Cornwall tourism businesses they surveyed were born in Cornwall and newcomers were often attracted by the region's landscape and lifestyle. Carson et al. (2018) explored the lifestyle–business motivations of migrant entrepreneurs providing winter tourism experiences in northern Sweden. Lifestyle focussed motivations included counter urban living (quiet and tranquillity), place based activities (such as boating and surfing) and quality family time. Such non economically based motivations may constrain business growth (Carson et al., 2018).

Researchers suggest that in considering the dichotomy between lifestyle and commercial goals, it is simplistic to see such goals from an either or perspective as it is a complex mix of factors that drive someone to pursue entrepreneurship (Bredvold & Skalen, 2016; Morrison, 2006). Some researchers postulate that the lifestyle label, used in reference to tourism firms based in lifestyle locations, is an elusive and subjective concept, which is challenging to define (Morrison, Carlsen, & Weber, 2008). They call for the prioritisation of research aimed at

developing an understanding of the complex interplay between economic life, society, environment and culture, specifically in relation to lifestyle oriented small tourism firms. Given the potentially murky boundaries between lifestyle and work for the digital entrepreneur, such an interplay may be similarly complex. Adding to the complexity is that economic wealth can facilitate access to improved lifestyle choices and an enhanced quality of life (Foley, 2004).

An area of potential significance yet to be explored is the contributions that digital entrepreneurs make to the areas in which they are based. The development of new enterprises by lifestyle entrepreneurs can contribute significantly to local economic development in regional areas, though this is not well documented (Dalgish, 2008). Lifestyle entrepreneurs may offer a way forward in regional areas by developing enterprises that enhance the qualities that attracted them to that location (Dalgish, 2008). Where business is internet based, while entrepreneurs can be a boon for local economies there is also potential for them to 'slip the net' of conventional regulation (Maynard, 2015). In general, the contribution of lifestyle entrepreneurs to local economic development is poorly documented (Dewhurst & Horobin, 1998), as is their contribution to the local community, for example through the local Chambers of Commerce (Marchant & Mottiar, 2011).

The internet can allow entrepreneurs freedom of movement and according to Carson et al. (2018), flexible and mobile working and living is a facilitator of entrepreneurship and lifestyle migration. As the digital business trend continues to spread, it offers further opportunities for individuals to combine their work and leisure, in the location of their choosing (Pauleen et al., 2015). With the evolution of job roles, business models, and ways of working, societies have an opportunity to redefine their attitudes to work and leisure. Alternately, for those based in tourism locations, internet work can supplement income earned in the tourism industry (Carson et al., 2018). The DE subjects of this study are based in regional and tourism locations, which may suggest that they are motivated, to some extent, by consuming their surroundings; this will be discussed further in the research findings. What is also still to be explored is the growing phenomenon of digital entrepreneurship and its relationship to quality of life. Past studies of lifestyle entrepreneurs have largely been area-specific. For example, Marcketti et al. (2006) studied a small group of US lifestyle entrepreneurs, and Williams et al. (1989) studied tourism entrepreneurs drawn to the lifestyle in Cornwall (UK) as a setting for their entrepreneurial endeavours. The present study explores the motivations of DEs and lifestyle and location may be influencing factors in the creation of their businesses, issues not adequately covered in previous research (Marchant & Mottiar, 2011).

2.10 Travel and Mobility

Relevant to the research questions in this study, is the role of location in the businesses and lifestyles of DEs. This section explores the ability to work from anywhere in view of the flexibility facilitated by ICTs. Of interest, is how this increased spatial flexibility is impacting the decisions made by DEs in choosing where to live and work. In the previous section, there was discussion of lifestyle entrepreneurship as a way for individuals to earn an income while living in a preferred location but there is growing evidence that some digitally connected entrepreneurs may prefer to travel rather than being based in one place (Müller, 2016; Reichenberger, 2018).

The literature refers to a new generation of workers who swap nine to five employment for location independence and can work from anywhere with their laptop and good internet access (Müller, 2016). The 'Digital Nomad' phenomenon will be discussed within this section (Makimoto & Manners, 1997). The term digital nomad refers to an individual utilising high-speed communication networks and mobile devices to live and work free from the constraints of time and location (Makimoto, 2013). Digital nomads are mainly described as remote workers employed in technology fields, including online marketing and web design (Thompson, 2019), though mobile entrepreneurs can also fit the digital nomad description (Reichenberger, 2018). In other words, a digital nomad may be a remote employee or operate their own business (as a digital entrepreneur). Only a subset of digital entrepreneurs is nomadic, as many are based long term in a single location. There is further discussion of the digital nomad later in this section.

Networks, communities and places play a pivotal role in entrepreneurship and provide the context for entrepreneurial processes (McKeever, Jack & Anderson, 2015). Businesses have traditionally been established in locations where there is access to major transportation networks; the marketplaces of yesteryear have become the big cities of today where buyers and sellers are united to facilitate trade. The marketplaces of today are becoming increasingly virtual (Zaheer et al., 2019), with digital technology enabling entrepreneurs to travel, while running an online business (Pauleen et al., 2015). The internet operates as a network providing access to global markets and as postulated by researchers, technology allows entrepreneurs to overcome the spatial and geographic barriers that can restrict business growth (Di Domenico et al., 2014). Maynard (2015) suggests that the fusion between online resources and point of source production equipment, such as 3D printers, will enable entrepreneurs to set up almost anywhere. It is worth noting that while ICTs have helped create a more level playing field by enabling a global marketplace, digital inequality is evident in low income and remote communities. For communities with a lack of access to computers, mobile

devices and the internet, research indicates the persistence of a digital divide (Jackson, 2009). The digital divide is significant in view of the discussion on location and the importance of internet connectivity to those with internet based businesses.

Makimoto and Manners (1997) predicted new technologies and mass transportation networks returning humans, in general, to a more nomadic lifestyle after millennia as settlers; their self-concept less tied to a certain neighbourhood, house or occupation than to finding new locations to stimulate their mind and senses (Makimoto & Manners, 1997; McIntosh & Twist, 2001). Travel can be inspiring and may even be a catalyst for embarking on the entrepreneurial journey; such was the case for the lifestyle entrepreneur participants of Marchant and Mottiar's (2011) study who had travelled extensively and frequently and saw travel as a source of inspiration. They were reported to be good communicators, with high levels of education, who enjoyed interacting with people. In tandem with the emergence of the DE phenomenon, the international tourism market is one of the world's fastest growing economic sectors (Glaesser, Kester, Paulose, Alizadeh & Valentin, 2017). Makimoto and Manners claim "wanderlust is part of the human psyche" (1997, p. 2), and while traditional nomads still range across parts of Africa, North America, Europe and Australia, digitally-enabled forms of nomadic life are now emerging. Foley and Cooney (2017) suggest that nomads, referring to travellers with no fixed place of abode who wander from place to place, have an alternate attitude to work, accommodation and life generally.

Aramand (2012) views nomadic cultures as prioritising protection rather than construction. Nomads may be motivated to avoid a highly consumerist lifestyle and its challenges to physical and mental well-being (Ryan, Huta & Deci, 2008). Besides the financial costs of living in a consumer society, travel provides an escape from physical possessions. The resulting lightness and freedom of movement are attractive to a growing breed who identify as minimalists. Journalist Anna Hart (2015), who swapped the nine-to-five in Hackney to trial working remotely in Bali, claims that travel is the ultimate aspiration for Millennials like her, who with the aid of technology have lightweight, portable lives. Recent research indicates that experiential purchases provide greater levels of satisfaction than material purchases (Gilovich, Kumar & Jampol, 2015). This aligns with the growing shift away from material consumption toward an environmentally sustainable economy, as concern grows over environmental degradation and resource over-consumption (Adams, Jeanrenaud, Bessant, Denyer, & Overy, 2016).

Digital nomadism has gained increasing researcher attention and a number of studies have been conducted (Muller, 2016; Nash et al., 2018; Reichenberger, 2018; Sutherland & Jarrahi,

2017). The work of digital nomads is described as "unaffected by the socio-spatial context" (Muller, 2016, p. 345). Reichenberger's (2018) research explored digital nomads' motivations and their interpretations of work, leisure and travel. Online content analysis was combined with semi-structured in-depth interviews with 22 individuals self-identifying as digital nomads, recruited through Facebook postings and from a variety of countries, throughout Europe and America. Participants were working mainly as freelancers and entrepreneurs and almost all of them had attained an undergraduate degree. Most participants did not have a permanent home or only spent up to three months a year there.

Reichenberger (2018) found that motivations for adopting the digital nomad lifestyle included freedom from the structures of a traditional working environment and the desire for fulfilment and enjoyment in both work and leisure, with freedom as an overriding theme - professionally, personally and spatially. "Professional freedom" was described as the motivation to choose and structure work in a self-determined manner, "spatial freedom" as the desire to work and live in a variety of places and "personal freedom" as "autonomy over both spatial movements and professional activities" (Reichenberger, 2018, p. 9). The researcher presents a model of digital nomad holism where these three freedoms converge and asserts that if these three freedoms are achieved, digital nomads reach the holistic state they are seeking.

Research conducted by Nash et al. (2018) explored the elements defining digital nomadic work and how such elements are intertwined with the use of ICTs. They present digital nomads as a community of workers situated where digital work, gig work, nomadic work and global travel and adventure meet. They suggest that digital nomads choose their lifestyle and "opt for tropical areas or places that are known to be ideal areas for hobbies like surfing, hiking, backpacking, or skiing" (Nash et al., 2018, p. 7). Similarly, Sutherland and Jarrahi (2017) claim that independent remote work and world travel adventure are distinct motivators for digital nomads (including those with their own businesses, who qualify as digital entrepreneurs). Paris (2012) discusses the "flashpacker" as seeming to embody both the digital nomad and backpacker cultures; Paris's (2012) research sought to develop insight into the convergence of independent travel and ICTs through interviews with eight "tech-savvy flashpackers" (p. 1). Findings included that interview participants were able to retain a sense of connection and embeddedness within existing social networks, through ICTs and social media platforms, while travelling. For digital entrepreneurs, located away from family, such may also be the case.

Thompson (2019) examined the digital nomad lifestyle through the lenses of leisure, privilege, inequality, work and community based on interviews with thirty-eight self-described digital

nomads. Thompson (2019) asserts that "digital nomads select locations in which their demographic privileges are maximized, along with their hedonistic pleasures" (p. 33). The literature tends to focus on the potential freedom (Reichenberger, 2018) and benefits of the digital nomad lifestyle (Makimoto & Manners, 1997, Müller, 2016) however Thompson (2019) takes a more critical approach, discussing digital nomad employees as "downwardly mobile" and "cashing in on their passport strength" by moving to locations in which their limited income travels further (p. 11). Thompson (2019) offers an alternate prospective to other researchers in this area and paints a picture of millennials, frustrated with failing expectations of employment, taking their privilege and cultural ignorance to more balmy environments.

Baggio and Moretti (2018) submit that the aesthetic qualities of a destination, whether natural or artificial, play a key factor in attracting tourists. These same factors may attract digital entrepreneurs and other digitally enabled workers, with digital nomads flocking to places including Vietnam, Bali, Medellin and Cambodia (Thompson, 2019). The operation of the tourism industry has been fundamentally transformed by ICTs (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Femenia-Serra, Perles-Ribes & Ivars-Baidal, 2019). For tourist locations, entrepreneurs may bring innovation, and the resulting economic benefits (Maynard, 2015). They have a tendency to build strong community connections and networks (Mottiar et al., 2018), play an important role in strengthening local culture, and generally improve the quality of life for themselves and those in their community (Crnogaj et al., 2014). For tourism destinations, entrepreneurship and innovation play a key role in their ongoing sustainability (Crnogaj et al., 2014); the role of DEs is largely unknown and remains to be explored.

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the nascent literature informing this study. Figure 2.1 represents the economic and socio-cultural environment which provides a backdrop to the study. These work and lifestyle factors have been discussed throughout the chapter and provide context for the emergence of the digital entrepreneur. The changing world of work, heavily influenced by globalisation and ICTs, has provided the conditions for new forms and ways of entrepreneurship to be practiced. The decline of the standard employment model and rise of non-standard work (Gandini, 2015; Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017), including the gig economy, indicate that individuals may need to take a more self-directed approach in relation to planning their careers and generating income. Flexible work arrangements can facilitate greater levels of autonomy (Davis & Blass, 2007) as to how individuals combine multiple roles and responsibilities. However, navigating between physical and virtual domains can be challenging and require dealing with certain tensions (Di Domenico et al., 2014). Research

suggests that the creation of boundaries can assist individuals in separating different domains and managing their lives (Ashforth et al., 2000; Nippert-Eng's, 1996).

Changing attitudes to leisure (Pyöriä et al., 2017; Twenge et al., 2010) and longer life expectancies are among the social drivers impacting the future of work (Gratton & Scott, 2016). Simultaneously, virtual marketplaces are providing more opportunities for people to travel and live outside major cities while earning an income either through remote work or their own online businesses (Zaheer et al., 2019; Reichenberger, 2018). Tourism destinations are attracting digital workers in increasing numbers; some of these digital workers are DEs, at the fulcrum of traditional business and new ways of living and working. Little is known about their reasons for creating a digital business and factors at play in this alternate way of living. While there have been many studies conducted on entrepreneurial motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gilad & Levine, 1986; McClelland & Katz, 1965; Shapero, 1985), given the alternate context in which DEs operate, there is much to learn from their experience. New knowledge of DEs will provide theoretical contributions, including those to motivational theory, and also have practical implications in relation to the emerging world of work. The next chapter discusses motivational theory which provides the framework for this research.

Chapter 3 – Theoretical Framework: Motivational Theory

3.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter has provided an overview of the environment in which the digital entrepreneur has emerged and the relevant factors to be considered (including lifestyle and location), in view of the aims of this research. Motivational theory provides the lens through which the research questions are addressed. Researchers argue that while external forces such as the state of the economy, the nature of the environment, government regulations, political and social forces have a role to play in the entrepreneurial process, human motivation is integral to entrepreneurship (Shane, Locke & Collins, 2003). While existing research has examined the motivations of entrepreneurs generally (Ajzen, 1985; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gilad & Levine, 1986; McClelland, 1962), as digital entrepreneurship is a new phenomenon there is little research on entrepreneurial motivation within this context.

Examination of existing theories of human motivation, as they relate to entrepreneurship, is necessary to inform this exploratory research. Push-Pull Theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986) is well-established in studying entrepreneurial motivations and the principal theory informing this study (section 3.10). Push-Pull Theory posits that individuals are either pushed, by negative factors such as job loss (Shapero & Sokol, 1982), or pulled, by positive factors such as market opportunity (Giacomin et al., 2007), toward becoming an entrepreneur. Prior to discussion of the principal theory, other relevant motivational theories are discussed. These theories make varying degrees of contribution to this study and are outlined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Theoretical Framework: Motivational Theories in Entrepreneurship

Section	Theory	Source	Relevance
3.3	Hierarchy of Needs Theory	Maslow (1943)	Needs theory informs later theories (including SDT)
3.4	Need for Achievement	McClelland (1961)	Achievement as a pull factor
3.5	Expectancy Theory	Vroom (1964)	Probability of achieving desired outcomes, informs other theories
3.6	Personality Trait Theories	Rotter (1966); Bandura (1977); McCrae & Costa (1987)	Provides relevant background and informs the development of later theories
3.7	Entrepreneurial Event Theory (EET)	Shapero and Sokol (1982)	Situational events as push or pull factors
3.8	Theory of planned behaviour	Ajzen (1985)	Intention as an indicator of intended behaviour and motivation
3.9	Self Determination Theory (SDT)	Deci and Ryan (1985)	Intrinsic motivation, basic needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness as pull factors
3.10	Push-Pull Theory	Gilad and Levine (1986)	Primary theory informing this research

A visual representation of the position of this study within the theoretical framework is shown in Figure 3.1. The figure illustrates that Push-Pull Theory is the principal theory informing this study. Also shown are other relevant theories that inform theoretical framework. The figure is only broadly indicative of the extent to which other theories inform the study but nonetheless provides a holistic map of the theories discussed.
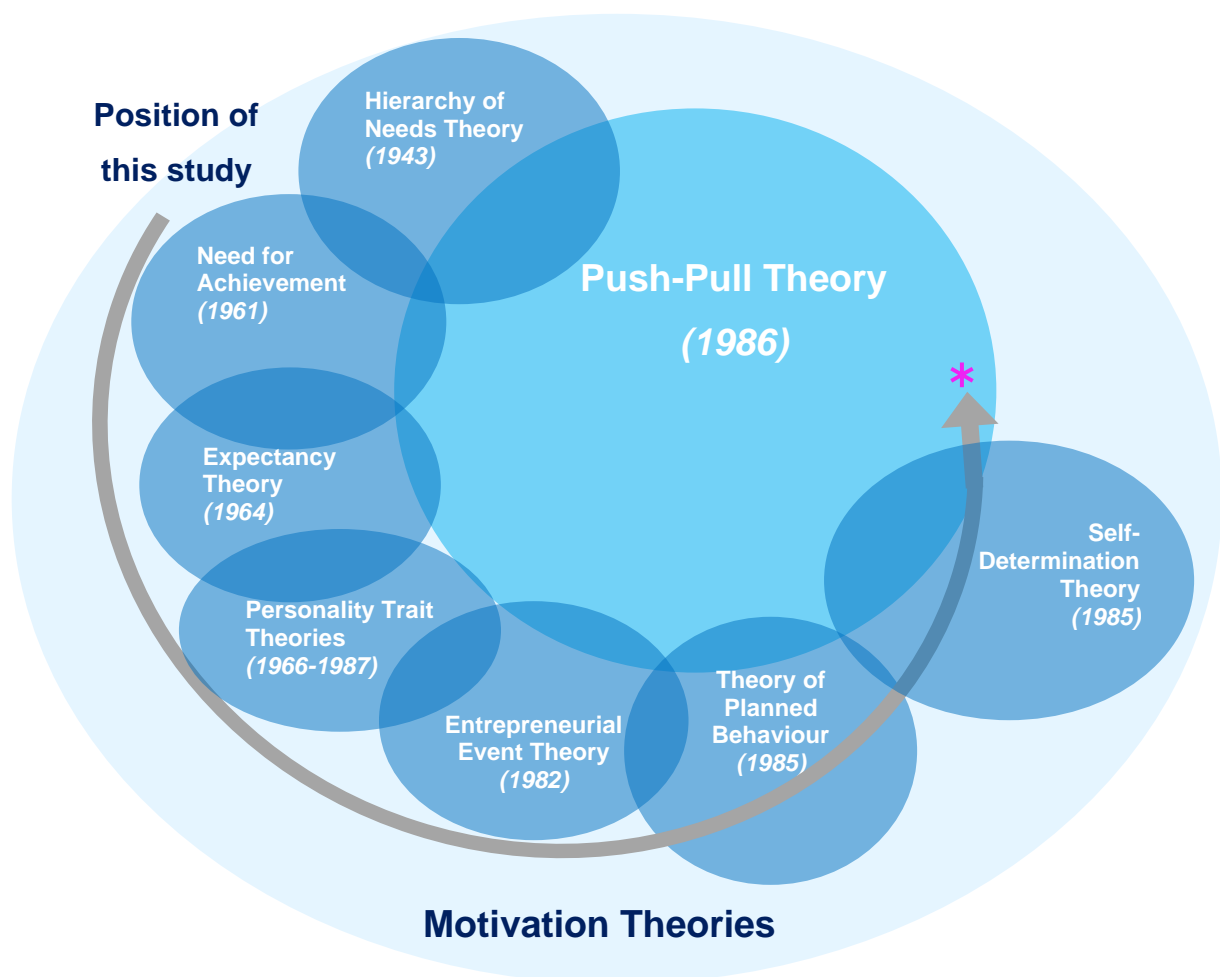
Figure 3.1 The Position of this Study within Motivational Theory

A brief discussion of the origins of the concept of human motivation is the focus of section 3.2. In section 3.3, the first scientific theory of human motivation, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943), is presented. This theory still has relevance, with elements of it evident in Deci and Ryan's later work, as will be discussed. McClelland's (1961) Need for Achievement theory posits that individuals with a strong need to achieve share characteristics with entrepreneurs (section 3.4). Section 3.5 presents Vroom's (1964) Expectancy theory which looks at behaviour as influenced by the probability of desired outcomes and has been applied to the study of entrepreneurs (Renko, Kroeck & Bullough, 2012; Segal et al., 2005).

Since the 1960s, many studies have explored the personality traits of entrepreneurs, as distinguished from those of the general population. Popular theories examining the personality traits of entrepreneurs include Rotter's (1966) Locus of Control, Bandura's (1977) Self-efficacy theory and McCrae and Costa's (1987) Five Factor Model, presented in section 3.6. Cognitive theories, which later developed popularity, explore how the traits required of the entrepreneur alter in response to changing external conditions (Gilad & Levine, 1986). These theories examine motivation as a dynamic process resulting from the interaction between the individual and the situation (Segal et al., 2005), such as Shapero and Sokol's (1982) Entrepreneurial Event Theory (EET) (section 3.7).

Azjen's (1985) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) posits that intention is a key predictor of behaviour (discussed in section 3.8). According to Carsrud and Brännback (2011), intention and action are linked by goals, with both goals and motives playing an important role in predicting behaviour. For the purposes of this study, participant goals gave a nuanced view of underlying push and pull motivations. Another well-known motivational theory is Self Determination Theory (SDT), which distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT) is a sub-theory of SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2000), conceptualising the psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness as essential for psychological growth and optimal human functioning (Al-Jubari, Hassan & Liñán, 2019). SDT is a well-established theory in the study of entrepreneurial motivation, with particular relevance to this study (section 3.9).

The primary model informing this research is Push-Pull Theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986) presented in section 3.10. According Gilad and Levine (1986) Push-Pull Theory considers entrepreneurship as contingent on situational conditions, with negative factors such as job loss, pushing an individual toward entrepreneurship and positive factors, such as a recognised opportunity gap in the market, pulling one into entrepreneurship. However, Anderson et al., (2013) claims opportunity is a meeting of both self and circumstance; therefore, subjective factors also warrant consideration. Push and pull factors are also referred to in terms of necessity and opportunity (Cheung, 2014; Hessels et al., 2008; Stephan et al., 2015). Stephan et al. (2015) posit that while 65% of all studies investigate opportunity and necessity motivations, this dichotomy is simplistic and propose seven dimensions of entrepreneurial motivation (presented in section 3.10.2). In section 3.11, the research questions are revisited. As DEs are an emerging type of entrepreneur, motivational theory provides a viewpoint from which to consider this group and the context in which they operate. As such it provides new insights into DEs and helps lay theoretical foundations in this significant new area of research.

The chapter concludes with a chapter summary which provides an overview of the theoretical framework that will inform this study (section 3.12).

3.2 Human Motivation

Central to this research, and the primary research question, is what motivates an individual to create an online business? The secondary research questions explore the significance of work, lifestyle and location in the lives of DEs, based on their subjective experience. In addressing the research questions motivational theory provides the theoretical lens. Carsrud and Brännback (2011, p. 11) posit that the study of motivation looks to answer three types of questions: "what activates a person, what makes the individual choose one behaviour over another, and why do different people respond differently to the same motivational stimuli?" What makes this study unique from other studies of entrepreneurial motivation is that the dynamic online environment in which DEs operate, and their flexibility in relation to time and place, could fundamentally impact what activates them and their choice of behaviour.

Research into human motivation, can be traced back to Freud's work on instincts, specifically the human instincts to survive and avoid failure (Carsrud & Brännback, 2011). The concept of hedonism, and the avoidance of pain and seeking of pleasure, formed the basis of early approaches (Steers, Mowday, & Shapiro, 2004). Understanding human motivation has since evolved beyond the drives for survival and reproduction into a multifaceted and complex area (Baumeister, 2016). Limitations of early approaches, such as defining individual perceptions of which events were painful or pleasurable, led to a shift toward more empirically based models to explain human motivation (Steers et al., 2004). Recognising the subjective nature of human experience was critical to this shift (Baumeister, 2016). Capturing the subjective experience of the individual, on the entrepreneurial journey, is key within the context of this study.

While a lack of consensus in defining motivation inhibited development in the field (Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981) there is general agreement, within motivation literature, that any or all of the elements of initiation, direction, intensity, persistence, and termination constitute motivated behaviour (Landy & Becker, 1987). In relation to work motivation, Pinder (1998) asserts that energetic forces within the individual and beyond, act to initiate behaviour and determine its form. Baumeister (2016) considers motivation as a function of desiring change; a "condition of an organism that includes a subjective sense (not necessarily conscious) of desiring some change in self and/or environment" (p. 1). This sense of wanting change is recognised to include the willingness to take action in order to facilitate such change (Baumeister, 2016).

Relevant to this study is the development of insight into the change(s) that DEs sought to make by creating an online business.

> Entrepreneurship is a profound, pervasive human process offering independence and opportunities for self-expression for the individual and the focused motivation and behaviour appropriate to today's national and international marketplace for the corporation (Shapero, 1985, p. 5).

Shapero (1985) articulates entrepreneurship and motivation as entwined and necessary within a national and global marketplace; this quote is particularly relevant today as geographical boundaries continue to dissolve, facilitated by technology. How DEs utilise new opportunities for location independence and freedom, enabled by ICTs, is significant in relation to the future of work. In the evolving world of work, employees including remote workers and digital nomads, are accessing new ways of working and increased levels of flexibility.

3.3 Hierarchy of Needs Theory

The first scientific theory of motivation, applied within the context of work, is attributed to Maslow (1943) who argued that people have social and physiological needs that they are driven to satisfy. Maslow's (1943) popular Hierarchy of Needs theory posits that human needs are prioritised within a pyramid and as lower needs are satisfied, higher order needs then develop priority. Lower level needs, such as food, clothing and shelter, must be reasonably satisfied, then an individual becomes concerned with safety needs, such as security and freedom from fear. Social needs follow and reflect the human need for love and acceptance. Esteem needs signify the need for respect and achievement and at the top of the pyramid is self-actualisation, which reflects the need to realise one's potential for personal growth (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014). Studies have shown the desire for self-actualisation (Maslow, 1943) to be a driver for new venture creation (Logan, 2014; Watson, Gatewood & Lewis, 2014). This well-established theory has been revisited many times and still has relevance; elements of it are evident in Deci and Ryan's (2002) later work and SDT. Deci and Ryan (2002) assert that, according to the Aristotelian view of human development, individuals possess an innate striving to seek challenges, actualise their potential and grow psychologically. This concept is explored further in section 3.9 and is evident in this study's findings.

3.4 Need for Achievement

Espíritu-Olmos and Sastre-Castillo (2015) discuss the need for achievement as the behavioural tendency which drives individuals to persevere with certain activities that require a standard of excellence. Need for Achievement theory originated from McClelland's (1961) Theory of Needs, according to which human motivation is based on three types of needs: the need for achievement and drive to excel; the need to have power and drive to have impact, and the need for affiliation and close interpersonal relationships (Aramand, 2012; Lilly, Duffy & Virick, 2006). McClelland's (1967) Need for Achievement theory, captured in "The Achieving Society" (1961), posited that a common personality trait for entrepreneurs was a high need for achievement. Research suggests that the characteristics of individuals with a strong need to achieve, including striving to meet targets and problem solving, are also characteristics needed for entrepreneurship (Littunen, 2000). Further, the skills and abilities, such as taking initiative and assuming risks, of the person with a high need for achievement fit unusually well for business (McClelland, 1965; McClelland, 1962).

Aramand (2012) suggests that in entrepreneurship, the driving force is the need for achievement, economic achievement in particular. McClelland (1962) claimed that, for the entrepreneur, feedback comes in the form of costs and profits, with profitability being the simplest measure of success within a capitalist economy. As discussed in chapter two, researchers have long identified entrepreneurship as a key driver of economic development (Kassean, Vanevenhoven, Liguori, & Winkel, 2015; Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004), and entrepreneurial success has been largely measured in economic terms (Aramand, 2012; Wach et al., 2016). Segal et al. (2005) asserts that the link between entrepreneurs and a high need for achievement is not surprising given that entrepreneurial success has largely been viewed and measured through an economic lens. However, the drive for profits may be simply a symptom of living in a capitalist economy, together with having a strong need for achievement, rather than an interest in money for its own sake (McClelland, 1962).

Research has shown entrepreneurial motives to be multidimensional. For example, the lifestyle entrepreneurs (Marchant & Mottiar, 2011; Marcketti et al., 2006; Williams et al., 1989) discussed in section 2.9, were largely motivated by lifestyle reasons. Social entrepreneurs have also been characterised as having low wealth seeking motivation (Lukes & Stephan, 2012), with social gains suggested to be primary motivators (Carsrud & Brännback, 2011). Exploring the significance of entrepreneurial motivations more broadly than achievement based and economically measured factors is a key focus of this research. It could be considered that as society's values shift, those with a high need for achievement may choose to measure success according to a new set of values.

3.5 Expectancy Theory

While largely researched within the fields of work motivation and organisational behaviour, Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964) has also received attention in studies of entrepreneurial motivation (Renko et al., 2012; Segal et al., 2005). According to the theory, entrepreneurs who have confidence in their abilities to achieve certain outcomes are more likely to exert the effort required to achieve such outcomes (Renko et al., 2012). Renko et al. (2012) propose that expectancy theory holds promise for research on nascent entrepreneurs who conduct activities intended to result in a viable new enterprise. They posit that it can assist researchers to gain insight into the motivational origins of entrepreneur's intentions.

However, individuals may persist with certain behaviour even if their expectations are not satisfied, due to commitment to a course of action (Adam & Fayolle, 2015). It has been suggested that while motivation may trigger entrepreneurship, as the entrepreneurial process takes place over time, commitment may bridge the gap between intention and behaviour when motivation is no longer present (Adam & Fayolle, 2015). Nonetheless, studies of entrepreneurial motivation using Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory as a framework have produced interesting results, such as Segal et al.'s (2005) research.

Segal et al. (2005) hypothesised that the desirability of self-employment was a product of the desired outcomes of such, combined with the probability of achieving such outcomes. Their review of the literature revealed that the decision to be self-employed, rather than employed by others, was emphasised by five criteria: "income potential; financial security; independence; the need for achievement and escape from corporate bureaucracy" (p. 50). A survey was administered to 112 business students to test this hypothesis with results indicating that self-efficacy, tolerance for risk and perceived net desirability are a significant predictor of entrepreneurial intentions. They further claimed a stronger indicator of such intentions is predicted when these three variables are combined. Whether these results can be extrapolated to the wider population of entrepreneurs remains unclear. Other studies present self-efficacy as a key entrepreneurial tendency (Aramand, 2012; Bandura, 1977; Chen, Greene and Crick, 1998), discussed further in section 3.6.

3.6 Personality Traits of Entrepreneurs

While motives refer to the drivers that direct behaviour, personality traits describe an individual's typical behaviour and how they carry out action (Lukes & Stephan, 2012). Using the trait approach, the entrepreneur is assumed to be a certain personality type (Gartner,

1988). Segal et al. (2005) posit that the topic of motivation within entrepreneurship literature has had a similar progression to that within the field of organisational psychology, whereby the focus of early research was on the traits and characteristics distinguishing entrepreneurs from the general population. Entrepreneurial traits have been suggested to include an internal locus of control, creativity and innovativeness, vision, risk tolerance, and independence (Gartner, 1990; Kuratko & Hodgetts; 2004). This section presents several key theories claiming certain personality traits as particularly relevant to the entrepreneur, namely Locus of Control theory (Rotter, 1966), Self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1977), and McCrae and Costa's (1987) Five Factor Model.

Rotter's (1966) Locus of Control theory posits that the impact of a reward on the preceding behaviour partly depends on the individual's perception of the reward as contingent on their behaviour or independent of it; if a person perceives an event as contingent on their own behaviour, this represents a belief in internal control. In other words, individuals with an internal locus of control have the belief that their actions directly impact an event's outcome (Shane et al., 2003). Brockhaus (1975) suggests, in discussing locus of control in relation to the entrepreneur, that without the belief in their ability to affect the success or failure of their venture, the entrepreneur would be unlikely to expose themselves to the risk associated. An internal locus of control is claimed to support learning and active striving (Littunen, 2000), not surprising given it related to an individual's perception of control over their own life (Rotter, 1966). Learning and personal development has been suggested by researchers (Stephan et al., 2015) to be a key dimension of entrepreneurial motivation, as presented in section 3.10.2, and significant in this study.

Bandura's (1977) Social Learning theory resulted in development of the term self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their capability to perform a certain task (Aramand, 2012; Boyd & Vozikis, 1994). One's belief in their own ability to generate and implement the required resources, competencies and skills to complete particular activities and achieve desired outcomes is a reflection of their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Self-precepts of efficacy are posited to influence one's motivation (Bandura, 1986) and an individual's self-efficacy has been suggested to affect their choice of activities, goals, persistence, and achievement in a number of different contexts (Zhao, Seibert, & Hills, 2005).

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy or one's confidence in their abilities to successfully perform those roles and tasks associated with entrepreneurship, is considered an antecedent to entrepreneurship (Chen et al., 1998). Individuals with entrepreneurial self-efficacy are drawn to opportunities that develop and utilise their capabilities; they are purported to seek challenge,

believing in their ability to successfully rise to such challenges (Shepherd & Patzelt, 2011). Further, studies show that an individual's willingness to bear the risks associated with entrepreneurship is positively associated with their self-efficacy (Aramand, 2012; Hatammimi & Wulandari, 2014). Of interest is how the digital landscape will impact DEs' self-efficacy. For example, if business operation in the digital realm requires well developed technology related skills, how this may impact motivation.

One of the most recognised models of human personality traits is the Five Factor Model, which comprises the traits of extraversion, neuroticism (emotional stability), openness to experience, conscientiousness and agreeableness (McCrae & Costa, 1987). Caliendo, Fossen and Kritikos (2013) surveyed a large sample of the German population from 2000 to 2009, utilising this model, to explore these and other traits in relation to entrepreneurship. Findings indicated that high values in the traits of openness to experience, emotional stability and extraversion, increased the probability for entry to entrepreneurship. Specific personality traits, including locus of control, trust and risk tolerance, were strongly related to the decision to seek self-employment. While these study findings indicated that personality traits may significantly influence the decision to enter into (and exit) self-employment, deeper information and the why of entrepreneurship were not ascertained.

A later study, conducted by Levine and Rubinstein (2017), analysed United States Department of Labour demographic survey data, from 1995 to 2012, with the aim of distinguishing entrepreneurs from other business owners, by disaggregating the self-employed based on whether their businesses were incorporated or unincorporated. While this method of differentiation had limitations, they argued that the business activities of incorporated self-employed demanded "comparatively strong non-routine cognitive abilities" (Levine & Rubinstein, 2017, p. 1). Their findings indicated that incorporated business operators tended to have higher learning aptitude and self-esteem scores. Those study participants that succeeded as entrepreneurs tended to break the rules in their youth, by engaging in more illicit activities. Perhaps this points back to the established link between entrepreneurship and the willingness to take risks (Brockhaus, 1980; Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004).

Risk taking propensity, locus of control and need for achievement were acknowledged by Gartner (1985) as relevant to entrepreneurship, in the development of a framework describing new venture creation. While some generalisations in personality traits were observed, findings indicated that entrepreneurs and their ventures are far from homogenous; there is vast complexity and variation in new firms and their creators. It has been suggested that entrepreneurs are remarkably diverse and despite extensive research on their traits and

characteristics, no specific profile has been determined (Smilor, 1997). According to Low and MacMillan (1988), entrepreneurs lie at the tail ends of personality distributions and thus "tend to defy aggregation" (p. 148). To add to this complexity, throughout the business lifecycle, different personality traits may take on importance. For example, in the start-up stage, traits such as creativity, alertness and insight have been viewed as critical (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000). In the growth phase, the ability to persevere in the face of obstacles and challenges, a feature of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), may have additional significance.

Some researchers have questioned the value and validity of using psychological traits, of any kind, to describe entrepreneurs (Brockhaus, 1982; Jenks, 1965). Anderson (2015) suggests that the fascination with looking for common traits to explain entrepreneurship lead to scholars "barking up the wrong tree" for twenty years (p. 9). Despite the large number of studies examining entrepreneurial personality traits, results remain inconclusive (Chedli, 2016; Segal et al., 2005) and there is no specific version of trait theory has emerged as a predictor of entrepreneurial behaviour. Human behaviour has been recognised as being a dynamic interaction between the individual and the situation, rather than a function of personal characteristics (Gilad & Levine, 1986; Segal et al., 2005). This is supported by the call for research focussing on the wider context of reasons that individuals engage in entrepreneurship (Welter et al., 2017).

In one of the few studies of motivation in relation to DEs, Taleghani, Ghafary, Keyhani and Ahmadi (2013) conducted a quantitative questionnaire based on eight pre-determined personality traits of 120 Iranian internet entrepreneurs. They concluded that digital entrepreneurs display a higher rate of entrepreneurial characteristics than do non digital entrepreneurs. The process for selection of the eight chosen traits is unclear but such traits included risk tolerance, locus of control, tolerance for ambiguity and seeking challenges. While trait theory is not a primary theory informing this study, it has had a significant role in the development of the literature relating to entrepreneurial motivation.

3.7 Entrepreneurial Event Theory

Shapero and Sokol's Entrepreneurial Event Theory (1982) proposes that variables, within the social and cultural environment, shape nascent entrepreneurship. This model takes a different approach to other theories which take a more self-directed view of entrepreneurial motivation. Entrepreneurial Event Theory (EET) assumes that human behaviour is guided by inertia until an intervening event disrupts such inertia. The resulting displacement could be negative, for example divorce or job loss, or positive such as a lottery win or inheritance. This causes a

change in behaviour where an individual selects the best alternative from the resulting options (Krueger, Reilly & Carsrud, 2000). Van der Zwan, Thurik, Verheul & Hessels (2016) suggest that the distinction between pull and push factors is evident in EET, for example, an important change or disruptive event (such as being made redundant) may push or pull an individual to start a business.

A recent study using this model is Stirzaker and Galloway's (2017) qualitative study of individuals aged 50 plus who became self-employed following redundancy. Using surveys and interviews, they examined why respondents had sought entrepreneurship post redundancy and analysed the data through the lens of EET. Findings indicated that while the catalyst event or *push*, redundancy, was described negatively the resulting experiences of self-employment were largely positive; many participants created a venture that added value to their lives, though not necessarily financially. For participants of the current study, entrepreneurship may also add value beyond economics, for example through temporal and spatial flexibility.

3.8 Theory of Planned Behaviour

Intention models, developed within the psychological literature, were a focus of research in the 1980's (Adam & Fayolle, 2015). Carsrud and Brännback (2011) claim that when the search for personality traits unique to the entrepreneur fell out of favour, some researchers recognised the link between ideas and actions and entrepreneurial intentions models gained significance. Azjen's (1985) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) originates from social psychology and posits that intention is a significant predictor of behaviour (Kautonen, Van Gelderen & Tornikoski, 2013). According to the theory, three attitudinal precursors guide human behaviour: personal beliefs about likely behavioural outcomes and evaluations of such outcomes, perceived beliefs about the expectations of others and motivation to comply with such, and beliefs about the *power* of those factors that may influence behaviour. In combination, these attitudes form behavioural intention. In general, the more favourable the outcome and perceived social norm and the greater the behavioural control, the stronger the intention to perform the behaviour (Ajzen, 1985).

Carsrud and Brännback (2011) claim that most research on entrepreneurial intentions is based on this model and essentially all entrepreneurial intentions could be labelled as goals according to TPB. Intentions theories are relevant to this research in that entrepreneurs' goals are viewed as providing key insight into their motivation. The interview instrument used in conducting this research (Appendix A) is informed by motivational theory. As well as direct questions seeking information as to entrepreneurs' motivations, information was sought in

relation to participants' business and lifestyle goals. Such goals explored intentions and provided a nuanced view of participant motivations, the aim of which was to generate deeper understanding of subject motivations.

Krueger et al. (2000) conducted research which focused on attitudes as predictors of intentions and intentions as predictors of behaviour by comparing the predictive ability of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) with Entrepreneurial Event Theory (EET), in examining entrepreneurship. They claim their results offer strong statistical support for both models. However, while intentions models can be useful, in so far as intentions can be predictors of behaviour, they have limitations. As previously discussed, attitudes and intentions can change over time and environmental factors may influence the ability to act on intentions. Further, Hytti (2010) highlights the argument that the transition into entrepreneurship is more of a phase, from a career viewpoint, than a singular unique event. For the purposes of this research, both TPB and EET are relevant in that they help inform other theories, including Push-Pull Theory, as indicated in Figure 3.1.

3.9 Self Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), first proposed in 1985 (Deci & Ryan), explores the human pursuit of goals and aspirations and its effect on well-being (Ryan et al., 2008). SDT is a well-established theory developed from studies comparing intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Since its inception, SDT has been refined and elaborated by researchers around the world (Gagne, 2014). The theory is based on traditional empirical evidence interpreted according to a meta-theory in which humans are seen as organisms actively seeking ways to satisfy needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Latham (2012) claims Deci and Ryan's emphasis on self-determination was largely informed by research conducted by the University of Michigan, which highlighted the importance of employee involvement in decision making in relation to their jobs. Researchers assert that motivational research remains a vibrant field and SDT continues to provide a blueprint for better understanding of the human condition (Vallerand, Pelletier & Koestner, 2008).

Central to this study is gaining insight into why individuals start online businesses and their motivation in doing so. Motivation is seen as the force underpinning a person's energy, and the initiation, direction, intensity, persistence, and termination of their behaviour (Landy & Becker, 1987). Motivation can be autonomous or controlled and this distinction is integral to SDT (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Intrinsic motivation is autonomous and performed without the need for external reward; it is the tendency to seek challenges, explore, extend one's

capabilities, and learn (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Intrinsic motivation involves performing an activity because one derives satisfaction from the activity itself (Gagne & Deci, 2005).

Self Determination Continuum

| Amotivation | External Regulation | Introjected Regulation | Identified Regulation | Integrated Regulation | Intrinsic Regulation |

Controlled ← → Autonomous
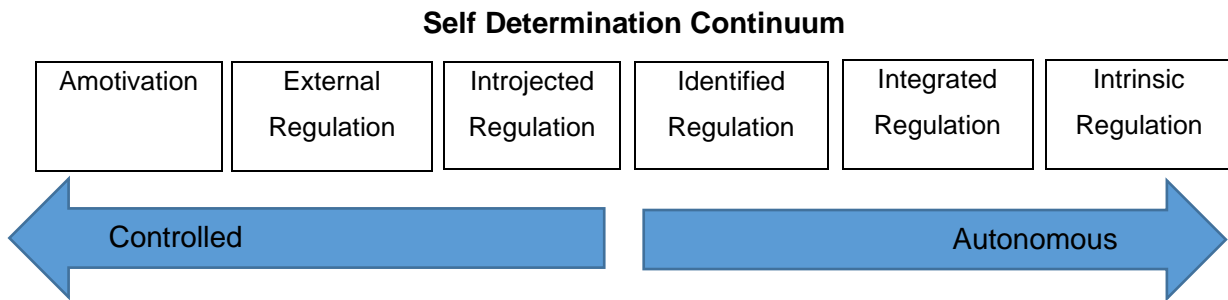
Figure 3.1 Self-Determination Continuum (adapted from Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 237).

The closer an individual's behaviour is to the right of the continuum in Figure 3.1, the more self-determined the individual's behaviour (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Activities can be autonomous (self-determined) or controlled (non-self-determined) and while both are instances of intentional behaviour they involve different types of regulatory processes (Deci & Ryan, 2000). *Intrinsic regulation* is at the right end of the continuum and refers to behaviour that has an internal locus of causality. At the other end of the continuum sits *amotivation*, which refers to a total lack of motivation. In between amotivation and intrinsic motivation there are four categories of extrinsic motivation, increasing, from left to right, in the extent to which they are *autonomous* rather than *controlled*. These four categories of extrinsic motivation are aimed at meeting others' expectations or external rewards to varying degrees, whether consciously or unconsciously recognised. *External regulation* is based on external punishments or rewards, while *introjection* involves internalised feelings of guilt or anxiety that result in action. Next is *identified regulation* in which the person's identity or self-image derives from others' values or social expectations that are accepted as personally important. Finally, in *integrated regulation*, motivations are again based on others' values or beliefs but are fully assimilated, such that the person believes they represent personal needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Al-Jubari et al., (2019) posit that integrated regulation becomes identical to and cannot be distinguished from intrinsic regulation. In all four categories of extrinsic motivation the person is guided by others' interests rather than the inherent satisfaction of the activity or pure enjoyment of it, in contrast to intrinsic motivation. It follows that in SDT, extrinsic work orientations are associated with lower work satisfaction than intrinsic orientations (Vansteenkiste, Neyrinck, Niemiec, Soenens, De Witte & Van den Broeck, 2007).

Also, worth considering is that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations can coexist and are therefore not mutually exclusive (Carsrud & Brännback, 2011). Entrepreneurs may be driven by economic necessity when other forms of employment are not available, an extrinsic motivator (also a "push" factor) but may also be individuals who value the freedom to create and run their own businesses or live where and how they want (indicative of intrinsic motivation). Smilor (1997) claims that "effective entrepreneurs are dreamers who do" and it is intrinsic passion, often described as drive, that leads the entrepreneur to make the improbable possible (p. 342). Intrinsic passion, or drive, can also act as a 'pull' factor. While emerging entrepreneurs may have strong intrinsic motivation, they are traditionally associated with the drive for business growth and profit creation (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004; Schumpeter, 1934), which are extrinsic goals. As discussed previously, there is recognition among researchers that entrepreneurship is not only about high-risk, high-growth business ventures (Marcketti et al., 2006). Intrinsic motivation is suggested to be reward in itself (Lilly et al., 2006) and intrinsic motives have been found to increase entrepreneur satisfaction more than economic ones (Borzaga & Tortia, 2006).

Kuratko et al. (1997) found both intrinsic and extrinsic goals important for entrepreneurs starting or sustaining a business. Important extrinsic goals included acquiring personal wealth, early retirement and family security. However, intrinsic goals such as challenge, excitement and growth were also identified as important. Arora's (2014) study of 38 male entrepreneurs and 22 female entrepreneurs discovered that gender influenced entrepreneurial work motivation, with the women entrepreneurs having greater intrinsic work motivation than the men. Of interest is whether the motivations for digital entrepreneurs indicate intrinsic or extrinsic orientation, given DEs alternate context and degree of spatial and temporal flexibility.

Entrepreneurs have traditionally been seen as highly autonomous individuals (Kuratko et al., 1997). Many appear to prefer to work alone and Shane (2008) posits that fewer than one in five new business owners seek to take on other employees, often because they value autonomy, flexibility and control over their lives. While greater control over income or economic security is a common motivation for starting a small business, greater control over the location, travel time, hours and social context of work may also be involved (Carree & Verheul, 2012). This may include escaping the psychological and social drawbacks of a corporate office to gain greater intrinsic satisfaction from the work itself. Entrepreneurs who are intrinsically motivated may seek challenge, excitement, personal growth or a sense of self-worth from their work (Kuratko et al., 1997).

Entrepreneurial motivators can also include social factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic. Jayawarna, Rouse and Kitching (2013) found six distinct motivations in their study of UK entrepreneurs. Findings revealed some entrepreneurs were driven to achieve a high income and some were reluctant entrepreneurs with few employment options. Others found starting a business more convenient than being an employee, for example by reducing the need to work long hours away from home. Intrinsic social motives were present in social entrepreneurs, driven more to contribute to their community than to make a profit.

Basic psychological needs theory (BPNT) (Deci & Ryan 2000) is a sub-theory of SDT proposing that three psychological needs are essential for optimal human functioning (Al-Jubari et al., 2019). Deci and Ryan's (2000) categories of motivation are based on a 'meta theory' of three universal instinctive psychological needs or growth tendencies: *autonomy*, *competence* and *relatedness*. They claim that when these needs are satisfied, self-motivation and wellbeing are enhanced and individuals most fully realise their potential (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Conversely, when these innate needs are frustrated, motivation and wellbeing decline. These three psychological needs, each considered in the next sections, are claimed to be particularly well satisfied through intrinsic goals and aspirations (Ryan et al., 2008).

3.9.1 Autonomy

Autonomous behaviour is behaviour that is of one's own volition (Al-Jubari et al., 2019) and central to the need for autonomy is a sense of personal choice (Ryan et al., 2008). It is the need to self-organise behaviour and experience congruence with one's sense of self (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In other words, "one's actions emanate from oneself and are one's own" (Van Gelderen, 2010, p. 710). In contrast, controlled behaviour involves acting out of a sense of requirement or pressure (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Greater work-related wellbeing, engagement and performance are associated with an autonomy orientation (Baard, Deci & Ryan, 2004). In research on entrepreneurial motivation, autonomy is the most often-cited motive for business creation (Stephan et al., 2015; Van Gelderen, 2010). Similarly, internal locus of control and independence feature highly in trait theory as common tendencies shared by entrepreneurs (Gartner, 1990; Kuratko & Hodgetts; 2004).

Leighton (2016) asserts that emerging business models and internet platforms represent a new philosophy; people want increased autonomy, control and choice in relation to their work. Autonomy appears to be a major source of entrepreneurs' satisfaction, and as the changing world of work requires people to be more enterprising, autonomous action becomes more

critical (Van Gelderen, 2010). As has been presented in chapter two, in the context of the changing world of work the ability to be self-directed may continue to gain importance. Hessels et al. (2008) claim that where autonomy or independence is a dominant motive for seeking self-employment, it is likely the entrepreneur has limited ambitions for business growth. As discussed previously, entrepreneurship motives appear to be far more diverse than those associated with economic indicators.

While autonomy is a widely cited motive for entrepreneurship (Stephan et al., 2015; Van Gelderen, 2010), there are few studies exploring the types of autonomy entrepreneurs seek. Van Gelderen and Jansen (2006) suggest that there are different reasons why venture creators seek autonomy; many do so for decisional freedoms. However, some seek freedom as a necessary condition to fulfil other motives. Van Gelderen and Jansen (2006) conducted semi-structured interviews with 167 nascent entrepreneurs and postulate two types of autonomy motives: one associated with task characteristics of self-employment (a proximal motive), the other with avoiding having a 'boss' or restrictions and acting in a self-congruent manner (instrumental autonomy).

A recent study, which has parallels with the current study, is Reichenberger's (2018) study of digital nomads, introduced in chapter 2.10. The study presents professional, personal and spatial freedoms as key motivators for adopting the digital nomad lifestyle and living life on one's own terms. Also relevant is a study by Dutot and Van Horne (2015), suggesting that autonomy may be an important motive for Digital Entrepreneurs. The researchers conducted ten semi-structured interviews, with French and Emirati digital entrepreneurs (five in each country), exploring digital entrepreneurship intention. The stage of development of each operator's firm was considered together with factors of agility, entrepreneurial characteristics and entrepreneurial alertness. Findings revealed that many of the entrepreneurs sampled were reported to perceive their venture as a way to be their own boss (Dutot & Van Horne, 2015).

In relation to Push-Pull Theory, which has particular significance in this study, autonomy has been classified as both a push and a pull motive (Dawson & Henley, 2012). In McKeown and Hanley's (2009) research, the desire to be one's own 'boss' was posited to be a pull motive for professional contractors. Alternately, Giacomin et al. (2007) refer to autonomy as a push motive, for example where an individual feels dominated at work and takes self-determined action as a result. Autonomy will be discussed further in section 3.10 and has key relevance in this research.

3.9.2 **Competence**

González-Cutre and Sicilia (2012) define competence as the need to feel effective and show progress toward internally desired, intrinsic goals. Researchers discuss human action as not only a function of motivation but also of an individual's intelligence and cognitive skills and abilities (Shane et al., 2003). Facing challenges within one's capabilities is part of undertaking a task and can satisfy an individual's innate need to experience competence (Al-Jubari et al., 2019). There appears to be a relationship between competence and personal self-efficacy (presented in section 3.6). Chen et al. (1998) claim that individuals assess their capabilities against different occupational requirements and tend to avoid those in which they perceive they lack competence and enter those in which they feel efficacious.

Satisfaction of competence needs is often found in a person's ability to adapt to complex and changing environments and leads to feelings of mastery; where adaptation is not achieved, competence is frustrated, motivation is lacking and feelings of helplessness result (Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, De Witte, Soenens & Lens, 2010). In relation to contemporary work practices, Harmer and Pauleen (2012) suggest individuals require the skills necessary to understand and manage an increasingly complex environment. For the subjects of this study, of interest is the relevance of learning and adapting, for example to new technologies, in their motivation to start an online business.

3.9.3 **Relatedness**

Relatedness is the human need for connectedness, satisfying personal relationships and feeling part of a community (Kaplan & Madjar, 2015). It is well established that social connection is a strong motivator for employment and predictor of job satisfaction and performance (Jahoda, 1982; Warr, 1994). Shepherd and Haynie (2009) suggest that while the need for distinctiveness (Brewer, 1991) may be satisfied through entrepreneurship, this can be at the expense of the need for belonging, negatively impacting psychological well-being; therefore, the need to be distinctive must be balanced with the need for belonging. Although autonomy is significant for many entrepreneurs, they may also be motivated by the need to connect with like-minded individuals and form business or even personal relationships.

According to Leighton (2016), there is a growing population of independent self-employed professionals who seek connection by working collaboratively with other professionals. The rapid growth of coworking spaces (Johns & Gratton, 2013), Meetup groups (Bouncken &

Reuschl, 2018) and other opportunities for face-to-face interaction among entrepreneurs points to satisfying needs for relatedness and human connection, in addition to achieving business related goals. In relation to this study, DEs are often solo entrepreneurs, with many living away from their home country and communities. The role that coworking spaces (discussed in section 2.4), as well as social media and online communities, play for DEs is particularly relevant as the life of a digital entrepreneur has the potential to be socially isolating.

3.10 Push-Pull Theory

This section discusses Push-Pull Theory which is the primary theory informing this research. Push-Pull Theory evolved from two theories produced by empirical research to explain entrepreneurial motivation, popularly termed "push" and "pull" theories (Gilad & Levine, 1986; Kirkwood, 2009; Segal et al., 2005). Push theory supporters claim that negative external forces, such as job dissatisfaction, inadequate salary, difficulty securing employment (Segal et al., 2005) and missing out on promotion may push individuals into entrepreneurship (Kirkwood, 2009). Alternately, Pull theory proponents suggest that individuals seeking desirable outcomes, such as independence, wealth, and self-fulfilment, are attracted to entrepreneurship (Segal et al., 2005). This thesis explores the factors pushing and pulling DEs toward business creation and relevant reasons underlying this.

Shapero (1975) discussed "push" entrepreneurs as "displaced persons", somehow dislodged from a comfortable situation, with this acting as a precursor to their entrepreneurial behaviour (p. 83). Gilad and Levine (1986) postulate that the entrepreneurial individual may react to a hostile or unreceptive environment by starting their own business, as a way of proving their self-worth. For professionals, self-employment may be a refuge in the face of such events (McKeown, 2005). It can also present a way to make a living for the unemployed or those with limited chances of gaining employment (Karanja, Maingi, Wangui, Wanjohi & Maina, 2018) or for individuals dissatisfied with their previous employment (Brockhaus, 1982).

Alternately, the Pull hypothesis proposes that positive factors, for example attractive business opportunities, draw the individual into entrepreneurial endeavours. Market opportunity, profit and social status have been identified as individual pull factors (Giacomin et al., 2007). Studies in support of Pull theory suggest childhood business activities and entrepreneurial family environments encourage the individual to seek profitable business opportunities (Gilad & Levine, 1986). Anderson et al. (2013) refer to pull factors as "ambition" factors that reflect positive entrepreneurial attitudes (p. 140). Ambitious entrepreneurship has recently emerged as a concept in the entrepreneurship literature and is often used in the context of

entrepreneurs' intentions in relation to their firms. Hermans, Vanderstraeten, Van Witteloostuijn, Dejardin, Ramdani and Stam (2015) assert that ambitious entrepreneurs aim to maximise value creation, expressed as profit, innovation, growth or other indicators, beyond self-sufficiency. However, there are reasons beyond economic and ambition factors that draw an individual to entrepreneurship, as this study affirms. While monetary motivations are usually considered a pull factor, it is not always money that motivates people to start a business (Kirkwood, 2009). For example, entrepreneurship also provides opportunities for continual learning and improvement, which can operate as a pull force, as was the case in Mitchell's (2004) study of South African entrepreneurs. Mitchell (2004) claims this pull factor is related to the "need to escape an unsatisfactory situation" (p. 177), which can act as a push factor.

There is variation in terminology when categorising entrepreneurial motivations (Dawson & Henley, 2012). "Push" and "pull" factors (Amit & Muller, 1995; Gilad & Levine,1986; Yitshaki & Kropp (2016) are also referred to in terms of "necessity" and "opportunity" factors (Cheung, 2014; Hessels et. al, 2008; Stephan et al., 2015) and as "drives" and "incentives", respectively (Carsrud & Brännback, 2011). Carsrud and Brännback (2011) claim that all existing motivational theories may be separated into drive theories and incentive theories. Drive theories propose that an internal stimulus, such as hunger or fear, results in behaviour that aims to reduce the resulting internal conflict. For example, a hungry person is "pushed" to search for food. Alternately, in incentive theories "pull" factors dominate, for instance, an individual is "pulled" toward achieving a perceived positive outcome. For the purposes of this study, the terms push and pull will be used to categorise the motivational forces directing behaviour.

3.10.1 Push-Pull Behavioural Model

Gilad and Levine (1986) proposed a behavioural model to measure the influence of certain environmental factors on the entrepreneurial response, testing push and pull factors. The model took into account negative factors 'pushing' individuals toward entrepreneurship, such as dissatisfaction with their employment, as well as positive, 'pull' factors, reflecting an expanding economy. They tested various versions of the model, using Citibank data, sourced from Dun and Bradstreet and Business Conditions Digest Series, in relation to new business incorporations from 1959 -1981. The dependent variable was new business incorporations as a proxy to indicate the level of entrepreneurial activity. Push factors were the employment conditions, the opportunity cost of leaving paid employment and the individual's financial position. Pull factors represented perceived opportunity and included new housing

construction, willingness to take on credit and consumer spending. Other forces included the interest rate, money supply and stock market conditions. Gilad and Levine's (1986) findings supported both push and pull hypotheses of entrepreneurial motivation, indicating that some entrepreneurs were "pulled" into business by the growing opportunities resulting from economic expansion. Simultaneously, lingering unemployment "pushed" others into entrepreneurial endeavours (1986, p. 50).

Research applying the Push-Pull framework has indicated that individuals become entrepreneurs mainly due to pull factors, rather than push factors (Segal et al., 2005). A claim supported by recent international studies finding pull factors to be more dominant (Falco & Haywood, 2016; Shinnar & Young, 2008; Yitshaki & Kropp, 2016). In a study of workers in Ghana, Falco and Haywood (2016) used panel data to examine factors influencing the rise in self-employment. Reviewing earnings across waged workers and the self-employed, they examined pull factors, such as improved opportunities for the successfully self-employed and push factors, as reflected in the limited opportunities available to wage workers. Overall, their findings indicated that for educated, productive individuals, the potential higher returns offered by self-employment had a pull effect.

Pull factors also proved strong influencers in Shinnar and Young's (2008) study into the motivations of foreign-born Hispanic entrepreneurs, living and working in Las Vegas. Pull factors were reported to influence research participants to enter into entrepreneurship more strongly than push factors. Always wanting to run a business, more money, greater flexibility, and belief in their skills all acted as pull factors. Yitshaki and Kropp (2016) conducted a study of Israeli social entrepreneurs exploring their motivations and patterns of opportunity recognition through life story analysis. Findings indicated that the majority of participants were motivated by pull factors, which included their past or current prosocial behaviours. For others, job dissatisfaction and a search for greater meaning acted as push motivators. These life experiences led to the formation of social ventures to fill the gaps created by unmet social needs. The findings in these studies support Segal et al.'s (2005) claim that pull factors are primary determinants of the decision to pursue entrepreneurship, rather than push factors.

There is also an argument that Pull entrepreneurs experience more success than Push entrepreneurs, as reflected in Amit and Muller's (1995) study of Canadian business enterprises. This may have merit; push entrepreneurs choose business creation as their best available option when options are limited. Pull entrepreneurs, on the other hand, appear to choose business ownership regardless of the other options available, indicating intrinsic motivation. Similar findings have been evidenced in relation to opportunity (pull) and necessity

(push) entrepreneurs. Verheul, Thurik, Hessels & Van der Zwan (2010) postulate that opportunity entrepreneurs have a higher chance of survival because their entry into self-employment is voluntary and often in their area of expertise. Asah, Fatoki and Rungani (2015) state the higher rate of survival for opportunity entrepreneurs may be due to better preparation in starting their business. The pre-entry capabilities of opportunity entrepreneurs have also been shown to influence early business success (Baptista, Karaöz, & Mendonça, 2014).

This echoes the findings of McKeown and Hanley's (2009) study exploring Push-Pull factors impacting the move into self-employment for professional contractors. Push-Pull Factors associated with direct and delayed (after leaving prior working arrangement) moves into contracting were categorised within a matrix. Where it was individual choice to engage in contracting work, pull factors included more money, greater flexibility and the preference for being one's own boss (autonomy). Push factors included redundancy, employer request and contracting as the best option available (McKeown & Hanley, 2009). The need to balance work and family was classified as both a push and a pull factor. Results indicated that those individuals who perceived their movement into contracting as voluntary (as a result of being pulled) had a greater attachment to contracting as a way of working than those who were pushed (McKeown & Hanley, 2009).

The influence of gender was considered in Kirkwood's (2009) research into the push and pull factors driving business start-ups. Overall, there were relatively few differences in motivation found between the genders but Kirkwood (2009) suggests the role of children should be recognised as having importance in existing Push-Pull Theory. This relates to the discussion on the prevalence of flexible work and the ability to combine family roles within online work. Family roles were explored by Foley, Baird, Cooper and Williamson (2018) in their study of entrepreneur mothers, which examined their experience of independence as being either opportunity or necessity driven. Findings indicated that for research participants, independence was perceived as a necessity in meeting the demands of motherhood. Hence, they proposed the term "family-driven entrepreneurship" to "capture the social and institutional factors that may disproportionately push women with caregiving responsibilities towards self-employment" (p. 313).

A gendered approach has also been considered in relation to digital entrepreneurs. In one of the few studies of DE motivations, Malik (2017) analysed data from thirty in-depth interviews of women, residing in the United States, who identified as being digital entrepreneurs. One of the research questions focussed on how they constituted their careers discursively and materially. Emerging push factors included job loss, limited workplace flexibility and the

perceived presence of a glass ceiling. Pull factors included the search for work-life balance, to suit their personality, channel their creativity and have greater control over their resources. Findings revealed that the choice to pursue entrepreneurship was not made in a vacuum but the result of an interplay of factors including market conditions, memorable messages received growing up and normative gendered assumptions in relation to family and work (Malik, 2017). While a gender comparative approach is outside the scope of this study, family responsibilities and children may well impact the motivation to pursue digital entrepreneurship and merit consideration.

As well as events or circumstances external to the individual, internal factors can push or pull an individual toward entrepreneurship. Dawson and Henley (2012) distinguish between internal and external push and pull factors in their research exploring the ambiguity between push and pull reasons for choosing self-employment. They conducted secondary analysis of a large data set of self-employed individuals from UK Quarterly Labour Force Surveys from 1999 to 2001, examining the push and pull influence of both internal and external factors. Lack of alternative opportunity and redundancy were classified as external push factors, while job dissatisfaction and family constraints were considered internal push factors. Internal pull factors were considered to include autonomy, challenge and perceived self-efficacy. External pull factors included market opportunity and innovation. Findings indicated the tendency for dimensions to be blurred, "individuals may report multiple motivations for choosing self-employment across both "push" and "pull" and external and internal dimensions" (Dawson & Henley, 2012, p. 703).

In highlighting the conceptual ambiguities in categorising motivations in either/or categories within the Push-Pull framework, Dawson and Henley (2012) contemplate whether "it is the positive desire for autonomy that pulls an individual towards self-employment" or alternately, "the lack of personal autonomy in organisational employment that pushes an individual to consider alternatives" (p. 701). Similar questions could be asked in relation to workplace flexibility and lifestyle factors. Is it a lack of flexibility that pushes an individual to start their business or the desire for increased flexibility that operates as a pull factor? The answer appears to depend on the frame of reference. Lifestyle factors appear to have a pull or push effect. Negative, or push, motivators include wanting to leave the 'rat race' and/or downshifting (Williams et al., 1989). Positive, or pull, motivators include having a creative outlet, better managing competing work and family roles, learning from experience and enjoying the work (Marcketti et al., 2006). This is particularly relevant to this study given DEs' spatial flexibility and the potential role of lifestyle and location in starting a business.

Anderson et al. (2013) claim that the simultaneous existence of push and pull dimensions within a single individual makes the dichotomy contentious. This was evidenced in their study which explored the nature of informal entrepreneurship in Tunisia and critically examined push and pull concepts. As a result of their findings, they considered that the concepts lack explanatory power due to their overlap and neglect of the context or environment in which entrepreneurship occurs. Opportunity is a meeting of both self and circumstance; what may present an opportunity for one person may not be construed as such for another (Anderson et al., 2013). In the current study, the spatial flexibility available to DEs may represent an opportunity to travel or live in their preferred location (acting as a pull factor) and/or a chance to move away from the city (push). The digital environment presents contextual factors which need to be taken into account as part of Push-Pull dichotomy. This is aligned with Van der Zwan et al.'s (2016) assertion that in applying the Push-Pull framework the context is worth considering, as well as the participants' subjective construction of reality.

3.10.2 Dimensions of Entrepreneurial Motivation

Stephan et al. (2015) claim that the most longstanding conceptualisation in relation to entrepreneurial motivation has been the opportunity-necessity differentiation, also termed push-pull. Their international review of empirical studies of entrepreneurial motivation, spanning from 2008 to 2013, claimed that 65% of all studies investigated opportunity and necessity motivations. They posit that the most common question asked, to capture motivations for entrepreneurship, seeks to differentiate between those who have no better employment option and those who start a business proactively as a result of seeking opportunities (Stephan at al., 2015). For those employed, Powell and Bimmerle (1980) consider that opportunity may arise through an occurrence at work or due to an outside stimulus.

Stephan at al. (2015) suggest that the dominance of the use of opportunity-necessity (push-pull) theory is its intuitive appeal and inclusion in large scale international research studies, such as the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) and the European Commission's Flash Barometer report. However, they claim that the Opportunity-Necessity dichotomy is simplistic and beyond this dichotomy, a wealth of typologies of entrepreneurial motivation exist. In a review of 27 such studies, Stephan et al. (2015) present the most commonly identified dimensions, which they believe are sufficient to capture entrepreneurial motivation:

1. *Achievement, challenge & learning* – using entrepreneurship to fulfil the desire for personal development;

2. *Independence & autonomy* – an individual's desire to be in control of their own time and work and the flexibility to combine work and personal pursuits;

3. *Income security & financial success* – desire for financial rewards from entrepreneurship;

4. *Recognition & status* – respect and recognition for one's entrepreneurial endeavours from family, friends and the community;

5. *Family & roles* – the desire to continue a family tradition or leave a legacy;

6. *Dissatisfaction* – similar to the necessity motivator; dissatisfaction with previous working arrangement; and

7. *Community & social motivations* - the desire to contribute to one's community through the business or philanthropic endeavours (Stephan et al., 2015, p. 38).

Collectively, these studies suggest that autonomy (discussed in section 3.9.1) is a key driver of entrepreneurship that is experienced as motivating and satisfying long after business start-up, positively influencing firm success. Stephan et al. (2015) suggest that future research should take into account the multifaceted nature of entrepreneurial motivation and the importance entrepreneurs place on different aspects of motivation given the influence this has on business performance.

Williams and Williams (2012) share the view that entrepreneurial motivation is multifaceted, based on their study of entrepreneurs living in deprived urban neighbourhoods in England. Entrepreneurs' motives were found to be complex, combining opportunity and necessity factors, with the balance shifting in response to the changing affluence of their local area, over time (Williams & Williams, 2012). They call for a more nuanced analysis of entrepreneurial motivations, taking into account the evolution of the entrepreneurial idea and the socio spatial contingency of motivations. Further, researchers need to be mindful that entrepreneurial motivations can change over time (Hessels et al., 2008). Kirkwood (2009) argues that given the motivations for becoming an entrepreneur can be seen as multi-faceted, a qualitative research approach can be well suited to understanding complex phenomenon. Such an approach has been deemed appropriate for the purposes of this research, as is discussed further in chapter four.

3.11 Research Aim: The motivations of DEs

Motivational theory forms the theoretical lens through which the research questions are addressed. This section discusses the aims of the research and the rationale for the research questions. The literature review in chapter two explored the changing world of work and the digital disruption impacting business, together with the rise of flexible work and social drivers for change. Within this environment, the digital landscape provides new opportunities for entrepreneurship. This study uses motivational theory, predominantly Push-Pull Theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986), as a framework to explore the motivations of a type of entrepreneur exploiting these opportunities. The literature review presented some of the environmental factors that could influence individuals in their decision to pursue entrepreneurship. For example, perhaps the desire for more flexible hours is an incentive for digital business creation. Kirkwood (2009) argues that little exploratory research has been conducted to review how changes, such as the reduced barriers to entry offered by technology, may have impacted push and pull theories. Schjoedt and Shaver (2007) point out that much research, using Push-Pull Theory, is pre-internet. In this study, the first research question explores what factors prompted the individual to start an online business.

Research Question 1: What motivates an individual to pursue an online business?

There is yet to be a well-developed body of literature in relation to DEs and specifically, their motivations. The digital landscape differs from the traditional business landscape in a number of ways (i.e. ease of entry into digital business and the virtual shop front). What is unknown is how these factors impact entrepreneurial motivations. The literature review considered the role of governments in supporting growth, innovation and entrepreneurship. An understanding of the factors driving (pushing) and incentivising (pulling) the motivations of entrepreneurs needs to be considered in the creation of programs that support and foster entrepreneurial activity. Researchers posit that positive attainment of factors driving and/or incentivising entrepreneurship implies success, yet studies of entrepreneurial success have largely focussed through an economic lens, with economic indicators such as revenue and sales growth, market expansion and firm size continuing to dominate the literature (Stephan et al., 2015; Wach et al., 2016). However, as discussed at various points in this chapter, entrepreneurial motivation can be multi-dimensional and dynamic (Hessels et al., 2008).

The findings from Aramand's (2012) study of women entrepreneurs in Mongolia, indicated that the need for affiliation and wanting to help others were key entrepreneurial motivations. Aramand (2012) claims that, within entrepreneurship literature, there is a lack of emphasis on

non-economic motivations, with the focus being on American individualistic goal-oriented studies, where entrepreneurship is viewed as a means of wealth creation for the founder. Yet, subjective entrepreneurial success may include indicators such as work-life balance, personal learning and community contribution (Jayawarna et al., 2013). Buttner and Moore's (1997) study of 129 women entrepreneurs found they measured success in terms of internal rewards to do with professional development, personal growth and skill development more than external measures of business growth or profit. Kirkley's (2010) study of thirty New Zealand entrepreneurs found they most valued independence, ambition, creativity and daring, over economic indicators. The call for research on the broader context of reasons why individuals engage in entrepreneurship appears well founded (Welter et al., 2017).

Very few studies exist on the motivations of digital entrepreneurs (i.e. Dutot & Van Horne, 2015; Malik, 2017; Taleghani et al., 2013) and on how lifestyle goals may coexist with economic goals. Malik's (2017) study of women digital entrepreneurs viewed entrepreneurship through a social constructionist lens using a gender centred approach. The findings revealed that entrepreneurship was considered a social activity, created through personal interactions and interpretations, as opposed to simply an economic endeavour. As such, it was seen as an enabler of personal well-being, family caregiving and a vehicle for enacting socially responsible and community minded practices. These factors are also important in the growth and sustainability of economies.

Research Question 2: How do DEs balance their work and lifestyle domains?

The reduced barriers to entry into business (Schjoedt & Shaver, 2007) and other features of the digital environment (such as the virtual shop front), have made it possible to combine lifestyle with entrepreneurship in new ways. The online environment offers a degree of flexibility that has not previously been available. Pauleen et al. (2015) posit that despite research over several decades, little is understood about the impact of technology-enabled work on the relationship between work and private life. Given the flexibility now possible, of interest is how DEs manage to combine their lifestyle with their working lives. It is anticipated that one or the other will take precedence, depending on the business stage and/or other roles the DE has to manage, for example family responsibilities.

There are some studies that explore the concept of lifestyle entrepreneurship, with living in a particular location acting as an incentive to entrepreneurship. Such studies focus on tourism entrepreneurs and touch on only a small portion of occupations, industries and business types (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Marchant & Mottiar, 2011; Williams et al., 1989). Digital

entrepreneurship provides a vehicle for working from anywhere, at any time, with mobile connectivity. Given the freedom to work and live anywhere, where do DEs choose to base themselves? This is the foundation for the third research question.

Research Question 3: How does location play a role in the work and life of DEs?

This question presupposes that the DE has a degree of choice in where they choose to live. This being the case, what lifestyle, work and other factors are considered in their decision. Online business can allow DEs spatial freedom not possible in traditional business. For example, the virtual shop front does not require the DE to have a physical customer presence. Of significance is how such issues impact the DE and their business. Further, the role of DEs in the areas they inhabit is yet to be explored. As the DE phenomenon grows, governments may attempt to attract DEs for the economic and community contributions they can make. Shapero (1985) claims that "entrepreneurship provides communities with the diversity and dynamism that not only assures continuous development, but also an environment in which personal freedom and individual rights can flourish" (p. 5). Understanding the lifestyle factors significant for DEs and the infrastructure and services they require to conduct their business will therefore gain increasing importance. The literature review considered the role of governments in supporting growth, innovation and entrepreneurship. An understanding of the factors driving (pushing) and incentivising (pulling) the motivations of entrepreneurs needs to be considered in the creation of programs that support and foster entrepreneurial activity.

3.12 Conclusion

This study uses motivational theory, predominantly Push-Pull Theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986), as a framework to explore the motivations of digital entrepreneurs. As has been outlined in this chapter, since the first empirical model of human motivation was introduced (Maslow, 1943), many studies of have been conducted on entrepreneurial motivation using a variety of theories. These theories include McClelland's (1961) Need for Achievement Theory, Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964), Personality Trait Theories (Rotter, 1966; Bandura 1977; McCrae & Costa, 1987), Entrepreneurial Event Theory (Shapero & Sokol, 1982), Azjen's (1985) Theory of Planned Behaviour and Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which were discussed within this chapter. While Push-Pull Theory is the central theory informing this research, these other approaches, depicted in Figure 3.1, have varying degrees of relevance to this study. In essence, motivation is a function of the individual and their environment with either intrinsic and/or extrinsic factors causing an individual to take action. Push drivers and

pull incentives may be intrinsic or extrinsic depending on the individual's subjective reality and the broader context in which they operate.

The environmental context and some of the broader economic and social factors relevant for this new type of entrepreneur were discussed in chapter two. There is yet to be a well-developed body of literature in relation to DEs and specifically, their motivations. The digital landscape differs from the traditional business landscape in a number of ways (i.e. ease of entry into digital business and the virtual shop front). What is unknown is how these factors impact entrepreneurial motivations. In section 3.11, the research questions were discussed together with the research aims and justification for the study. As DEs are an emerging type of entrepreneur, motivational theory provides a viewpoint from which to consider this group and the context in which they work. As such it provides new insights into DEs and helps lay theoretical foundations in this significant new area of research. Chapter four outlines the research approach adopted in this study.

Chapter 4 – Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

As discussed in the preceding chapters, there is limited knowledge of DEs within the literature, necessitating an exploratory approach for this study, as this chapter will outline. Digital entrepreneurs are the creators and early adopters of nascent business models, exploring new ways to combine work, lifestyle and location. They are potentially redefining traditional constructs of work and smudging boundaries between work, play and location, further highlighting the importance of adopting an open approach to research design. The research questions discussed in section 3.11, demonstrate the exploratory approach that will be taken when providing insight into this phenomenon:

Research Question 1: What motivates an individual to pursue an online business?

Research Question 2: How do DEs balance their work and lifestyle domains?

Research Question 3: How does location play a role in the work and life of DEs?

This chapter outlines the research methodology adopted in this study. Firstly, in section 4.2, the research paradigm of constructivism and the rationale for the philosophical context underpinning this research is discussed. The qualitative research approach is then further explained (section 4.3), along with the rational for choosing a multiple case study approach in addressing the research questions (section 4.4). Case selection and bounding are the focus of section 4.5, followed by an overview of the purposive, snowball sampling approach utilised to recruit individuals who fit the research selection criteria (sections 4.6 and 4.7). The main data collection tool was semi-structured interviews, including pilot and field interviews, as outlined in section 4.8. The chapter closes with a discussion of ethical considerations (section 4.9) and a chapter summary (section 4.10).

4.2 Research Paradigm

This section looks at the researcher's philosophical stance in conducting this study. A paradigm is a set of beliefs that represents an individual's view of the world and their place in it (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Mertens (2010) discusses paradigms as "metaphysical frameworks" which act as a guide for researchers in the "identification and clarification of their beliefs with

regard to ethics, reality, knowledge, and methodology" (p. 469). Establishing such a framework requires making philosophical assumptions of "the nature of reality (ontology), how the researcher knows what he or she knows (epistemology), the role of values in the research (axiology), the language of the research (rhetoric) and the methods used in the process (methodology)" (Creswell, 2007, p. 16).

This qualitative research project adopts a constructivist paradigm and considers the subjective meaning that digital entrepreneurs create for their work and personal lives. Of the paradigms shaping research practice, the positivist and constructivist views are most common. Positivism argues that science should focus on studying facts observable by the senses, while constructivism asserts that knowledge about reality is constructed based on the meaning individuals attribute to things (Wrona & Gunnesch, 2016). Positivists tend to favour large-scale questionnaires, which facilitate hypothesis testing and allow for objective, generalisable findings and establishing causal relationships (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). In the field of entrepreneurship, Bruyat and Julien (2001) submit that the positivist paradigm can be useful in relation to small changes, however this research looks at a decidedly new phenomenon, which may create fundamental shifts in the field.

A constructivist approach starts with the assumption that knowledge is constructed from what the subject knows based on his or her own experience, which is subjective (Löbler, 2006). The subject's perception of their environment and the context in which they operate helps shape that construction. Entrepreneurship is now recognised to be more complex and heterogeneous than was previously thought, and the phenomenon cannot be understood without considering the entrepreneur as a "human being capable of creating, learning and influencing the environment" (Bruyat & Julien, 2001, p. 166). Researchers have called for broader context in understanding the reasons that individuals engage in entrepreneurship (Welter et al., 2017) and as such the constructivist paradigm has much to offer in advancing the field.

Given the exploratory nature of this research and the context of this study, a constructivist paradigm was considered the most appropriate. The constructionist view considers the iterative dynamic between researcher and participant (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Individual experiences may be multifaceted and complex, and it is the researcher's goal to interpret these experiences and better understand the participant's world. In the words of Shaw (1999), "researchers need to adopt an approach that allows them to *get close* to participants, penetrate their internal logic and interpret their subjective understanding of reality" (p. 60). For this reason, a qualitative research approach was adopted, as outlined in section 4.3.

4.3 Qualitative Research Approach

The lack of existing knowledge about DEs' motivations represents a gap best filled using a qualitative research methodology. As an emerging field of research, it requires comprehensive, multi-dimensional, exploratory studies for distinctive concepts to emerge and lay the foundations for future studies (Zaheer et al., 2019). Quantitative studies heavily dominate the research into entrepreneurial motivation (Stephan et al., 2015) and these studies tend to focus on economic indicators of success (Wach et al., 2016). Stephan et al. (2015) posit this may be indicative of a view that the dimensions of entrepreneurial motivation have reached a consensus. In addition to the economic role entrepreneurs play, there is growing interest in entrepreneurship as a social, cultural and historical phenomena (Pittaway & Tunstall, 2016). A qualitative approach is necessary to explore entrepreneurial motivation from the subjective perspectives of DEs, cognisant of the new environment in which they operate. When the goal is to understand the human experience within a particular context, rather than to locate an objective truth, qualitative inquiry is the preferable approach (Malik, 2017). People's desires in the creation of new business tend to be individual, with the decision-making process taking into account material and immaterial risks and gains (Hessels et al., 2008).

While every research method may be used for exploratory, descriptive or explanatory purposes (Yin, 2009), where the goal is exploration and the variables are unknown, a qualitative methodology is the most suitable (Creswell, 2012). A qualitative approach can enable the researcher to construct a full picture of the research participants, within the context of their environment (Creswell, 2012). In considering the nature of the research problem and the emerging state of entrepreneurship research, specifically digital entrepreneurship, the researcher determined that a qualitative approach was preferable, in addressing the research questions. Qualitative methods can assist the researcher to achieve a depth of understanding that acknowledges the uniqueness of human experiences (Galloway, Kapasi & Whittam, 2015).

Myers (2015) suggests that much progress has been made to advance qualitative research in the past twenty-five years within management and organisational studies, with qualitative studies represented in almost all well recognised journals within the business and management disciplines. There is a well-documented need for qualitative methods to advance the depth and diversity of the relatively young field of entrepreneurship research (Bruyat & Julien, 2001; Hlady-Rispal & Jouison-Laffitte, 2014). Berglund (2007) considers that, given the youth of the field, fundamental issues are still being grappled with and phenomenological

methods can provide a powerful tool for exploring how entrepreneurs interpret their experiences. Gaining insight into DEs' motivations, within the emerging context in which they operate, requires diving into to their experience, best achieved with a qualitative methodology.

The global economic and sociocultural factors impacting the changing world of work (explored in chapter 2) have created drivers and incentives for individuals to exit paid employment and create online businesses. This can be a multifaceted, emotionally charged and life changing journey in which context plays a significant role, further demonstrating that qualitative research is the preferred approach. Despite the methodological contributions attributed to qualitative research in recent decades, there has still been much criticism of this research approach, with exclusion of theory and subjectivity of interpretation cited as the main issues (Wrona & Gunnesch, 2016). The researcher has taken steps to address any methodological limitations, as is discussed further in section 5.8.

4.4 Multiple Case Study Approach

A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates the real-life context of a contemporary phenomenon (Yin, 2009). In view of the research questions and the exploratory nature of this research, a case study approach was adopted. Yin (2009) suggests that a case study methodology allows the researcher to "retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events" (p. 4). A case study strategy facilitated an in-depth exploration of the reasons DEs start online businesses, together with how such businesses allow them to manage their work and lifestyle domains. The significance of location, given the potential portability of digital businesses, provides further context in relation to motivations and goal achievement. As the digital business trend continues to spread, it provides new opportunities for individuals to combine their work and leisure, in the location of their choosing. The lack of existing knowledge in relation to this trend represents a gap in the literature best filled by a qualitative case study research methodology. Case studies can allow researchers to gain deep understanding of situations and the meaning created for those involved; the insights generated as a result can influence policy and future research (Hancock & Algozzine, 2016).

Dul and Hak (2007) posit that case study research has support as a valid research strategy in a variety of areas including management information systems, strategy, and operations management. This approach has also been used to analyse the impact of the internet on firm internationalisation (Loane, 2005; Mathews & Healy, 2007). Where it is necessary to development understanding of a unique issue, the case study approach is the most appropriate methodology. It provides an opportunity for intensive analysis that can be

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overlooked using other research methods (Stake, 1995). Three conditions, often present in business research, make case study research a worthwhile strategy: "(a) when the topic is broad and highly complex, (b) when there is not a lot of theory available, and (c) when context is very important" (Dul & Hak, 2007, p. 24). This study meets all three conditions in that the topic is broad, little is known is about the subject of this research, digital entrepreneurs, and the context within which they live and work is central to the study. For the researcher to gain a sound understanding of the case, the interaction between the case and its context requires examination (Yin, 2013). According to Creswell (2012), case studies allow the investigation of human behaviour *in situ*, within the environs in which phenomena occur or are experienced. This research project aims to explore the subjective reality of DEs based in different locations.

When using a case study methodology, the researcher's goal may be to understand a population of cases based on intensive analysis of a single case, or small number of cases, or alternately to elucidate the specific features of a particular case, based on the dimensions of interest (Seawright & Gerring, 2008). Rather than rely on a single case study, a limitation of which can be researcher bias (Christmann, Alexander & Wood, 2016), a multiple case study approach was utilised for this research. Stake (2005) suggests that the primary reason for a multiple case study approach is "to examine how the program or phenomenon performs in different environments" (p. 23). This research explores digital entrepreneurship within two different contexts (Australia and Bali), to facilitate comparison, with the aim of providing greater insight into the phenomenon. Recently, use of multiple case studies has become popular; common patterns can emerge between theory and cases using such an approach (Chetty, 1996). As common themes and patterns are identified and greater understanding of the research problem emerges, the number of cases is determined by the extent to which collected data generates understanding (Shaw, 1999).

Case study methodology is a research approach that Thomas (2011) refers to as involving analyses of "persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more methods" (p. 513). Researchers have adopted differing views within the case study approach. While Yin (2009) defines a case study in terms of research process, Stake (1995) focuses on the case or unit of study. Merriam (1998) alternately defines a qualitative case study in terms of the finished product. Tight (2010) refers to differing treatments of case study as a style, strategy, design, method or approach and concludes that "the essence of case study is the detailed examination of a small sample" (p. 337). Regardless of which interpretation is used, the case study approach is suitable for the current study. With little known about digital entrepreneurs, as emerging social phenomena,

case studies assist the researcher to gain insights that may be missed using other research methods.

4.5 Case Selection and bounding

Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2013) describe a case as a "phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context" (p. 28). This phenomenon includes individuals within certain contexts (Miles et al., 2013). In the present study, the digital entrepreneur is at the heart of the case, and the boundary is determined by time and place. Baxter and Jack (2008) claim that a common pitfall associated with case study research is attempting to answer a question that is too broad or has too many aims for a single study; therefore, it is important to determine what a case will not be. Placing boundaries around a case can narrow the study's focus and ensure objectives are achievable. Testing the generality of theoretical ideas requires that human social life be "sliced and diced" and "casing" allows like objects to be established, and measurement practicalities ascertained (Ragin & Becker, 1992, p. 219). Researchers suggest multiple ways cases may be bound including by time and activity, time and place, and definition and context (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Miles et al. (2013) suggest attending to several dimensions when bounding a case: the conceptual nature of the case, the physical location, social size and temporal extent.

On one end of the spectrum, cases are pre-existing empirical units that simply need to be identified and studied; on the opposing end of the spectrum, cases are by nature theoretical and researchers construct them or co-construct them with respondents (Wrona & Gunnesch, 2016). Importantly in the context of the current study, cases may be constructed after analysis has revealed those characteristics that can be considered as defining (Ragin & Backer, 1992). The original design of the study included three cases, bounded by location as the South West of Western Australia, the Central Queensland Coast, and Bali, Indonesia. During data analysis, factors emerged that resulted in the joining of the two Australian cases into a single case. These factors included replication of emergent themes and ease of data management. Bounding cases can bring closure to a problematic relationship between theory and data (Ragin & Backer, 1992). This was demonstrated in Wrona and Gunnesch's (2016) study into school reform efforts with their research question rooted in "what happens when" (p. 339). In their efforts to balance researching a well-defined case and its context they learned that cases could not be predetermined but rather were guided by their theoretical framework and personal subjectivities and co-constructed with initial respondents.

In this study, cases are bounded according to time and location, to allow the researcher to explore the DE phenomenon in separate physical locations. The flexibility of online business allows DEs mobility; the purpose of choosing more than one location is to compare the DEs in one region with the DEs in another allowing cross-case, as well as within case, comparison (Cho & Lee 2014). Location is commonly used to bound case studies and an example of this approach is Dutot and Van Horne's (2015) study of French and Emirati digital entrepreneurs exploring entrepreneurship intention. Wrona and Gunnesch (2016) suggest that, in relation to qualitative case study research, selecting the right cases is pivotal and sampling techniques should consider theoretical assumptions to avoid arbitrariness. In selecting the cases for this study, Miles, Huberman, Huberman and Huberman's (1994) approach to case sampling and selection provided an appropriate framework to guide case selection.

Table 4.1 Approach case sampling and selection (adapted from Miles et al., 1994, p. 34)

Criteria	Case Study 1	Case Study 2
Case Description	Australia	Bali, Indonesia
Criteria 1: **Relevance**	Yes, DEs living in selected regional areas, emergence of local coworking hubs	Yes, coworking hubs established in Ubud and Canguu attracting DEs (Thompson, 2019)
Criteria 2: **Likelihood of appearance of rich phenomena**	Yes, can provide rich data in relation to lifestyle and location factors	Yes, can provide rich data in relation to lifestyle and location factors
Criteria 3: **Generalisability**	Yes, particularly for regional and tourism destinations	Yes, particularly for other developing, tourism destinations
Criteria 4: **Likelihood of producing believable explanations**	Yes, can provide credible explanation of the observed phenomenon without significant bias	Yes, can provide credible explanation of the observed phenomenon without significant bias
Criteria 5: **Feasibility**	Yes - researcher is familiar with the areas specified and has access to potential research participants	Yes - researcher is familiar with the areas specified and has access to potential research participants
Criteria 6: **Ethics**	Ethical implications considered	Ethical implications considered

Table 4.1 represents six criteria for case selection and how they apply to the chosen case studies in this research project (Miles et al., 1994). Firstly, the sampling needs to be relevant to the study's conceptual framework and research questions. Case selection is best framed according to the objectives of the research and whether or not the case study is a data source for new theory or alternately a data source for evaluating existing theory (Chetty, 1996; Elman, Gerring & Mahoney, 2016). The use of multiple case studies across different geographical locations pertains to the research questions and is particularly relevant to the third research question about the significance of location. The researcher identified populations of DEs within Australia and Indonesia and was therefore confident in the likelihood of uncovering rich

phenomena within these populations (criterion 2). The DE populations within these two countries are described in greater detail in the data analysis chapter (section 5.2). The third criterion addresses how likely the research plan is to enhance generalisability based on representativeness. Using multiple case studies allows for cross-case comparison and observation of similarities as well as distinctions between cases.

The fourth criterion concerns the believability of the descriptions and explanations produced by the research. This relates to the cases as true to life and able to provide an accurate and convincing account of the phenomenon observed, without significant bias (Curtis, Gesler, Smith & Washburn, 2000). The researcher remained cognisant of any potential biases (Lee, 1999) and limitations in relation to case data (discussed further in section 5.7). The fifth criterion explores feasibility and whether the plan is achievable based on available resources, access to research subjects, and the researcher's working style. Seawright and Gerring (2008) discuss that as well as providing methodological justification for their decisions, researchers rely on considerations such as money, time, expertise and access. The researcher was familiar with the locations specified, had access to DE populations within these areas as well as the resources necessary to achieve the outlined case selection plan within the timeframe required. Research must also take into account ethical considerations and these are discussed in section 4.9.

4.6 Sampling

Qualitative researchers need to decide which people, sites, settings, events and activities are of greatest relevance to the study (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Accordingly, this study employed a purposive sampling approach combined with snowball sampling to build depth in the research data. Neergaard (2007) asserts that purposive sampling is the preferred approach for case study research. Purposive sampling involves gaining a sample representative of the segment of the population with the most information relevant to the topic of interest (Guarte & Barrios, 2006). Snowball sampling is a form of purposive sampling that has been widely used in qualitative sociological research and involves accessing the contact information of potential research participants via other research participants (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981; Noy, 2008). This technique often has the advantage of reducing the cost and time required to assemble a diverse group of participants representative of the target population (Sadler, Lee, Lim & Fullerton, 2010). Depth can be added to an investigation using the snowball sampling method (Teddlie & Yu, 2007).

Snowball sampling can be an effective technique for studying populations such as entrepreneurs. In Wach et al.'s (2016) study of German entrepreneurs, participation rate was 40% using this method. Obtaining the sample may rely on the researcher's knowledge of the field and rapport with members of the targeted community (Barratt, Ferris, & Lenton, 2015). Further demonstrating the suitability of this approach for the current study, Andringa, Poulston and Pernecky (2016) used snowball sampling to effectively recruit 16 interviewees for their study investigating motivational factors influencing the transition of successful hospitality entrepreneurs back into paid employment. Snowball sampling also proved useful in Noy's (2008) study of backpackers; the method provided an effective way of tracking social networks as well as routes of travel, with research participants gladly referring each another, allowing the study to proceed smoothly.

For this study, participants were sought for inclusion based on a number of criteria (section 4.7) and potential research participants were identified through other research participants. DEs interviewed had links to other DEs and where appropriate, the interviewer contacted potential participants via these links. This method proved useful because given their flexibility in relation to where they work, some DEs are quite mobile. However, Biernacki and Waldorf (1981) point out that while existing literature appears to suggest that snowball sampling is self-propelling and proceeds on its own this is not always the case. They submit issues with snowball sampling can be found in these areas:

- Finding participants and initiating referral chains;
- Verifying the eligibility of potential research participants;
- Engaging respondents to assist with identifying other research participants;
- Controlling the numbers in a chain and types of chains; and
- Monitoring and pacing referral chains and maintaining data quality.

It is up to the researcher to manage the sample's initiation, development and termination in a deliberate manner (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). In the current study, this technique proved effective as it was led by the researcher. Initiating the chains was the most challenging stage but controlling chains did not prove problematic. There was only one researcher conducting interviews and after a certain point the chains led back to an individual who was already a research participant. This also assisted the researcher in determining the data saturation point. Miles et al. (1994) refer to data saturation as the point in data collection where there are diminishing returns, with additional data only resulting in replication and redundancy.

In the current study, initial research participants were identified via researcher networks in Australia; these contacts then provided links to further participants, including initial participants in the Bali case. During field research in Bali (discussed in section 4.8.3), social networking sites were shown to be an effective tool in communicating with research participants. Once contact had already been established through other participants, Facebook Messenger was used to distribute information about the study and establish interview meeting times. Other studies of entrepreneurs have found social media useful in communicating with research participants; Baltar and Brunet's (2012) study of Argentinean immigrant entrepreneurs living in Spain utilised Facebook to reach participants in a timely and cost-effective manner.

4.7 Research Participants

In view of the research questions, it was decided that research participants meet predetermined criteria: that they are entrepreneurs with an online business, highly digitally connected and based in the case locations at the time of the study. Shaw (1999) asserts predetermined criteria can assist the researcher to be objective in identifying potential research participants. Within each research question were dimensions of interest for the researcher to explore. Selecting a diverse sample was critical to getting alternate perspectives according to these dimensions.

The researcher needs to identify participants who may provide important insights in relation to the research questions (Hancock & Algozzine, 2016). It was anticipated variations in mobility, type of business and lifestyle factors could impact motivational drivers and incentives. It was therefore desirable to have a demographically diverse sample of entrepreneurs, with businesses in different industries and varying levels of mobility. Several of the research participants did not meet the selection criteria as strictly as the researcher intended. For example, two research participants had off-line businesses that they managed remotely. However, given the significant insights they provided into the topics being explored, the researcher decided to include them as part of the study. This is discussed further in the emergent findings on the definition of a DE (section 6.8).

Seawright and Gerring (2008) posit that given the dual objectives of obtaining a representative sample together with useful variation, in the dimensions of interest, case study analysis should be driven by the positioning of the case according to such dimensions within the population of interest. Summary tables displaying key characteristics of the eighteen participants of each case are shown below, with participants listed in the order they were interviewed (Tables 4.2 and 4.3). Participants of the Australian case study range in age from 27 and 63, with their

businesses representing a variety of industries. Eleven participants were based in the South West at the time of the interview. One of these participants was just passing through the South West. The remainder of the Australian case study participants were based in Queensland. The Bali research participants range in age from 25 to 69, with businesses in a range of industries. Two of the Bali case study participants also spend part of their time based in Queensland. Another participant of the Bali case study is now living in Port Hedland after running his contracting business remotely from Bali.

Table 4.2 Case 1 – Australia: Summary table of research participants' key characteristics and locations

Interview Participant		Location	Country of Citizenship	Gender	Age	Industry
A1	Ross	South West WA	Australian	Male	41-50	Technology
A2	Andrea	South West WA	Australian	Female	41-50	Technology
A3	Clarke	South West WA	Australian	Male	31-40	Technology
A4	Carl	South West WA (mobile)	UK	Male	21-30	Photography
A5	Trevor	South West WA	Australian	Male	51-60	Software Development
A6	Cliff	South West WA	Australian	Male	41-50	Software Development
A7	Tony	South West WA	Australian	Male	41-50	Marketing
A8	Louise	South West WA	Australian	Female	41-50	Health and Wellness
A9	Heather	South West WA	Australian	Female	41-50	Online Retail
A10	Marisa	South West WA	Australian	Female	41-50	Digital Media
A11	Stan	South West WA	Australian	Male	61-70	Digital Media
A12	Julia	QLD - Regional	Australian	Female	31-40	Marketing
A13	Marie	QLD - Metropolitan	Australian	Female	51-60	Marketing
A14	Chloe	QLD - Regional	Australian	Female	31-40	Marketing
A15	Sonia	QLD - Metropolitan	Australian	Female	31-40	Health and wellness
A16	Liz	QLD - Regional	Australian	Female	31-40	Online Retail
A17	Peta	QLD - Regional	Australian	Female	31-40	Health and wellness
A18	Lorna	QLD - Regional	Australian	Female	61-70	Online retail

Note: Individual research participants are referred to using a pseudonym and age range to maintain their anonymity.

4.8 Data Collection

Case study data sources may include documentation, archive records, artefacts, interviews, participant observation and direct observation (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The main source of data for this project was semi-structured in-depth interviews (discussed in section 4.8.1). Additional data included hand-written researcher notes and impressions formed during the interviews. A

Table 4.3 Case 2 - Bali: Summary table of research participants' key characteristics and locations

Interview Participant		Location	Country of Citizenship	Gender	Age	Industry
B1	Mark	Bali	Australian	Male	31-40	Health and Wellness
B2	Betty	Bali	Australian	Female	51-60	Health and wellness
B3	David	Bali/WA	Australian	Male	31-40	Health and Wellness
B4	Amy	Bali	Canadian	Female	21-30	Software Development
B5	Sam	Bali	Italian	Male	31-40	Digital Media
B6	Eva	Bali	Australian	Female	21-30	Digital Media
B7	Phil	Bali	Canadian	Male	21-30	Health and wellness
B8	John	Bali	USA	Male	61-70	Education
B9	Lucinda	Bali	Switzerland	Female	31-40	Technology
B10	Natalie	Bali	French	Female	21-30	Online wholesale
B11	Tania	Bali	UK	Female	21-30	Online wholesale
B12	Harry	Bali	Portugal	Male	21-30	Crypto Currency
B13	Jack	Bali	USA	Male	51-60	Crypto Currency
B14	Gus	Bali	Netherlands	Male	21-30	Health and wellness
B15	Jacques	Bali	Switzerland	Male	21-30	Health and wellness
B16	Chess	Bali	USA	Male	21-30	Health and wellness
B17	Brett	Bali/QLD/Spain	Australian	Male	41-50	Travel and Tourism
B18	Jason	Bali/QLD	Australian	Male	51-60	Technology

Note: Individual research participants are referred to using a pseudonym and age range to maintain their anonymity.

recognised triangulation technique is using multiple sources of data to strengthen internal validity and reliability (Merriam, 1998). Validity and reliability are explained further in section 5.6. Data sources should not be merely convenient or left to chance but based on identifying the best persons, occasions and places in order to develop understanding (Stake, 1995). For this reason, research participants were interviewed face to face where possible, with the majority of the Bali interviews taking place in the field at one of two coworking locations (Hubud and Dojo). Context played an important role and the interviews were set in locations that were convenient for the respondent and allowed him or her to feel comfortable and relaxed. Where a face to face interview was not practicable, participants were interviewed via the use of videoconferencing software such as Skype or Zoom. Given the transient nature of some of the interview participants, these platforms proved a convenient tool for the researcher. Only one interview was conducted by telephone, as requested by the interviewee.

Interviews were recorded with the participants' consent and later transcribed by the researcher. Data collection and analysis occurred concurrently (Baxter & Jack, 2008) which allowed the analysed data to guide subsequent data collection (Cho & Lee, 2014). Given the exploratory nature of this field of research, this approach provided the researcher with enhanced understanding of the research problem and permitted exploration of issues as they emerged (Eldabi, Irani, Paul & Love, 2002). The data analysis process is explained in chapter 5, together with discussion of key themes and issues emerging during the collection and analysis phase.

4.8.1 Interviews

Interviews are a common source of case study data (Hancock & Algozzine, 2016; Yin, 2009) and a key tool for qualitative researchers (Roulston, deMarrais & Lewis, 2003). Research questions require translation to the data collection instrument (Caudle, 2004) in a way that facilitates collection of the data required. Based on a review of the literature, motivational theory, in particular, Push-Pull Theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986), was used to inform the interview questions. DEs were asked what factors had pushed them, and alternately pulled them into the creation of their businesses. Another group of questions related to DEs business and lifestyle goals, informed by the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1985), which looks at entrepreneurial intentions as drivers of behaviour. DEs personal definitions of success also provided clues as to underlying motivations. Interview questions pertaining to the other research aims, as well as questions aimed at capturing the broader DE narrative, also formed part of the interview instrument. Campbell, Quincy, Osserman and Pedersen (2013) refer to in-depth semi-structured interview data as the "empirical backbone of much qualitative research in the social sciences" (p. 295). The goal of this research was to develop an understanding of digital entrepreneurs and capture their narratives which made in-depth interviews the preferred research instrument (Appendix A). Prior to commencing the interview, the researcher sought to establish trust and rapport with the subjects. This was assisted using the snowball sampling technique, with many research participants introduced to the researcher and the project through another participant. This mutual connection established an element of trust the researcher was able to build on.

Hancock and Algozzine (2016) suggest that researchers follow certain guidelines in order to conduct a successful interview and an interview guide can assist the researcher to ask appropriate questions based on the fundamental research goals. The semi-structured nature

of the interviews and open-ended questions allowed for the free flow of dialogue between the researcher and the respondent. Predetermined but flexibly worded questions prompted open expression from the interviewee (Hancock & Algozzine, 2016). The researcher was also able to probe for further data when interesting and relevant information was disclosed. Interview questions can provide a mental framework that can be tuned according to the direction of the interview (Yin, 2012). The interviewer may depart from the interview schedule by asking new questions, varying the question order or rewording questions, where appropriate (Basit, 2003; Bryman & Bell, 2011). This approach allowed the researcher to adjust her questions according to the interview context, for example during the field interviews some questions needed to be reworded slightly for coherence and also guided, in part, by preceding interviewee responses.

4.8.2 Pilot Interviews

Conducting a pilot study allows the researcher to collect and analyse data and test the interview tool on a small number of participants prior to the main study (Chenail, 2011). The first two interviews were considered pilots to ensure that the interview questions would generate the type of rich data sufficient to answer the research questions. Instrumentation rigour can be a major challenge for researchers when using interviews to generate data (Chenail, 2011). Marshall and Rossman (2014) propose that pilot interviews can provide the opportunity to test specific research questions, uncover any issues with question flow or sequencing and identify confusing or unnecessary questions. Content analysis of initial responses can reveal any alterations, additions or deletions required (Marshall & Rossman, 2014).

The pilot interviews provided evidence of the rigour of the interview tool and generated useful data. Data obtained during a pilot is not typically included within the main data set (Chenail, 2011). However, the only refinement to the process and interview instrument, as a result of pilot, was an additional question on the definition of a DE. This question was suggested by the first interviewee and given the exploratory nature of the research was considered a worthwhile addition to the interview questions. A decision was made to include the pilot interviews within the main study as the first two interviews. Conducting the pilot allowed the researcher to develop a degree of confidence in the interview questions early in the study.

4.8.3 Field Interviews

The majority of the interviews conducted in the South West took place in a quiet, private office at the University or an alternative suitable location. The remainder of the Australian interviews took place via videoconferencing tools, Zoom and Skype. Through the snowball sampling process, the researcher interviewed several Bali based DEs, via videoconference. Based on information and contacts made through her initial interviews, the researcher decided to travel to Bali and conduct field interviews at Hubud and Dojo, two well-known coworking spaces. During the conducting of the field interviews, the researcher sought to become immersed in the experience; to blend in with the population being studied, by eating at the coworking space cafes, attending workshops and utilising the space facilities. This assisted her in creating rapport with research participants and building an overall impression of the community. Yin (2009) suggests the use of multiple sources of information for case study research and aligned with this ethos, participant observation and field notes formed part of data collection. Stake (1995) submits that a considerable proportion of data is gathered informally and is impressionistic in nature, though such data may be refined or replaced. Testing these impressions requires both sensitivity and scepticism on behalf of the researcher (Stake, 1995).

At Hubud, interviews with DEs were conducted in a private room or quiet area of an adjoining café. At Dojo, there was no private room available for use and interviews took place in a relatively quiet space within the facility. This area was most convenient for the participants and, while not ideal in terms of privacy and noise, the interview was able to proceed without concern.

4.9 Ethical Considerations

In any research study involving human participants, the protection of those participants needs to be a primary concern, with the ethical tenets of avoiding any physical or psychological harm fundamental (Lune & Berg, 2016). Resnik (2011) refers to ethics as norms of conduct that differentiate between behaviour that is acceptable and unacceptable. In research, ethical norms promote truth, knowledge and the avoidance of error, with numerous codes and policies addressing ethical principles including honesty, objectivity, confidentially, integrity, openness, respect and social responsibility (Resnik, 2011).

Ethics Clearance for this research project was obtained, in the first instance, from the Edith Cowan University Human Research Ethics Committee (Reference 17219). Approval was granted for this project as meeting the standards of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. The researcher, then transferred her candidature to CQUniversity Australia and the project was granted approval by the CQUniversity Human Research Ethics

Committee (Reference 0000020958 – Appendix D). While this project was relatively low risk, the researcher ensured she was aware of any potential ethical issues and addressed these appropriately, as outlined in this section. Informed consent, maintaining participant anonymity and secure research data management were the primary issues to be considered.

For any research project, research participants need to be fully informed about the researcher and the study. Informed consent means that the individual knowingly consents to participate in the research of their own free will, without manipulation or inducement (Lune & Berg, 2016). The participants of this study were provided a Letter of Informed Consent (Appendix B) prior to their interview, outlining the nature of the study and the requirements of participation. The researcher confirmed participant's understanding of voluntarily participating in the study, prior to their interview. The researcher also discussed participant anonymity and other relevant details pertaining to the study. Throughout the interview process the researcher tried to ensure that researcher participants were relaxed. She made sure they were seated comfortably and routinely assessed their general demeanour, with no such assessments providing any cause for concern.

Guba and Lincoln (1994) assert that the close personal interaction that is a feature of the constructivist lens can cause issues with confidentiality and anonymity. Ethical and legal requirements, including anonymity and confidentiality, were adhered to throughout and following the research project. Maintaining confidentiality requires the researcher to actively attempt to remove any elements that may reveal subjects' identities from research records (Lune & Berg, 2016). The data for this research, including interview audio recordings and transcripts, were stored securely, in accordance with the data management plan and participants names and identifying particulars stored separately to the data. Any working documents containing identifying participant particulars were stored on a password protected computer and/or in a locked cabinet in the researcher's private office.

Data recording methods were established in accordance with research protocols and interviewee permission obtained prior to commencement of the interview. Research subjects were made aware that they could withdraw from the project at any time without explanation or penalty. Participants were provided with opportunities to ask questions and to have any questions answered to their satisfaction. The contact details of an independent third party, from CQUniversity's ethics office, were provided to participants as an additional point of contact.

4.10 Summary

This chapter outlined the rationale for adoption of a qualitative case study approach in this research project. Based on the research questions and emerging nature of the field, the researcher determined there was a sound basis for the selected methodology. A constructivist paradigm allowed the researcher to gain insight into the nature of the subjects' (DEs) perceived reality (Shaw, 1990; Wrona & Gunnesch, 2016). As a new field of research, fresh insight is needed and an exploratory approach to allow new concepts to emerge and foundations to be laid (Zaheer et al., 2019). As discussed in chapters 2 and 3, quantitative studies dominate research on entrepreneurial motivation (Stephan et al., 2015) but there is growing interest in the social and cultural aspects of entrepreneurship (Pittaway & Tunstall, 2016). The need for qualitative research to add depth and diversity to understanding to the field is well documented, and this chapter highlights the suitability of this approach for a study of this kind (Bruyat & Julien, 2001; Hlady-Rispal & Jouison-Laffitte, 2014).

A case study approach was selected to allow the researcher to investigate an emerging phenomenon within its actual context (Yin, 2009). Case studies are an effective research strategy when dealing with complex phenomena for which there is limited existing theory and context is important (Dul & Hak, 2007). A multiple case study approach allowed for cross comparison between cases and in view of the research questions this was considered most appropriate. This approach has been used by researchers conducting similar studies (i.e. Dutot & Van Horne, 2015). The primary data collection instrument was in-depth, semi-structured interviews, with field notes providing context and participant observation and researcher notes providing additional data sources. As well as contributing meaningful data, these additional sources assisted data triangulation, intended to strengthen validity and reliability (section 5.6). The researcher remained cognisant of ethical considerations and adhered to the ethical principles governing academic research throughout this research project. The following chapter outlines the procedure for data analysis employed in conducting this research.

Chapter 5 – Data Analysis

5.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter presented the rationale for adopting a qualitative multiple case study approach. This chapter describes the two cases and outlines the data analysis procedure employed. Basit (2003) refers to the analysis of qualitative data as "a dynamic, intuitive and creative process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorising" (p. 143). In the current study, data analysis commenced concurrently with data collection (Baxter & Jack, 2008), and continued well after data collection ceased. Researchers analyse data either to arrive at a new understanding or to test their predictions about a phenomenon (Gaiser & Schreiner, 2009). Thematic analysis was the strategy adopted for this study, which allowed the researcher to capture meaningful themes from the data.

To provide context for the discussion, there is a description of the two case studies analysed during this project, Case Study 1 - Australia and Case Study 2 – Bali, Indonesia (section 5.2). These cases offer alternate perspectives from which to explore the DE phenomenon and address the research questions. The various stages of the data analysis process are then discussed including data management (section 5.3), framing the analysis (section 5.4), and the process of the thematic analysis (section 5.5). Braun, Clarke, Hayfield and Terry (2019) view thematic analysis as "an umbrella term, designating sometimes quite different approaches aimed at identifying patterns ("themes") across qualitative datasets", (p. 843). A discussion of validity and reliability (section 5.6) follows, then an overview of the limitations of this study (section 5.7) and finally a chapter summary (section 5.8).

5.2 Description of Cases

Stake (2013) suggests that the primary reason for a multiple case study approach is that it allows the researcher to examine how a phenomenon performs in different environments. Within each of the two cases, the researcher had access to different DE populations through her industry and personal networks. In Australia, research participants were identified in the South West of Western Australia and on the Queensland coast. In Bali, Indonesia, participants were accessed via Australian networks and through coworking hubs operating in Bali. The researcher became aware of a growing population of DEs in the South West of Western Australia, through several coworking spaces operating in the region, as well as a local networking group for entrepreneurs. Case selection was guided, in large part, by the likelihood

of providing rich information (Miles et al., 1994), given the research aims. In particular the case locations provide bountiful landscapes for the interplay of work, lifestyle and location factors needed to provide insight into the research questions.

Research participants were accessed using a purposive snowball sampling method (as described in section 4.5) and this led to identification of the first Queensland research participants, as well as the initial participants in the Bali case study. While the case studies occur in separate countries with differences in language, culture and religion, there are also similarities. What binds the two cases together is that is that there was evidence of the phenomenon (digital entrepreneurship) within each study location (Stake, 2013). The DE research participants were situated in areas within these countries that attract high numbers of tourists, offer a range of lifestyle-based activities and benefits, together with well-developed infrastructure and scenic beauty. A multiple case study approach allowed the researcher to conduct cross-case comparison throughout the data analysis process, as reported further in the findings (chapter 6).

5.2.1 Case Study 1 - Australia

Located in the south western corner of Australia, the South West region covers an area of almost 24,000 square kilometres, and had an estimated resident population of 170,000 in 2013 expected to grow to 217,000 in 2023; the area is Western Australia's most popular tourism destination and features national parks, world renowned beaches, tall timber forests, wineries and restaurants ("South West", 2019). Participants of the Australian case study are mainly from the coastal towns of Busselton and Dunsborough, in the South West region. Other case participants are from Brisbane and areas on the Queensland coast including Cairns, the Sunshine Coast, and the Whitsundays.

Queensland is Australia's second largest and third most populated state, with a population close to five million residents (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Queensland attracts over 26 million overnight visitors each year and has a reputation as a world class tourism destination with beautiful beaches, rugged outback locations and unique holiday destinations ("Business Queensland", 2019). Given the spatial flexibility that working online can allow DEs, it not surprising to find DEs living and working in the South West region and on the Queensland coast. While DEs may reside in many cities and regional areas in Australia, these areas provided ease of access to research participants, given the snowball sampling technique

employed, while providing rich information. Interview participants had mostly been based in these areas for several years.

5.2.2 Case Study 2 - Bali, Indonesia

Bali covers an area of 5,636 km2 and is located in the Republic of Indonesia; Bali is home to over four million people and is among 17,500 islands that make up the Indonesian archipelago (Bali Tourism Board, 2020). The island has a tropical climate and while the West monsoon brings showers and high humidity, daytime temperatures are between 20 and 33 degrees celsius (Bali Hotels Association, 2020). According to the Bali Hotel's Association, in 2018 foreign tourist arrivals in Bali exceeded six million, an increase in visitors of 6.59% from the previous year. Bali's rich cultural landscape and attractive environment attract large numbers of Western travellers (Hakim, Kim & Hong, 2009). Researchers claim that beyond the tropical beach destination image, the popularity of tourism in Bali owes much to the friendliness of its people, unique traditions, and cultural and historical attractions (Hussain, Agrusa, Lema & Tanner, 2018).

As well as attracting tourists, Bali is among several locations across the world that are becoming meccas for digitally enabled workers (Thompson, 2019) including DEs. Even in rural and remote areas, Bali offers increasing access to technology (Hussain et al., 2018). Canguu and Ubud in Bali are each ranked in the top ten cities worldwide for digital nomads on Nomadlist; Nomadlist is a popular site ranking cities from around the world for digital living and working, with key ranking indicators including affordable cost of living and quality of living (Levels, 2014). Coworking spaces in Bali (in Canguu and Ubud specifically) provided ease of access to research participants. While the interviews were conducted in English, the researcher was not seeking participants from any specific cultural backgrounds. However, it happened that all research participants were DEs who had descended on Bali from Western countries. Apart from staff employed to work in the coworking spaces, there did not appear to be any Indonesian nationals using these facilities.

5.3 Data Management

The researcher established a data management plan, prior to collection of any data, to ensure that there was a systematic process to manage the data. In the digital age, policy environments encourage data management plans that address issues such as digital data preservation and Cliggett (2013) asserts that the digital repositories gaining popularity with

universities can offer the best protection of digital files. As per policy requirements, a digital file was established on the University research department's digital repository for storage and protection of this project's data. Within this research project, thirty-six interviews were conducted (eighteen in each case) ranging in length between thirty-three minutes and seventy-two minutes. The researcher conducted and transcribed the interviews herself, to further build familiarity with the data. The two pilot interviews discussed in chapter 4 were professionally transcribed but this practice was not continued. The researcher felt that without the benefit of engaging closely with the audio recordings of interviews, it was not possible to capture nuances of speech such as tone and expression, delve into any confusing dialogue, or explore meaningful responses. Bird (2005) discusses the transcription process as a key phase of data analysis and an integral aspect of data interpretation. The interview transcription process resulted in well over 100,000 words of data to be organised, sorted, reduced and coded.

Interview data were stored together with notes made during the interview and interviewer impressions. The researcher ensured the names and identifying particulars of research participants were stored separately to the data to preserve participant confidentiality and anonymity, as discussed in section 4.9. The audio from each interview was transcribed into separate documents. A spreadsheet was created which provided a useful tool to capture an overall picture of the data. This master spreadsheet was later used to create separate spreadsheets for dissecting data and exploring themes. The interview questions were recorded on the horizontal axis and responses were populated into the spreadsheet on the vertical axis with each interview participant captured in a single row. NVivo, a computer programme for coding and organising data, was also used to manage and organise the data, for coding and thematic analysis (see further details in section 5.5).

NVivo is a source of Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) used by researchers for data management. CAQDAS is a significant development for qualitative researchers and can assist with qualitative data analysis (Bryman & Bell, 2011). NVivo holds information and observations in a way that allows the researcher to connect different elements of the data and combine these into themes (Richards, 2002). The interview audio, spreadsheets and any other documents pertaining to the data were uploaded into NVivo. The coding of data in NVivo was an iterative process explained further in section 5.5.

Bryman and Bell (2011) assert that while use of CAQDAS is widely accepted, its use raises several concerns; coding text into chunks and using the code and retrieve process, can result in the loss of narrative flow and the decontextualizing of data. The researcher avoided this by routinely referring to the broader interview narrative, captured in the transcripts, to provide

further context and clarification to the data. By using a variety of tools to manage and analyse the data, the researcher was able to develop deep familiarity with it and cross check and reference emerging themes, thus enhancing the data validity. As an additional data management tool, the researcher kept a journal in which to record her thought process and relevant points of interest that arose through the data. This journal also captured the rationale for any decisions made, particularly in relation to coding and themes (Pidgeon & Henwood, 1996).

5.4 Framing the Analysis

This study takes an exploratory focus, with the researcher as an instrument for data analysis (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). Namey, Guest, Thairu and Johnson (2008) suggest a comprehensive analysis plan to delineate the boundaries of analysis where there are large data sets. The research interview instrument (Appendix A) contained 37 questions the rationale for the formulation of which was discussed in section 4.8.1. Once the interviews were transcribed and reduced, as discussed below, each interview resulted between 2000 and 3000 words of text. Together with interviewer notes and impressions, this resulted in a significant set of data for analysis. Part of analysing the data involves reducing it; Miles et al. (1994) explain data reduction as "a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organises data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified" (p. 11). Given the semi-structured nature of the interviews, participant responses directed the researcher's questioning. For example, sometimes an upcoming question was answered in response to a preceding question, eliminating the need to ask that question. A protracted response could also provide insight into other questions. These and similar issues required that data be sorted and otherwise reduced to provide structure to the data set.

Another way to provide structure to the data set is through visual display (Miles et al., 2013) . Data display assists the researcher to draw conclusions by showing the data in an organised way using a multidimensional space, revealing connections between different sections of data (Dey, 1993; Verdinelli & Scagnoli, 2013). Wheeldon and Faubert (2009) suggest that user generated maps can assist qualitative researchers to frame their experience by providing a visual representation of a collection of concepts. Tables, mind maps and concept maps were used by the researcher at various stages of the data analysis process to help create an overall picture of the data, generate new insights and assist in reaching conclusions (abridged example, Appendix C).

5.5 Thematic Analysis

An appropriate method of qualitative inquiry for analysing large qualitative data sets is thematic analysis (Nowell et al., 2017). Thematic analysis is a process for identifying, analysing and describing themes or patterns by searching across a broad data set for segments that capture something meaningful (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Namey et al. (2008), in comparing content analysis with thematic analysis, point out its nuanced nature, "Thematic analysis moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas" (p. 138). In this study, the researcher looked beyond explicit language, in analysing the data, and endeavoured to capture implicit meaning, in view of the subject's broader narrative (demonstrated in Table 5.4).

Braun et al. (2019) view depth of engagement as central to good qualitative research practice with elements including open, exploratory research design and analytic processes and researcher subjectivity emphasised. These features are prioritised in the reflexive approach to thematic analysis. Using a reflexive approach, themes are generated from meaning-based patterns, which are explicitly revealed through semantics or hidden within the data. Finding themes requires analytic work on behalf of the researcher and coding evolves organically (Braun et al., 2019). When the researcher is the research instrument, methodological decisions and their rationales must be transparent to enhance the credibility of the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Nowell et al., 2017).

Braun and Clarke's (2006) phases of thematic analysis served to guide data analysis (Table 5.1), a process which was both dynamic and complex. As expressed by Lawrence and Tar (2013), "when encountering qualitative research for the first time, one is confronted with both the number of methods and the difficulty of collecting, analysing and presenting large amounts of data" (p. 29). Thematic analysis involved dipping in and out of the data, viewing it from different angles, engaging with segments in microscopic detail and alternately with a "wide-angle lens. Cross-case and within-case comparison provided further perspectives. Qualitative studies can assist with theory building, and as such, "coding requires extra care, and a balance between creativity, rigour and persistence has to be achieved" (Ghauri, 2004, p. 12). Existing theory, the research questions, and the interview questions provided reference points throughout this process. The method was shown to be recursive, rather than linear, with the researcher iteratively moving back and forth between codes, themes and data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process allowed constant comparison between individual interviews, as well as within and across cases (Yin, 2009).

Table 5.1 Adapted from Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87)

Phases of Thematic Analysis	
Phase	**Description**
Gaining familiarity with the data	The researcher conducted and transcribed the interviews. The resulting data were read and re-read with initial ideas and decisions recorded in a journal. Data captured and analysed using NVivo, spreadsheets and visual display.
Generating initial codes	Structural (question based) codes were applied to the data. Interesting features were coded across the data set, both systematically and as they emerged.
Searching for themes	Codes were collated into potential themes, based on the research questions, interview questions, existing literature and emerging ideas. Gathering of all data relevant to each potential theme.
Reviewing themes	The researcher ensured that the themes fit relevant to the coded data, within and across cases, and for the entire data set, producing a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis of each theme was conducted to refine the specifics. The overall narrative of the analysis was reviewed, with clear names and definitions generated for each theme.
Producing the report	The final level of analysis involved the selection of rich, compelling extract examples, analysis of such extracts, relation of the analysis back to the research purpose and extant literature, and finally production of the thesis.

5.5.1 **Coding**

Assigning codes, categories or themes to data, representing units of meaning, assists the researcher to make sense of and explain phenomena (Basit, 2003). Braun et al. (2019) assert that although the terms "code" and "theme" are sometimes used interchangeably "coding is essentially conceptualized as a process" for identifying themes (p. 5). The assigning of numbers or symbols to segments of data allows data to be grouped into a limited number of categories, this process is referred to as coding (Cooper & Schindler, 2002).

As discussed, NVivo was used for data analysis during this study. In NVivo, the coding of data is achieved through nodes, with each node relating to a specific theme, place, person or other area of interest (Bryman & Bell, 2011). During analysis, as themes began to emerge, data were coded to into nodes classifying those themes. To keep the data set manageable, separate files were created for each research question and case study, easing the process of cross-case comparison. Each file contained the interview questions and responses relevant to that research question. Cooper and Schindler (2002) suggest that data set partitioning should consider the research problem and purpose of the research. Large data sets can be rendered more manageable with the application of structural codes to a set of questions encompassing a particular domain of inquiry (Namey et al., 2008). Namey et al. (2008) also

propose that for structured and semi-structured interview data, where discrete questions and probes are repeated across the data set, a structural coding process like the one described above is useful.

The coding of open-ended responses can present challenges for researchers, particularly when there are large volumes of questions and a large variety of responses (Cooper & Schindler, 2002). Analysing content by establishing thematic units requires that the units reflect the objectives for which data were collected and the research questions (Cooper & Schindler, 2002). Potentially significant codes were identified early in the study (a priori codes) based on the research questions, interview questions and literature in the field (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). McClelland's (1967) Need for Achievement theory, resulted in the code of *achievement*, Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) underpinned the coding of the themes of *autonomy*, *competence* and *relatedness*. Push-Pull theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986) related to the emerging push factor codes of *dissatisfaction with previous employment* and *necessity*. Pull factors incentivising digital entrepreneurship included codes of *learning and growth*, *opportunity*, *work-life balance factors* and *lifestyle factors*.

Table 5.2 Selection of A Priori Codes Identified Early in Analysis

Code	Description	Source(s)	Reference
AT	Autonomy - motivational factor established within the literature	Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985); Push-Pull factor (Dawson & Henley, 2012); proposed dimensions of entrepreneurial motivation (Stephan et al., 2015)	RQ 1
COM	Competence - motivational factor established within the literature	Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985); Intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985; González-Cutre & Sicilia, 2012)	RQ 1
REL	Relatedness - motivational factor established within the literature	Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985); Human need (Kaplan & Madjar, 2015)	RQ 1
DIS	Dissatisfaction with previous employment - motivational factor established within the literature	Brockhaus, 1982; Push-Pull theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986); proposed dimensions of entrepreneurial motivation (Stephan et al., 2015)	RQ 1
NEC	Necessity - motivational factor established within the literature	Push-Pull theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986); Opportunity/necessity (Cheung, 2014; Hessels et al., 2008; Stephan et al., 2015)	RQ 1
OP	Opportunity - motivational factor established within the literature	Opportunity/necessity (Cheung, 2014; Hessels et al., 2008; Stephan et al., 2015)	RQ 1
WLB	Work-life balance factor	Push-Pull factor (Malik, 2017)	RQ 1 & 2
LF	Lifestyle factor - impacting role of location	Push-Pull factor (Williams et al., 1989; Marcketti et al., 2006)	RQ 3

Table 5.2 displays a selection of a priori codes applied to the research data. Each code represents a potentially significant concept within the study, the source or rationale of its significance and the research question it pertains to. Identified a priori codes were then applied

to the raw data for subsequent analysis, which included comparing the relative frequency of themes or topics, as well as their overall significance within the data set (Namey et al., 2008, p. 145). Searching for code co-occurrence was also part of this process; code co-occurrence occurs when two or more codes are applied to discrete data pertaining to a single research participant (Namey et al., 2008). Co-occurrence was a routine feature when coding the data (evident in table 5.4).

While a priori codes provided a starting point for data analysis, coding was also organic, allowing room for new codes to emerge to and others to fall away. The researcher remained cognisant that "personal biases, pet theories and strong a priori convictions can blind researchers to existence or meaning of potentially disconfirming findings" (Lee, 1999, p. 167). Some codes (including a priori codes) identified early in analysis were not included in the final list of codes, as they were not shown to be useful or significant based on further analysis of the data (King, 2004). Other codes were split (Braun et al., 2019), '*autonomy*' was split into '*autonomy*', '*autonomy-temporal*' and '*autonomy-spatial*' to allow more nuanced examination of the data, as an example. Codes were also combined (the codes for learning and growth) and renamed, '*satisfied corporate*' became '*anti-dissatisfaction*', '*relatedness*' became '*community and social motivations*' and '*family'.*

The researcher remained aware of the need to maintain openness and scepticism in the face of initial conclusions (Miles et al., 2013). Open coding has specific relevance for exploratory studies (Shaw, 1999) and can allow new concepts and theory to emerge. Open coding involves identifying concepts and their features and dimensions within the data and "naming and categorising of phenomena through close examination" (Lawrence & Tar, 2013, p. 32). New codes to emerge, based on concepts revealed through deeper analysis of the data, were *integration*, *financial self-sufficiency* and *purpose*. Uncovering new codes often required moving beyond the data's surface to identify "implicitly or unexpected unifying patterns of meaning" (Braun et al., 2019, p. 6).

Table 5.3 shows the final list of codes, established during data analysis. Establishing the codes was an iterative process, informed by the data. Many of the final codes had related sub-codes, for example *digital environment* included *coworking* and *digital automation*. Several codes were established predominantly for data management purposes (rather than being motivational factors), for example *business stage, life stage, DE challenges* and *social media,* each of which emerged throughout the data in a number of different contexts. An example of how the final codes were applied to the data is displayed in table 5.4.

Table 5.3 Final List of Codes

Code	Description	Code	Description
ACH	Achievement	FS	Financial self-sufficiency and financial success
A-DIS	Anti-Dissatisfaction	INT	Integration
AT	Autonomy	LF	Lifestyle factors
AT-Spa	Spatial autonomy	LG	Learning + growth
AT-Time	Temporal autonomy	LOC	Locational factors
B-G	Business growth	LS	Life Stage
BS	Business stage	MOB	Travel and mobility
CH	Challenge	NEC	Necessity
CRE	Creativity	OP	Opportunity
CSM	Community and social motivations	PP	Purpose (includes passion)
DE-C	DE challenges	SEP	Separation
DIG	Digital environment (includes coworking and digital automation)	SM	Social media
DIS	Dissatisfaction with previous employment	SS	Success
FAM	Family (including children)	WLB	Work-life balance factor

Table 5.4 displays an example of coding applied to interview responses. Codes often required clarification by examining the participant's responses to other questions, in the context of their overall narrative. A strategy for examining the data from a fresh perspective was to create a new NVivo project and recode the data, which happened several times during data analysis. After recoding, projects were compared to identify any new findings of significance. This process allowed the researcher to develop confidence in her data-related decisions.

Table 5.4 Example of coding applied to question responses

Data extract	Key word(s)/ Concept	Code(s)
On any given day we can go out on our boat to the Great Barrier Reef and fishing (pause) location is very important to your happiness and I get to sit in my office here and look out at the beautiful home we've built and the swimming pool and the sun shining.	boating, fishing, sun shining	Lifestyle factor (LF)
	location is very important to your happiness	Location (LOC)
	our boat, home we've built, swimming pool (pride as reflection on achievement)	(Sense of) Achievement (ACH)
I don't know if it's really living the dream, I don't know if it improves your happiness here because you also have the hassle, I need to find a place. I need to find a new rhythm to work here and especially when you are travelling a lot.	logistical issues in travelling and finding a place	Mobility (MOB), challenge (CH)
	need to find a new rhythm	DE challenge (DE-C) Learning + growth (LG)
	travelling a lot	Mobility (MOB)
It changes as you get older and have children. Being healthy and happy, not a dollar figure. Not being Instagram famous.	growing older, children	Family (FAM), life stage (LS)
	happy and healthy	Success (SS)
	not money or fame	Financial (FS), Success (SS)

5.5.2 **Themes**

Good themes tell a coherent, meaningful story in relation to the overall data set and provide insight based on the research question (Braun et al., 2019). Braun et al. (2019) suggest two key strategies for constructing themes. One way is to use codes as building blocks by collating

similar codes, together with their accompanying data, and forming meaning clusters. Alternately, substantive codes that articulate a central idea and form a meaningful pattern across the data set can be elevated to themes. Each of these strategies proved useful in constructing themes.

Table 5.5 Overview of Theme Construction Process

Theme	Description	Underlying Codes	Related Sample Quote
Time as Currency	Value placed on time and electing how to spend it	Autonomy - temporal	For me it's total freedom of my time. Being able to choose at any point of my life what I want to do, when and stuff like that
		Work-life balance, (financial self-sufficiency, lifestyle factors)	To be able to live from it (the business) and be as relaxed as possible with it and have a good work life balance
		Travel and mobility	More travel, more experiences and quality time
		Family, (community and social motivations, digital environment)	With the digital business model, I can spend my time helping my family and community
		Lifestyle factors, (family)	I can create whatever I want and I can work the hours I want and I can build a business that will work around the life I want to lead and being able to do the things that I want with my kids
Accelerated Learning & Growth	Accelerated rate of learning facilitated by business ownership	Autonomy - temporal	Having to learn all these skills in a short space of time is something that my job would have never been able to provide me
		Learning and growth	I'm addicted to learning and can't stop
		Challenge	You don't have to be happy everyday but having a challenge every single day, I love that
		Travel and mobility (lifestyle factors)	[This] is a platform to grow in creating experiences.
		Creativity	Creating a business is my art, my paint on canvas
		Digital environment, (financial self-sufficiency)	Economic and personal development, the internet is one of the most powerful tools and can lead to change in third world countries if people are entrepreneurial
Integrated Entrepreneur	Business as integrated with self	Work-life balance	I have work-life integration not balance
		Learning and growth	Where I epitomise what I want this to become… best version of self and congruency in all areas
		Purpose	I want to make a difference in the world and inspire and empower others
		Social Media Use	Totally being online allows me to combine business and lifestyle
		Integration	Blurred lines between business and personal
Redefining the 9-5	Escape from traditional path	Achievement, autonomy	I wanted to create something that was mine
		Success	My definition of success is being able to wear t-shirts and cargo shorts every day of the year
		Financial self-sufficiency	Being able to live the lifestyle you want and have your expenses covered and beyond
		Dissatisfaction	I hate the corporate life
		Necessity	Couldn't work remotely due to globalisation of software engineering
Home and Away	Spatial flexibility Location, Community and belonging	Autonomy - spatial, (autonomy)	I have friends everywhere and I'm a big traveller. I want freedom for me personally and who I can work with, where and when
		Location (digital environment)	Wanted to live in Dunsborough and explore new technologies
		Travel and mobility, (digital environment)	Being in the online side of things, you can travel anywhere
		Community and social motivations (family)	I firmly believe that when it comes to choosing where you live community is the most important thing

Table 5.5 provides examples of the process used to construct themes, using codes as building blocks. The codes w*ork-life balance*, *learning and growth* and *purpose*, with the new code *integration* (together with their associated data), intersected to form the cluster, the *integrated entrepreneur.* Each case and the broader data were examined in relation to this new theme in order to view the wider picture, with related data captured using the new code *integration*. There was significant evidence within the data, both explicitly and implicitly to validate these themes and justify their inclusion within the study's findings (chapter 6). There was significant code co-occurrence (Namey et al., 2008) throughout this process as evidenced (Table 5.5) by more than one code pertaining to discrete data. Another feature is the relationship evident between themes, for example *time as currency* and *accelerated learning and growth.* This overlap between themes unifies the data and helps paint a coherent picture of the data set.

Visual representations of the data, including tables and mind maps proved useful during this process (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017). Once constructed, themes and sub-themes were displayed visually using a thematic map. Thematic mapping (simplified extract of thematic map provided in Appendix C) is a process that allows the researcher to visually explore themes, sub-themes and connections in the data (Braun et al., 2019). This process proved illuminating for the researcher, as the use of a thematic map helped to distinguish how seemingly abstract concepts fitted together to tell a clear story. Themes organised in different ways allowed hidden connections to come to the fore and previously unseen nuances in the data to be revealed; within-case and cross-case comparison formed part of this process. The relationship between the dual themes of *time* and *learning and growth* was captured during the thematic mapping process (discussed further in section 6.4). As with the coding process, there were themes that began to emerge yet did not have the data to support them and could not be validated, hence they were not included (Braun & Clarke, 2006). One such potential theme was in relation to *happiness,* which featured significantly throughout the data; however, there was insufficient evidence to justify its inclusion as a theme. All significant codes relating to motivational factors were captured within these five themes. Other codes became additional points of discussion (i.e. DE challenges) and/or were used to inform findings such as the Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship (i.e. digital environment).

5.6 Validity and Reliability

Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson and Spiers (2002) assert that "without rigor, research is worthless, becomes fiction, and loses its utility" (p. 14). While qualitative research is becoming increasingly valued, to produce meaningful results it is essential that it is conducted in a rigorous manner (Nowell et al., 2017). The concepts of validity and reliability are well

established as methods of enhancing rigour and are well suited for quantitative research (Morse et al., 2002). For establishing rigour with qualitative inquiry, Lincoln and Guba (1986) substituted the terms validity and reliability for confirmability, credibility, transferability and dependability, which collectively establish trustworthiness. These terms have become well established within qualitative research (Nowell et al., 2017; Riege, 2003; Tobin & Begley, 2004) and the researcher has addressed each of aspects in conducting this study.

Confirmability addresses whether the interpretation of the data is logical and unprejudiced; to enhance confirmability, study methods need to be described in detail, in order to paint a complete picture of how the data were collected and analysed (Riege, 2003). The research data must also be retained, in accordance with prescribed procedures, for reanalysis by others if required. An audit trail needs to be visible, so an independent assessment of the data collection process and any decisions taken, can be made (Merriam, 1998). For the purposes of this study, the researcher captured and justified pertinent decisions made in relation to data collection and analysis. Multiple recording methods used included NVivo, spreadsheets, visual display and a researcher diary. Any pertinent decisions made were recorded with the data and securely held as prescribed in the data management plan.

Credibility relates to how accurately participants' views have been interpreted and represented by the researcher (Tobin & Begley, 2004). Merriam (1998) posits that reality is multidimensional, holistic and constantly changing rather than a fixed, objective phenomenon. For credibility to be achieved research findings should be confirmed by interviewees or peers as reality is open to interpretation (Riege, 2003). Triangulation of data is a strategy used to increase the probability that any findings generated are consistent and dependable within the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Triangulation can include the use of multiple sources of data, methods or investigators (Merriam, 1998) and involves viewing an issue from different angles in order to enhance validity (Lee & Lings, 2008). Curtin and Fossey (2007) refer to member checks as a way to find out if the participants' experiences are congruent with researcher interpretations. In conducting the interviews, the researcher sought further clarification whenever she was unsure of a participant's meaning in articulating their subjective reality. The researcher endeavoured to remain cognisant of any potential researcher bias, including any inclination to present a particular view through her behaviour or dress. The researcher needed to question any first impressions, in relation to participant motives, garnered in relation to their manner or appearance.

Transferability relates to achieving analytical generalisation and whether the findings are congruent with prior theory or able to be transferred to other settings (Riege, 2003). Ensuring

sufficient data has been obtained to reveal all aspects of the phenomenon, verifies comprehension and completeness (Morse et al., 2002). Lincoln and Guba (1986) suggest the development of narrative in relation to the context of the data, to allow all or part of the findings to be applied elsewhere. The researcher is cognisant that the two case studies are bounded by location and the participants based in specific areas. Interviews continued until data saturation had been achieved, with sampling adequacy evidenced by data replication with later participants (Morse et al., 2002). While the findings may be transferable across DE populations in similar areas (regional and tourist locations) how transferable the findings will be in alternate areas, for example major cities, remains unknown. The limitations of this study are discussed further in section 8.5.

Dependability addresses stability and consistency in the process of inquiry. For the research to achieve dependability, the process must be sound, traceable, and well documented (Tobin & Begley, 2004; Nowell et al., 2017). Within-case and cross-case data analysis and cross-checking of results can ensure internal coherence (Miles et al., 1994; Riege, 2003). In this study, the researcher maintained a thorough and rigorous data management system and worked closely with research supervisors throughout the data analysis process and in relation to data coding and case comparison decisions. Further, in conducting pilot interviews (discussed in section 4.8.2) the researcher was able to ensure that the interview instrument was able to elicit the type of information required to address the research questions (Lietz & Zayas, 2010).

5.7 Methodological Limitations

This study contains several limitations, some of which pertain to the qualitative research methodology employed (see section 8.5 for broader limitations). The methodological limitations relate largely to the reliability and validity of the research, and these have been considered and addressed in section 5.6. However, there are additional limitations of this study arising from the research design and this section will focus on these. For example, limitations in the snowball sampling technique, the thematic approach to data analysis, and researcher bias.

Purposive snowball sampling is widely used in qualitative sociological research (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981; Noy, 2008) and has several benefits, such as accessing hard to reach populations as discussed in section 4.6. While snowball sampling can diminish the cost and time of accessing research participants, the sample recruited is not random. Hence, there is potential for the sample to be biased, or overly representative of individuals that share similar

characteristics. Further, it can be challenging to assess when data saturation has been reached, given the sample is not random (Sadler et al., 2010). While the snowball sampling method was employed to recruit most research participants, some were accessed independently, thereby creating new chains. For example, several potential research participants were identified by university colleagues, leading to new chains in different geographical areas and thus increasing the randomness of the participant group.

The flexibility of the thematic approach to data analysis has been criticised as resulting in a lack in consistency in theme development (Nowell et al., 2017). As discussed in section 5.6, researchers can enhance the dependability of the research by ensuring the process is logical and clearly documented (Tobin & Begley, 2004). In this study, the researcher ensured data analysis was carried out in accordance with Braun and Clarke's (2006) proposed process for thematic analysis (section 5.5) and thoroughly documented. Any findings were cross-checked to ensure internal congruence (Miles et al., 1994; Riege, 2003). Peer debriefing with research supervisors regarding research decisions was also a useful strategy (Lietz & Zayas, 2010).

A potential issue for the qualitative analysist is *anecdotalism,* which Lee and Lings (2008) refer to "the temptation to base your conclusions on a small number of quotes which epitomise key points rather than a thorough investigation of the data" (p. 228). The researcher ensured that any quotes included in the findings took into account the overall context of the participants' narrative. Such quotes should present an authentic view of the research participants' accounts rather than just tell a convincing story (Ghauri, 2004). Any irregularities in the data, or contrary opinions, were also included in the findings to ensure accurate presentation of the overall data set.

Researchers also need to be aware of their own perspective and how this has the potential to shape, or bias, how the data is analysed and reported. Whittemore, Chase and Mandle (2001) posit that while every study has biases, and there are limitations with all methods, a self-critical attitude is essential in conducting rigorous investigations. To help minimise this limitation, the researcher used a research diary for self-reflection and endeavoured to take her own experiences and attitudes into account, particularly throughout the interview process and during data analysis and reporting.

5.8 Summary

This chapter has outlined the data analysis process together with the rationale for any data related decisions. A description of the two cases was provided, with Case 1 in Australia and Case 2 in Bali, Indonesia. Data management was aided by the use of NVivo which helped facilitate coding of the data and the combining of elements into themes (Richards, 2002). Thematic analysis provided a flexible approach for making sense of the data and enabled transparent interpretation of the process of analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017). The researcher maintained a thorough and rigorous data management system, working closely with supervisors throughout the data analysis process. This chapter outlined how validity and reliability concerns were addressed, through strategies to enhance confirmability, credibility, transferability and dependability, and collectively establish trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Limitations of the study, inherent in the research design, were also examined.

Chapter 6 – Research Findings

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this research was to generate understanding about digital entrepreneurs, an emerging group of entrepreneurs about who little is known. The growing impact of digital technologies has created new opportunities to combine work, travel and leisure and the personal insights of DEs experiencing these new possibilities can shed light on the social, economic and cultural changes currently taking place. As a new field of research, theoretical foundations are required, and this study aims to contribute to these foundations and provide new insights focussing on these research questions:

Research Question 1: What motivates an individual to pursue an online business?
Research Question 2: How do DEs balance their work and lifestyle domains?
Research Question 3: How does location play a role in the work and life of DEs?

The changing world of work provided the context for this research and motivational theory, the framework. The approach adopted in collecting and analysing research data was presented in the preceding chapters, along with a transparent account of how the data were analysed thematically. In presenting the findings, this chapter has two sections. The first part of the chapter presents the main themes identified through analysis of the data, with their associated sub-themes, as illustrated in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Key Findings

Main themes	Sub-themes
1. Time as currency	Virtual Shop Front
	Time management and boundary setting
	Business and life stage
	Time Zones
2. The Integrated Entrepreneur	Social Media Integration
3. Accelerated learning and growth	Personal growth linked to business growth
	Coworking Spaces
4. Redefining the 9 to 5	Dissatisfaction
	Redefining success
5. Home and Away	Travel and mobility
	Locational variables
	Settling
	Location to fit task orientation

Each finding is presented and discussed with illustrative quotations, extracted from interviews with DEs, capturing their subjective experience and providing rationale for the research findings. A range of DE perspectives are presented, to showcase their experiences from multiple angles and give breadth to the findings. The researcher has remained cognisant of the need to present the views of DEs in each of the case studies, to ensure both groups are adequately represented. To provide depth to the findings, given the constructivist paradigm this research adopts, participant accounts are discussed in detail to give a voice to individual participants, in view of the overall research objectives. Perspectives which provide insight into the world of the DE, as distinct from that of a traditional entrepreneur, are highlighted with a view to generating understanding of this phenomenon. The two case findings exhibited many commonalities and there was often little to differentiate them. Where there are significant differences, these are reported within the findings and mostly pertain to theme 6.6.

The second part of the chapter presents the study's three additional findings, as shown in table 6.2. The exploratory approach adopted, together with the open-ended nature of the interview questions, resulted in findings outside the scope of the research questions but central to the overall research purpose. The first of these findings relates to the methodological framework employed. Motivational theory framed the study and the findings of this research have provided insight into the motivations of DEs, in the context of the digital landscape and the broader economic and sociocultural environment. A Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship is introduced that addresses the first research question and brings together the five key themes in a coherent model (section 6.7). Second, at the outset of this study, no widely accepted definition of the term digital entrepreneur could be identified. During data collection, the researcher sought input from research participants on their interpretation of the term. Analysis of these subjective interpretations has resulted in a proposed definition of the term "digital entrepreneur" (section 6.8). Third, a primary aim of this research was to provide insight into this new phenomenon. Evident in participant narratives was that while digital entrepreneurship provided new opportunities and came with personal rewards, it was not without challenges. In section 6.9, these challenges are presented with the purpose of providing a balanced view of this emergent lifestyle.

Table 6.2 Additional Findings

	DE Motivations – Push-Pull Model
Additional Findings	Defining the Digital Entrepreneur
	DE Challenges

6.2 Time as currency

A key theme emerging from the data were the value DEs place on time and self-determination in electing how they spend it. Overwhelmingly, research participants mentioned the ability to use their time autonomously as both incentive for operating a digital business and an advantage of it. DEs' preferred use of time varied from spending time with family or on leisure activities to simply choosing when to work. Two examples of how these views were expressed are shown in the quotes below:

> Freedom to be in control of my own schedule and design my day how I want it to be. Some days I want to start work at 6am and some days I don't want to start work until 12pm. As long as the work's there and the results are there, it shouldn't really matter how I am getting it done. (Eva, Bali)

> I can work the hours I want, and I can build a business that will work around the life I want to lead and be able to do the things that I want with my kids. (Julia, Aus)

These comments provide examples of temporal autonomy as a primary motivating factor for research participants, across both case studies. The majority of research participants discussed the digital business model as integral in allowing them the freedom to choose when and where they work. Some participants designed their day around family and/or community commitments. Others simply appreciated the freedom of choice to work to their own schedule, and structure their day at their own discretion. The quote from Eva demonstrates that she views her work in terms of creating results and values being in control of how and when she achieves those results. This view was also expressed by Jacques:

> For me, it's total freedom of my time, being able to choose at any point of my life what I want to do, when and stuff like that. That's my number one goal and that's success for me. (Jacques, Bali)

Jacques is of eastern European descent, has a home base in Switzerland, and has been living in Bali for the last two and a half months while running his digital health and fitness business. He plans for the business to be "*completely digital*" in order to leverage his time. When asked about his lifestyle pursuits, he replied "*the business is my lifestyle*". This presents an interesting conundrum in that the digital business model appears to be giving him more time to work on the business and create content. However, on reflecting on his time spent in the coworking space he referred to it as "*70% social*". It appears that simply spending time in the

coworking space with "*like-minded*" individuals, who share similar views, has become a preferred social activity. Jacques' view was not unique, for many DEs the business was part of their lifestyle, with social activity linked to the business. The integration of work and lifestyle is discussed further in section 6.3.

Time is a function of autonomy and, as a recognised pull factor for entrepreneurs, autonomy is the subject of much entrepreneurship literature. This is discussed in section 3.9.1 of the literature review and analysed further in the discussion chapter (section 7.2). This finding related to all three research questions and the relationship between this theme and the literature is explored in chapter 7. Integral to this finding is the globally connected context in which DEs operate compared with traditional entrepreneurs and this is where interesting nuances become apparent, such as the impact of the virtual shop front and time zones.

6.2.1 **Virtual Shop Front**

For traditional entrepreneurs, maintaining an office or shop front from which to service clients and manage staff can be a constraint on time and resources. Findings confirmed that emerging platforms and technologies supported all manner of business activities including marketing, payments, customer relationship management and data analytics (discussed further in section 6.7.3). While technology can enable increased flexibility, it can also create an expectation of constant availability and effectively remove any down time from the business. Social media, instant messaging and interactive website pages all provided potential avenues through which DEs could be contacted:

> You're always tied to it. It's not just a shop where you can shut the front door. You're on call all the time…I work harder now because of the increase in competition and noise. The audience is so spread and it's easy to be forgotten. (Marisa, Aus)

The vast amount of internet highway traffic was acknowledged by the majority of DEs. Those who had been operating one or more online businesses had noticed a significant increase in online competition in recent years. Managing customer expectations and/or getting noticed, in what was perceived as a crowded online marketplace, presented challenges for some DEs in managing their time. However, there were those who used digital technologies to effectively leverage time, for example by digitally automating routine business processes:

> Online tools allow you to leverage your time. I can import a spreadsheet to Zero
> and invoice 20 people in one click. (David, Bali)

Third party outsourcing and employing virtual assistants (VAs) also allowed DEs to save time. While online business enables mobility and flexibility, DEs varied in how effectively they could mentally switch off from the devices that facilitate this:

> I'm my own boss. At any time, I have the power to click a button to let people
> know I'm open or closed for business. I set boundaries around time… You have
> to set time to work on the business and chill out time. (Sonia, Aus)

As the DEs responses in this section illustrate, there is variation in how DEs perceive their virtual shopfront and manage it. How they achieve this is impacted by the type of online business the DE operates and how they manage client expectations. For example, a research participant, with a digital media business, has clients who expect her to be readily contactable. Alternatively, a DE operating a health and wellness coaching business sees clients virtually, by appointment. In analysing the data, it arose that the ability to set boundaries was a key skill for DEs, given the pervasive nature of digital technologies.

6.2.2 Time Management and Boundary Setting

In valuing their time, some DEs managed to have clear boundaries between their work and lifestyle domains, while for others this presented more of a challenge. A third group did not desire to set boundaries between work and lifestyle domains, taking an integrated approach (discussed in section 6.3). Table 6.3 illustrates participants' differing approaches in creating boundaries around time, indicating three distinct approaches that emerged in relation to time management and boundary setting.

In response to the around the clock availability enabled by technology, these distinct approaches emerged:

- Those who set clear boundaries;
- Those who do not set clear boundaries and struggle as a result; and
- Those who do not want to set boundaries

Some participants, cognisant of the demands of technology and 24/7 availability, set boundaries in relation to their availability. The three participant responses articulating clear boundary setting (provided in table 6.3) offer quite different approaches to balancing work and

Boundaries	Interview Participant/ Industry	Quotation
Clear Boundaries	Mark, Bali Health & Wellness	*I have a personal rhythm and don't start work till twelve each day. Morning is for lifestyle, gym, surf and friends and I work in the afternoon.*
	Sonia, Aus Health & Wellness	*I set boundaries around time. My bread and butter is when the nine to fivers come home and they see me sharing something of value*
	Julia, Aus Marketing	*You need to be super driven, structured and organised…lots of distractions and this can be a challenge for people. No one else is telling you what to do. You need to manage your time well and factor in time for self-care. If you are super passionate about what you do you can overbook yourself*
Unclear Boundaries - Resulting in Discontent	Heather, Aus Online Retail	*The digital world is all-consuming, all messenger and texting. I've only had one phone call out of eighty inquiries…everything is at night-time, it's all messages and text*
	Peta, Aus Health & Wellness	*You can never be totally removed from it (the business)*
	Brett, Bali Travel & Tourism	*Business is never too far from my mind. I rarely switch off…the daily and weekly challenge of freedom. The phone and tablet can be a good and a bad thing…You question yourself…am I giving all areas of my life enough attention*
Don't Want to Set Boundaries	Tony, Aus Marketing	*Don't think I've ever had balance. I'd like to spend 25 hours a day working but I would like to spend hours sleeping*
	Marie, Aus Marketing	*The lines blur because I love what I do…My lifestyle is running a business. We know when to put it down and switch the laptop off, we're not stupid*
	Clarke, Aus Technology	*I don't ascribe to lifestyle goals; I enjoy my work a lot*

Table 6.3 Boundary Creation in Relation to Time

lifestyle domains. However, all of these individuals seem to have found a system that suits their preferred working style. Some DEs take a routine, structured approach to scheduling time. Many like to work in intense blocks followed by an extended period of time off. A proportion take a relaxed approach and plan their day around leisure activities, such as surfing, yoga and working out at the gym. A combination of approaches can be used in setting boundaries.

Another group of DEs found boundary setting challenging and struggled with how this impacted on other areas of their lives. Some DEs expressed that the business is always on their minds, in one way or another, exacerbated by the technology enabled devices that they keep close to them:

> People have the assumption that every day is a three-hour day or four hour day. Sometimes that's the case but sometimes I'm on for like thirty-six hours or forty-eight hours in a row doing nothing but thinking and working, thinking about working, working. (Chess, Bali)

This concept of mentally separating oneself from work was introduced in the discussion on the rise of flexible work in section 2.4. The lack of structure in their day could also be a challenge, which is discussed further in section 6.9. Scheduling time for work required self-discipline and some DEs were less disciplined than others. Lack of structure could facilitate constantly checking social media, "lying on the sofa", external distractions and general procrastination, which were all mentioned as less productive ways DEs spent time. The setting of boundaries around work was a key sub theme and provides insight in response to the second research question in relation to balancing work and lifestyle (to be discussed further in section 7.2.2). A significant group of DEs mentioned that the lack of separation between work and life is something they enjoy, as they report being highly engaged in their work. This concept of business and personal integration is explored further in section 6.3.

6.2.3 Business and Life Stage

In discussing time as currency and their approaches to balancing work and lifestyle domains, the business and life stage of the DE proved significant. Those in the start-up phase of business, were often stretched in managing their resources, with time pressure to start earning a sustainable income. Moving to Bali, where the cost of living was less than in their home country, had reduced the financial pressure for some DEs with business start-ups. The move to Bali also allowed them to network and learn from others on a similar journey. The growth phase presented new challenges for DEs but often they were in a better position to outsource tasks and/or employ staff and hence manage their time more effectively.

Life stage, in particular caring responsibilities, significantly impacted entrepreneurs' ability to manage time and set boundaries. In the Australian case study, most of the research participants were married or in significant relationships and many had dependent children living at home. This contrasted with the Bali case study where nearly all the research participants were single and without children. While several were in committed partner relationships, only one Bali case participant had dependent children (he has since moved with his family back to Australia). Gender participation in this study was mixed, with seventeen women and nineteen male participants. While this mix was not intentionally sought, and a full gender analysis is outside the scope of this study, the balance between male and female perspectives provided the latitude to view the data from a gendered perspective. For both men and women there were positive and negative aspects to combining the business with family

life. On the positive side, DEs were able to meet family responsibilities such as school pickups and drop offs, and to "*be there*" for events such as sports carnivals:

> I'm always there for the kids…I do most of the shopping, housework, cooking. (Cliff, Aus)

> I don't know how I would cope with 9 to 5…my own business allows me to be the rock for my children. (Louise, Aus)

As illustrated in the above responses, online business allowed some DEs to effectively combine business with managing household responsibilities. For one DE, a single mother who has a child with special needs, her online business provided her with a vehicle to earn an income while caring for her children. However, juggling business, home, and lifestyle domains is not without challenges:

> Small things like dishes, washing, nappies take up a lot of time. (Tony, Aus)

> Lifestyle's a hard one at the moment...I don't get much work done during the day and I find I have to outsource more than I should to manage. (Chloe, Aus)

The daily routine of running a household and caring for young children demands significant time and energy. Unpredictable sleep schedules, constant interruptions and lack of understanding from partners all presented challenges (this is explored further in section 6.9).

6.2.4 Time Zones

Interview findings revealed that most entrepreneurs did not view their location as a significant factor in the success of their business. As one DE, located in the South West of Australia, remarked, "*No one knows where I am. I could be in Boise, Idaho*". This is illustrated further in comments such as, "*wherever I can connect to the internet I can be working…depending on time zones*", "*you just need a laptop and internet connection and you're good to go*", and "*as long as I have good Wi-Fi and an international airport*". The global nature of many of the DE's enterprises was reflected in the importance they placed on time zones, access to an international airport and fast, reliable access. Managing clients or staff based in multiple time zones is a challenge that international corporations are familiar with. Some of the DEs interviewed, while having relatively small enterprises, were managing staff and/or clients

across multiple time zones. In choosing where to base themselves, they mentioned the impact of time zones as a deciding factor:

> The time zone is a bit of a problem. With clients in Asia, I can't go in South America or America in general because I will need to have meetings at crazy hours of the day. (Sam, Bali)

For DEs with international clients, the time zone of their location was viewed as a critical business enabler. Additionally, for a subsection of DEs with internationally based clients, time zone was also perceived as a *lifestyle* enabler. One DE mentioned that she preferred being based in an Indonesian time zone two hours behind her clients on Australian Eastern Standard Time:

> There's several other places I'd like to live - I've ruled out South American countries as I don't like being a day behind. Time zones are important - I like to have my nights free [for salsa dancing] but that's when clients are available because they work during the day. I'd consider Thailand, or Eastern Europe. Portugal keeps coming up. (Betty, Bali)

Being in a time zone two hours behind her clients, allowed Betty to service her clients when they finished work and also enjoy her salsa dancing classes in the evening. Many other DEs also made similar comments regarding the impact that time zones had on their business and personal lives. In relation to the future of work, this is a potentially significant finding. The role of time zones is discussed further in section 7.2.4. as relevant to research questions 2 and 3.

6.3 The Integrated Entrepreneur

For a significant number of DEs, the business and self were viewed as integrated. This finding has relevance to the first and second research questions. In relation to time management and boundary setting (section 6.2.3), there was a significant group of entrepreneurs who did not want to create boundaries between work and other aspects of their lives. For these DEs their responses often indicated alignment between work goals and personal goals. Further, there appeared to be integration between their work and personal life, as expressed in the following quotation:

> I'm at the stage now where there is no clear delineation between my personal life and my business life. (Phil, Bali)

Phil, a fitness entrepreneur, attended the interview in a muscle hugging t-shirt having just "worked out". He looked fit, tanned and relaxed and during the interview he sipped on herbal tea, appearing to epitomise his brand. Phil's appearance and behaviour at the interview demonstrates a level of embeddedness of the self in the business and the business as part of self. This concept of embeddedness in the business was also found with other participants, many of whom reported inherent enjoyment of their work. Some research participants expressed a desire to inspire and empower others and viewed their business as a vehicle to achieve this:

> My business is who I am. I have work life integration not balance. I want to make a difference in the world and inspire and empower others. (Betty, Bali)

> Totally being online allows me to combine business and lifestyle…I actually love working, I love it…I probably work 10 to 12 hours a day doing different things. For me, my work is an expression of myself. I find a lot of joy in my work. It is a business, but I create content all day. (Chess, Bali)

A significant majority of DEs expressed that if their circumstances changed, and they no longer had the business (or needed it to generate an income), that they would build another online business. Some expressed that without the business, they would not have any purpose:

> It would be horrifying…I'd be drinking gin at 9 am. (Marie, Aus)

In making the above comment, Marie shook her head and appeared aghast at the thought of no longer having her business. Such findings indicate that for a proportion of DEs the online business was integral to their sense of identity. A relevant question at this point would be how integration with the business impacted close personal relationships, with the demographic factor of family situation emerging as a significant consideration. Nearly all of the research participants who expressed being heavily integrated with the business had limited family responsibilities. However, this finding does not suggest that participants with partners or child care responsibilities are not able to find comparable joy and/or purpose in their businesses or are unable to become similarly emmeshed. The fact that this perspective was more readily seen in single participants simply suggests that family commitments factor into the work-lifestyle equation, and this will be explored further in section 7.2.2.

6.3.1 **Social Media Integration**

A finding of this study is that, just as for some DEs there is little separation between their work and personal lives, their offline personas can be similarly integrated with their online persona; hence, they live publicly visible lives through social media. Many research participants were consciously building their social media profiles and attempting to grow a marketable audience of friends and followers. For some, their online persona was a critical aspect of their business strategy and sharing their lifestyles, including their location, was viewed as integral to growing a following:

> We're building a community of people who are interested in saving the ocean…social media is very important to our business. (Tania, Bali)

> Everyone sees your entire life. I'm an online personal trainer and I think if you really want to be successful online you need to show people who you are… people actually want to reach out to you and actually want to work with you and they need to know you, like you and trust you, so you really need to show people your life. I used to view this as a downside but now I view it as an upside. You can't hide anymore. Before I would have a bad day and say I'm just going to hide from the world for a couple of days and hibernate. But you can't really do that as an online entrepreneur especially me now that I run two businesses… there's no room for bad days. (Phil, Bali)

Phil was a highly active social media user, building a community, or "tribe", of followers. A downside of this, appeared to be that Phil perceived the need to always portray his business persona. While outside the scope of this research, the emotional labour aspect of curating a personal brand on social media is an area for future research (discussed in section 8.6).

6.4 Accelerated Learning and Growth

Together with autonomy, the data revealed learning and growth to be dominant motivators for research participants. Part of the drive to pursue an online business was related to the accelerated rate of learning that participants perceived it would facilitate. Inherent in this accelerated growth is the perception of time as a finite resource. Specifically, the desire for personal growth at a rate determined and autonomously controlled by the DE, rather than at the rate determined by their previous roles or circumstances:

Part way toward creating my own form of internship, in the middle of it, learning, practice and development…a lot of it is intangible. (Carl, Aus)

The online business is perfect for this because you change the mentality from the office job where you have to stay in the same place all the day, all the year and you have few opportunities to get out from that, not only to travel but also to exchange with some other people. If you do always the same job, always in the same office, with always the same people around you're never going to change or improve your mind. I think that this kind of job and this kind of lifestyle allows you to go around have different input and different influences every day. (Sam, Bali)

Most participants indicated that the ability to autonomously direct their own learning was a key incentive of business ownership. Online business provided them with the opportunity to learn a range of new skills quickly, and direct their own learning, something not always available in traditional job roles. Some participants articulated that learning goes beyond just new skills and is inclusive of new influences and experiences. For participants of the Bali case, exercising their spatial flexibility and living in a foreign country provided inspiration, newfound independence and stretched their comfort zones:

The world is scarier when you're by yourself, so you grow way more. (Harry, Bali)

Through coworking hubs, participants were able to engage in shared learning opportunities and collaborate with others, as explored further in section 6.4.2. While most research participants had created their business without any external assistance, several mentioned that government funded programs had been valuable. For example, several female research participants mentioned that the Women in Rural, Regional and Remote Enterprises (WiRE) Program, based in Queensland, had provided an important source of learning and support in the creation of their businesses. The online environment also created many opportunities for learning, as well as leveraging time:

You need to have initiative to learn about new tools…you have to work really hard to start and then the automation comes in. (David, Bali)

Technology changes so fast…once you've mastered one thing you have to master the next. (Heather, Aus)

The need to constantly learn new skills and develop efficiency in the use of new tools was mentioned by DEs as part of creating and operating a digital business. A key challenge was continually adapting in the face of updates and changing algorithms which are a feature of the digital environment.

6.4.1 Personal Growth linked to Business Growth

While many research subjects did not express clear economic goals, most participants were economically motivated to varying degrees, as will be discussed further in section 6.5.1. What emerged as interesting were personal growth goals underlying wealth seeking indicators. As an example, the quotation below describes one DE's personal definition of success:

> It's the ability for someone to achieve something they set out to achieve…for me that's to grow my business to a $100 million dollar business because of the person I would need to become to create that. (Tony, Aus)

Tony is an avid traveler and before starting his own business, worked as a dance teacher and in a call centre to fund his travels. During the interview, he cited "*wanting to make money*" and having "*nice stuff*" as important to him. However, his main driver in the creation of a business worth $100 million dollars, appeared to be fulfilling his potential and personal growth. In wanting to become the person he perceives he needs to be to generate $100 million dollars, he is essentially expressing the desire to grow as a person beyond his current capability. As shown in the quote below, this link between business growth and personal growth was also articulated by other research participants:

> The reason I've been able to grow is because I consistently take a step forward every day. Every single day I'm getting a little bit better. My goal in life is to consistently progress…If there is any sort of limiting belief that comes up, I work through it, something that I need to learn, I invest in a course. On my way to my first million, obstacles will come up and I'll do whatever I need to grow through those. (Phil, Bali)

> I have grown a lot personally and learnt a lot that I wasn't planning to discover. I've got to know myself better and my limiting beliefs…When you are

accountable for big decisions there's a lot of mindset work that you have to work on (Eva, Bali)

Personal growth and overcoming "*limiting beliefs*" and "*personal fears*" formed part of the vernacular of many participants, who appeared to perceive their business as evolving and developing in tandem with themselves. For many, investment in personal development, through courses for example, was viewed as a form of investment in the business. Through the narratives of participants, the business journey as a personal learning journey was evident. Many expressed that, in hindsight, they would have backed themselves sooner in starting the business, trusted themselves earlier, and not given as much credence to the opinion of others.

6.4.2 Coworking Spaces

Particularly for Bali case participants, coworking spaces, in addition to "*fast internet*", provided access to knowledge and opportunities for idea generation, innovation and potential collaboration. Hub organised activities and organic socialisation with others helped create a sense of community (relevant to research question three) which, for some, was as important as the opportunities for learning and connection (see table 6.4). The role of community managers (as captured by researcher impressions during field work) appeared significant in connecting people, organising events and creating a welcoming space that could allow member connections to occur naturally.

Table 6.4 Coworking spaces as a source of learning and connection

Coworking spaces	
Learning and connection	*You get inspiration from being around these people which really makes you want to push to the next level. You see these amazing people succeeding and building stuff and wanting to change the world. You get inspiration, you take a deep breath and you start to do the same without even noticing. (Harry, Bali)*
	I was in an incubator and I found that really good for the first few years. We were all sharing what we were learning and the companionship was really good. (Lorna, Aus)
	There is a really strong digital nomad community and that's been super helpful if we have a question like how do we do Facebook ads or how do you open your bank account. Loads of questions like that there's someone who's going to know. (Tania, Bali)
	It's easy because they have a lot of events. There is a community and you can always know somebody new. It's dynamic because people are always coming and going so staying in the same place you can meet somebody new every day. (Sam, Bali)

For many participants, living away from their home country, coworking spaces served an invaluable role. Some had extended coworking to co-living and were living in share

accommodation with other foreigners (though it is unknown whether they were also DEs). Several DEs appeared to make a contribution through the hub, for example by informally welcoming new members. Many DEs noted that there were key differences between coworking spaces, which each one having its own "*vibe*" and atmosphere. Participants mentioned a particular hub as having an active party scene, another had a focus on generating business startups. Numerous participants had tried multiple coworking spaces before deciding on a particular one. Several participants mentioned while the social aspect of coworking hubs was valuable, a downside was that it could make it challenging to complete business tasks:

> I do connect with other business owners…but if I have any real work to accomplish, I'll stay home because it's pretty talkative there. But it's nice, it's like having co-workers that don't do the same thing as you do. (Chess, Bali)

> I come here 70% for social and 30% it's a place to work. If you're looking for a place to work, there are better places to work…for work you usually need a quiet place and to be around people you don't know. (Jacques, Bali)

Several participants mentioned that remaining focussed and disciplined, in the face of noise and interruptions, could be challenging in the coworking environment. Each of the coworking spaces utilised during field research had quiet, private spaces available for hire, either as part of membership rates or for an additional charge. While DEs' experiences with coworking spaces were mostly positive, one DE revealed that a staff member she had trained had been poached through the space she used. There was also the view that some members of the coworking community were more serious about building a business than others:

> I've found a lot of people here are not really inspiring. Some people have a few clients online but I like people with higher goals who make stuff. I think when you are building something that's scalable and growing you need to do more. A lot of people here are more like bikini digital nomads, like maybe they do something on social media or do some stuff and they're gone again [from work]. I think you need lots of discipline to get some productivity and do some work but that's just my observation. (Gus, Bali)

The issue of productive time management and discipline was significant for DEs, whether utilising a coworking space or not, as discussed further in section 6.9 (DE challenges).

6.5 Redefining the 9 to 5

Research participants consistently spoke about escaping the 9 to 5 and the freedom to design their own lives as motivators to start their own business, with dissatisfaction with the corporate environment was a key theme (relevant to the first research question). This was described in several ways by participants, and there were various catalysts in the decision to leave corporate employment. In order to exit their corporate roles many participants had reduced their expenses and redefined their views of success.

6.5.1 **Dissatisfaction**

All but a few DEs had resigned from corporate roles to start their online business. In discussing what initiated the switch, research participants largely expressed dissatisfaction with the corporate environment. While several DEs had not been able to find work in the area they wanted to live or had been made redundant (necessity drivers in starting a business), most had actively sought to escape from the corporate environment:

> I was frustrated with my work environment and the company I was working for. The structures and processes of the company made it structurally incapable of developing good software. (Cliff, Aus)

> I was in the corporate world for a bit…I hate the corporate life. I think micro-management was the one that really tipped me toward working for myself. There was a lot of meetings and time spent on creating stories to tell the senior management as to why we're not achieving results as opposed to finding solutions, so I can make more impact working on my own. (Eva, Bali)

Common complaints with the 9 to 5 included excessive meetings (that were perceived to be unnecessary), a lack of focus on results, and micro-management; such factors had become a key source of frustration. Some DEs had enjoyed a level of success in the corporate world, others reported feeling like outsiders in their former organisations:

> I was bored in a 9 to 5 job. I like extending things and where I worked it was a case of 'just do your job and shut up'. I also didn't like the bitchiness and gossiping and the lack of work of that actually gets done in a traditional business. People said they were busy but they spent half their time on eBay. (Louise, Aus)

> 9 to 5 is a chore…There's too many rules. I had no work life balance and was
> burnt out. (Sonia, Aus)

Another key frustration with corporate life was the perception of wasting their potential. This is linked with lack of autonomous opportunity for learning and growth, that is learning and growth at their own pace and in their own way (as discussed in section 6.4). Several DEs expressed that having someone else in charge of their time was contrary to their need to be independent:

> I don't like people telling me what to do. I like to do things in my own time, in my
> own way. Ability to set one's sail. (Tony, Aus)

> I was always independent. It's not a matter of being your own boss for me it's
> more like I feel safer when my future is in my hands. (Sam, Bali)

Independence and autonomy were highly important to DEs who appeared to have a strong need to self-direct their own lives, rather than acquiesce to their circumstances, as expressed in the following quotation:

> [I] have seen executives trapped in their own existence, in the rat race, with kids
> in private schools. (Ross, Aus)

Ross had worked in in executive recruitment for many years and spoke of executives who had got themselves "*in too deep"* to extract themselves from being caught in a hamster wheel of material success for its own sake. Ross himself had been dissatisfied with his corporate life and sensing an opportunity for a more fulfilling future, had moved with his young family to regional Australia to start his business, which uses digital technology to streamline processes for other organisations. Since starting his business, Ross had time to drop off and pick up his children at school, which was important to him. Another DE talked about climbing the corporate ladder and feeling like the ladder was "*up against the wrong wall*". While most research participants had been dissatisfied with their corporate lives, not all recalled their corporate careers negatively, with several recalling positive aspects of their previous roles. These included a regular salary, feedback from managers, workplace mentoring, knowledge gained in previous roles and being part of a team:

I miss my boss or maybe more getting feedback, not from customers but from somebody who tells me "don't do it like this" or "well done". Somebody who gives me security or challenges me. (Lucinda, Bali)

Lucinda had recently started her data management business and moved to Bali to experience remote working and a sense of freedom. While bureaucracy and workplace issues had been drivers for her in leaving her employment, she missed the relationship with her boss and obtaining feedback, particularly as she navigated her new business through unchartered waters. There were also a small minority of research participants who did not rule out returning to a traditional career at some stage. Dissatisfaction with his corporate career drove Carl to seek other opportunities:

I fell into work. I was not directed and there was frustration as I didn't enjoy my job, but I didn't know what to do about it…I was ready for something new and wanted professional development. I bought my first camera and had an interest in web design, travel and photography. (Carl, Aus)

Carl differs from many of the other participants of the Australian case study, in that he does not have a base in Australia. Carl trades his skills as a photographer and videographer in exchange for accommodation, food and travel and promotes his services and organises "*trades*" via social media. While not a traditional business, Carl's "*project*" demonstrates an innovative way of using technology to fund a lifestyle. It also demonstrates the new opportunities, to combine work with travel and leisure, that DEs saw as possible and were able to create using digital technologies. By operating this project completely independently of monetary incentives, Carl also demonstrates how DEs are capable of redefining success, which will be discussed more in the following section.

6.5.2 Redefining Success

Much like traditional entrepreneurs, achievement and financial success operated as important motivators for a significant proportion of DEs. Research participants expressed that the potential reward, sense of being "*uncapped*" financially, and in control of one's own fiscal future were attractive aspects of starting a business:

The potential financial upside…potential this is a very important word…Once you have a paid job you are within limits but your business, there are no limits

on both sides of the spectrum. You could be broke and you could be a millionaire. My risk appetite is very big. (Jacques, Bali)

I was pissed off with lack of reward for effort and ceiling on earning potential. (Mark, Bali)

However, the majority of participants did not have ambitious financial goals, with their focus on being "*self-funded*", "*financially free*" and "*earning an income I can live off*". Implicit in participant narratives was the view that the learning and growth they could achieve through entrepreneurship was its own form of compensation, as presented in section 6.4. Leaving paid employment to start their own business had involved a process of redefining their views of success for many, including their ideas on financial success, home ownership and the role of travel:

I think the idea of the American Dream has totally changed. People want to travel and do other things rather than just own a house and live in the same place and work for the same company… people are going to be moving around so much. I think digital entrepreneurs are on the forefront of that idea. (Chess, Bali)

Many DEs appear to have redefined what success means to them, with some appearing to value learning and experiences over material representations of success, security and stability, as illustrated below:

Not working your way up the ladder and material things. Not defining success in material ways, house, car…but the process of problem solving, overcoming challenges and trying a lot of new things. (Carl, Aus)

A view shared by some DEs, not specific to participants of any particular age group, was the perception of money as a vehicle for learning, growth and new experiences. Many DEs, mainly participants of the Bali case study, stated they would like to grow the business to a stage where it could fund their lifestyle sustainably. This was relative to the lifestyle and aspirations of the DE:

On some level, I'm fairly wealthy but I've made defining success easy by having a low bar. My definition of success is being able to wear t-shirts and cargo shorts every day of the year. I seriously tell myself that so if I never have to wear a

business shirt, a tie, or a suit again, I'm successful. I've got more than enough.

(Jason, Bali)

Jason wears his uniform of choice, a t-shirt and cargo shorts, during the interview. The suit and tie represent the person he left behind when he left his full-time job to develop passive income streams and start a tech investment company. He maintains two properties in Australia which he rents through Airbnb and he moves between these two properties and Bali. Since slipping into more comfortable attire, Jason has downgraded his economic goals; when his Mercedes was stolen, he switched to driving a motorbike to enhance his freedom. "*I'm atypical, I'm divorced, I've got no kids and even though I'm fifty, I can live like a young single man in his twenties if I want to.*" It could be simplistic to view Jason as experiencing a midlife crisis. This new flexibility allowed him to care for his sick mother, who suffered from dementia, up until her death. He stated that this would not have been possible when he was working full time and spending this time with his mother had been important to him. Most DEs placed a high value on their temporal autonomy (as explored in section 6.2). For those research participants with a clear financial goal, their autonomy and flexibility in achieving this goal was integral:

> Even if it takes me until I die to make the 10 million, I enjoy this. I'm not really driven by money, I've set this as a clear goal, and it is not like I have to have it. There is no attachment to that. It is simply that is the measure by which I will judge the success of the business…and if it doesn't happen it's actually not the end of the world at all…provided that those other things are not compromised.
>
> (Lorna, Aus)

As illustrated in the quote above, the majority of DEs expressed that while they would like further financial success, they were not willing to compromise aspects of their lifestyle in order to achieve that result. The importance of lifestyle, and the funds necessary to support that lifestyle, were reflected in the location in which the DE was based. As discussed, for many DEs, particularly those based in Bali, financial objectives were linked to what was required to support their lifestyle. The financial means required to support this lifestyle was a function of place. Many DEs had chosen to base themselves in Bali swayed by the lifestyle available relative to the cost of living as the three quotations below illustrate:

> It's not all about money…it is about money from one side, you need to have enough money to do the things that you like and to be really location independent. A lot of people are not really location independent. They are only

location independent if they stay in Asia because Asia is very cheap but it's more difficult to be location independent, for example, in New York or Singapore or Sydney. You need to have a lifestyle where you can stay where you want. For me it's success to stay where you want, and you need also to have an income that can sustain you to stay here or the most expensive city in the world. Singapore for example (Sam, Bali).

Being able to live how I want to. There's no dollar amount associated with it. If I can sustain this lifestyle that I'm currently living and not have to worry about money or my health or things like that then I consider myself successful. I don't have that tied to any specific number in the bank…if I decided I want to live in America, then I would say okay I'm not being successful anymore because I need to make more money now. Because this is where I want to live and how I want to live, I consider myself successful. (Chess, Bali)

As shown in the quote above, Sam felt that many of his fellow DEs based in Bali would be unable to sustain themselves financially in more expensive cities. As introduced in section 6.2.4, several Bali-based DEs, in the start-up phase of their businesses, mentioned that living in Bali allowed them further time to establish their business, given that their available resources were often drawn only from savings or freelance work. For some DEs, success was seen in terms of leaving a legacy, yet only one DE mentioned leaving a financial legacy. Others viewed leaving a legacy in non-monetary terms:

The stories I get to hear and how it [the business] makes people feel... It would be good to have money but it's about leaving a legacy. (Liz, Aus)

To inspire other people to love themselves, each other and the environment. My business is very much in line with the environment part. So, for me success would be to have an impact, a measurable impact on improving the state of the environment, especially the ocean and that's what drives me in my business. (Tania, Bali)

In leaving a legacy, Liz expressed the view that to her a legacy is not monetary but about how her business, which focuses on multiculturalism, engenders feelings of inclusion in those the business touches. For Tania, success is measured in terms of environmental impact. Community and social contribution was important to many DEs and was articulated as being "*able to give back*", "*making a contribution*" and *"positively impacting the planet"*. It was also

evidenced in DEs' businesses, for example in the creation of environmentally friendly products, as well as DEs' other interests including community volunteering activities, facilitating ocean clean-ups and charity events. This is relevant to the first research question, underlying participant motives, in the creation of their businesses, are largely personal and include learning and growth and community contribution. This is contrary to traditional indicators of entrepreneurial success, such as increased revenue and profit.

In discussing their views of success, one DE offered a particularly unique perspective. At almost 70, he is travelling the world and is mainly funded by his education-based subscription site. Researcher impressions capture John dressed in shorts and a t-shirt, congruent with his overall relaxed demeanour. He displays humour throughout the interview and appears to really enjoy his life. John discussed his business with enthusiasm and expressed that he had always been entrepreneurial, likes to "*make up his own rules*" and has *"push beyond whatever the acceptable edges are".*

> I kind of lean toward the Lao Tsu, Zen way of he who is most successful leaves no trace, which is totally antithetical to most people's version of success. I want to be the one who dies with no money in the bank and everything dispersed. And the one who doesn't have a party when they're gone, just disappears. (John, Bali)

John is a living example of the variety of demographic and motivational factors the DE phenomenon encompasses. John's personal measure of success appears to be about spending all his finances rather than wealth accumulation or any of the economic indicators traditionally associated with entrepreneurship.

6.6 Home and Away

While there were obvious similarities between participants of the two case studies in relation to the previous themes, there were key differences relevant to the current theme. Most participants in the Australian case study were largely settled in areas of their choosing, whereas for many participants of the Bali case study being mobile, to varying degrees, was part of their way of life.
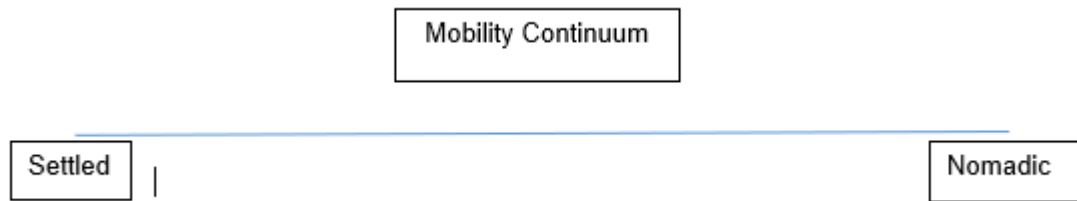
Figure 6.1 Digital Entrepreneur Mobility Scale

While participants of both case studies expressed an enjoyment of travel, they had varying degrees of mobility, as depicted in figure 6.1. Australian case participants mainly utilised their spatial flexibility to settle in a particular place and become part of the local community. Accordingly, most of the Australian case participants sit on the left of the mobility spectrum. Alternately, participants of the Bali case were experiencing spatial freedom and sit toward the right of the continuum. Significantly, while more nomadic case participants enjoyed the new experiences that their mobility entailed, some were clearly longing for a more stable base. Alternately, for more settled participants, being 'on the road' could hold special appeal. This section also explores the role of travel and presents the work, lifestyle and community factors which attracted participants to their location. The section then introduces the concept of moving to a particular location aligned with work orientation.

6.6.1 Travel and Mobility

Overwhelmingly, flexibility in relation to when and where they work was a key incentive for DEs, as discussed in section 6.2. Digital technology allows DEs flexibility in where they choose to base themselves; this spatial flexibility is referred to as location independence. Central to research question 3, are DEs' perceptions of location and their attitudes to travel and mobility:

> Being location independent isn't about being in a place, it's about not having to be in a place. (David, Bali)

> Location has nothing to do with my work, as long as I'm on planet Earth I'm location agnostic. As long as I have an internet connection, it really doesn't matter where I am. (John, Bali)

As expressed in the above quotations, many DEs did not view location as impacting their business. It was not surprising that a characteristic shared by many was enjoyment of travel and one of the attractive features of digital business was perceived to be the ability to travel and work from anywhere:

Travel is huge for me; I get a lot of clarity and a lot inspiration travelling. I find the time on the plane between airports, being out of reception is a nice refreshment for me. I get space for myself. (Sonia, Aus)

The comments above are indicative of the views of most research participants, who expressed that they found clarity and/or inspiration in travelling. Whether it was about giving themselves and their families the experience of a variety of places and cultures or just enjoying the time spent travelling as a break from their usual routine. One DE valued the opportunity to disconnect while flying (although this may no longer be the case now that Wi-Fi is available on planes). Travelling was viewed as a form of freedom, and implicitly linked with autonomy and independence. This is evidenced in comments such as, '*I want to be able to just take off… able to do want I want to do, how I want to do it.*' For some DEs, grounded for reasons external to their business, travel seemed to act as a beacon. One research participant, who lives on the Queensland coast and has a baby at home, says her child is "*the chief Skype call interrupter*". She dreams of taking her digital marketing business on the road:

My family is scattered all around Australia and overseas and I want to travel and bring [my child] up in a travelling world, not in a classroom…if I had good enough internet I probably wouldn't want to live anywhere and just travel from place to place and Airbnb everywhere. (Chloe, Aus)

Mobility and the opportunity to travel was a common theme across the narratives of all respondents with expressed desires to "*create memories with experiences*", "*drink wine in South America*" and "*travel to Paris*". As discussed, while travel was important to participants, they varied in terms of their mobility. Relevant to the third research question were those factors that attracted DEs to their location, as is explored in greater detail in the next section.

6.6.2 **Locational Variables**

Given the spatial flexibility that their businesses could facilitate, the factors that attracted DEs to a location and their reasons for remaining there warrant further attention. Specific work, lifestyle and community factors were fundamental to participants' ability to live and work in a particular location. Table 6.5 outlines the factors DEs communicated, either explicitly or implicitly, as important to them in choosing where to base themselves. These categories are interdependent to varying degrees; for example, many participants enjoyed the ability to go surfing, which related to categories of infrastructure (the beach as natural infrastructure), climate and leisure.

Table 6.5 Work, Lifestyle and Community Factors impacting Digital Entrepreneurs

Significant Locational Factors for Digital Entrepreneurs		
Work	**Lifestyle**	**Community**
ICT Infrastructure and Wi-Fi	Quality of life	Family members/ friends
Time-zone	Governance and safety	History
Accessibility/transport	Affordability	Culture and diversity
Office/Skype space	Climate	Work-lifestyle communities
Local opportunity	Infrastructure	Online communities
	Leisure and entertainment	

Work Factors

In relation to work and the operation of their business(es) participants considered the factors outlined in Table 6.5 as particularly significant.

Table 6.6 Significant Work Factors for Digital Entrepreneurs

Significant Work Factors for Digital Entrepreneurs	
Work Factors	**Quotation**
ICT Infrastructure and Wi-Fi	*I need really good Wi-Fi for uploading YouTube videos and Zoom. (Louise, Aus)*
	Wherever I can connect to the internet I can be working. (Tony, Aus)
Time-zone	*For us the biggest challenge is constantly changing time zones in relation to your target market, our target market is the US and it's just never the right time. There are a few hours per day where it's good. (Jacques, Bali)*
	Exploring new countries, one will be India and South America, but the time zone will kill me so maybe in two or three years. Maybe Australia and New Zealand in the second half of next year. (Sam, Bali)
Accessibility/ transport	*Location is important for me, must be able to drive to the water and must have an airport because I need to fly, I get itchy feet. (Sonia, Aus)*
	Also, the simplicity, everything is just so easy here. Just drive your scooter everywhere. (Harry, Bali)
Office/Skype Space	*I pay the maximum per month for 2 reasons [at Hubud]. One is so I can come and go and use the Skype rooms and secondly because I want to support the community. Also, 7 to 8 gigabytes for monthly online video and it can take a long time to upload. (John, Bali)*
Local Opportunity	*Helped to find the market gap…developed an app for the region. (Trevor, Aus)*

Affordable, reliable internet was non-negotiable for DEs, as it was seen as critical to their business. Several DEs mentioned needing switch their location, for example from home to a coworking location, in order to complete tasks such as uploading videos (due to the required bandwidth). Time zone was also key, as discussed in section 6.2, not only for managing client/customer and staff relationships but also for balancing work and lifestyle. Transport networks and infrastructure were important, with participants desiring close proximity to an

airport (for domestic and/or international travel) and/or affordable daily commuting options. Participants in the Australian case study usually had their own local transport (car and motorbike) and mostly worked from home. Affordable transport options for Bali case study participants included taxis and motorbikes or scooters.

Participants indicated that a quiet space was required for Zoom/Skype meetings and recording videos or live chats, and many preferred to complete such tasks from home. Participants also mentioned hiring a private room in a coworking space for this purpose. For collaboration and workshops, coworking spaces and hired facilities could be utilised.

While operating in a global marketplace, their location provided several research participants with a competitive advantage (for example, one DE managed an online community directory in her area, as part of her business) or helped them to recognise a gap in the market (one participant had developed a product specific to the local tourism market in his area). For another participant, relocation to the Whitsundays was a strategic move as living in a desirable location was integral to her brand. There were several DEs, based in regional Australia, who mentioned the limitations of living outside a capital city, in terms of accessing suppliers, attending industry events and hiring and managing staff. However, they were able to overcome most of these limitations by conducting regular travel and/or use of technology (such as video conferencing tools i.e. Zoom).

Lifestyle Factors

Lifestyle factors had significant importance for participants in electing where to base themselves. For many participants in the Australian case, the desire to live in a specific location and the lack of job opportunities aligned with their qualifications and experience had preceded the creation of the business. For many Bali case participants, their location offered the opportunity to enjoy a certain lifestyle while establishing their businesses.

Table 6.7 Significant Lifestyle Variables for Digital Entrepreneurs

Significant Lifestyle Variables for Digital Entrepreneurs	
Lifestyle Factors	**Quotation**
Quality of Life	*No traffic, I overlook a garden, we are blessed. (Ross, Aus)*
	I like my lifestyle here – the weather, the people, the movement, the food, the wine sucks but I don't miss it when I'm here. (John, Bali)
Governance and Safety	*There's very few logistical challenges to having a really nice life. (Jack, Bali)*
	It's very quiet where I live, and the kids can play in the street. (Stan, Aus)

Affordability	*The main reason for being here is an economic incentive. We can live here longer than any other country with the income we have. It's much cheaper here and ticks all the other boxes that make a place nice. Good weather, good food, good people. (Jacques, Bali)* *You can be an entrepreneur without sacrificing going out to eat at restaurants etc. because it's cheaper. If I was in Australia, I would only be able to live a couple of months…this helps a lot in the early stages. (Natalie, Bali)*
Climate	*Ideally I'd spend 6 months of the year on the Sunshine Coast and 6 months in Tasmania…I love winter and the culture. (Peta, Aus)*
Infrastructure	*Here in Bali you have a good gym and that's important. (Gus, Bali)* *We have a young family and the education here is good. My children attend a small school and get individual attention. (Liz, Aus)*
Leisure and Entertainment	*I have tried other coworking spaces in Bali, but I like this one because it's pretty crazy. They have crazy parties, the staff are energetic, they have fun online. (Jason, Bali)* *We like cycling, weather, caving, uncrowdedness…we're outdoorsy people, we have a boat and go free diving for crays. (Trevor, Aus)*

General quality of life, ease of living, affordability, safety and security were key lifestyle considerations. Underpinning quality of life were factors including the availability of quality housing and accommodation, variety of fresh and tasty food options, general energy and people. Overall, factors varied in significance depending on the individual participant and their business and life stage. For Australian case participants with children, access to health care and education were viewed as important. Alternately, many participants of the Bali case study were attracted in part to Bali's affordability and social scene. The exchange rate and value of the local currency saw their foreign dollar travel further in Indonesia, making it a viable option. For DEs involved in start-ups, this provided additional time for their businesses to start earning money and become sustainable. The political climate, access to visas, safety, and security factors were assessed as significant.

The natural environment, together with manmade infrastructure, emerged from the data as significant. The case locations are scenically appealing places with beautiful beaches and other natural attractions; hence, tourists were also drawn to these locations. Participants engaged in a range of leisure activities when not engaged in work, including surfing, mountain biking, boating, fishing and dancing. The location provided the natural and/or artificial infrastructure necessary for these activities. Environmental factors, including climate, were also important. For example, the tropical climate in Bali and the Northern Queensland coast appealed to research participants located in those areas. Several participants mentioned seasonality as impacting their mobility and travel decisions. Restaurants, nightlife and cultural activities featured highly for some participants, particularly single DEs based in Bali. Then there are those features that are more challenging to quantify, such as the "*vibe*" and "*energy*" of a place, as described by Phil:

I am very connected to the meditation and energy here in Bali…The energy
when you walk into a café and everyone's relaxed. It's so calming. (Phil, Bali)

Community Factors

Community factors were found to be significant for research participants in electing where to
base themselves. Important variables included the presence of family and/or friends, a sense
of history with the location and the culture and diversity of the population. These are explored
in this section together with the intersection of physical and online communities.

Table 6.8 Community Factors impacting Digital Entrepreneurs

Significant Community Factors for Digital Entrepreneurs	
Community Factors	**Quotation**
Family members/ friends	*The people here are great, we've made the most amazing friends down here. (Heather, Aus)*
	There has to be greenery and water and some people who are familiar. (Sonia, Aus)
History	*I was born in Busselton and my husband has a business here. We live on a farm and it's beautiful. A place is whatever you make it. (Marisa, Aus)*
	I've been in Bali before and you have a couple of good working spots and good Wi-Fi, good weather, good beach, you can surf, good parties. (Gus, Bali)
Culture and Diversity	*Love the lifestyle…surfing and Hindu culture and the people. (Mark, Bali)*
Physical Communities	*This is such an amazing place to network and find other people to do business with…also surfing, you talk to the guy next to you and make another new friend, so here in Bali it's pretty much everywhere which is something I love. (Harry, Bali)*
	With digital business model, I can spend my time helping my family and community. (Clarke, Aus)
Online Communities	*I stay in contact with what's happening in online forums and watching the fun activities on the Instagram stories from…Bali. (Jason, Bali)*
	Facebook networking groups made up of local people. (Ross, Aus)

While family and friends are often members of one's community, participants expressed that
people who are familiar are part of what makes a community home. For more geographically
settled research participants, in the Australian case, established relationships contributed to
the sense of community:

[This place] is the desired end point lifestyle… long lasting relationships endure
over time and you see people wearing different hats. The sense of community
seems more real. (Cliff, Aus)

As Cliff spoke there appeared to be a noticeable sense of melancholy in his voice, and his emotional connection to the place he calls home was evident. He talked about getting to know the same people in different contexts – business, the children's school, through hobbies and community work – over time, which added depth to relationships. Many Australian case participants had an existing connection to their location, they were born locally or had been exposed to it for many years as a holiday destination. In settling in an area, many DEs actively contributed to their communities through volunteering, membership of Chambers of Commerce, committee and board positions and through hubs and educational facilities.

For Bali based DEs, the local culture was a significant drawcard and provided a cultural experience different to that in their home country. While the coworking community consisted of largely English speakers from Western countries, the local population offered diversity and a friendly and inclusive environment. Many Bali based DEs were on their second or third trip to Bali and intended to return; some had established connections with local families throughout their visits. However, several participants of the Bali case study expressed a sense of emotional distance in being away from their home communities:

> I've had a lot of people say you're living the dream and things like that, but the real dream would be to be living this life with the people I care about. (Mark, Bali)

It appears that for some DEs, who others perceive to be in an exotic location and "*living the dream*", their real dream is for something less fluid. While digital technology allows them freedom, they can struggle to find stability without home, family, and extended community to provide moorings. Of interest is that, while physical communities served an important role, online communities were also found to be significant to participants in both case studies. Social media provided a way for participants to connect with those in their home countries or other family and friends based internationally. A recurring theme was online communities spilling into physical communities and vice versa. As an example, social media groups provided a way for participants of coworking spaces to keep in touch with other members between visits, as well as a way for new arrivals to find "*like-minded*" others:

> There's so many Facebook groups. Life revolves around Facebook groups in Canguu…We meet up every week and have a game night. That's my main social thing. (Tania, Bali)

The online world is much more suited to my personality. I would be very happy just to be behind a computer for the rest of my life…I feel like I can work out people easier [online] than I can face to face. I can pick up a person's tone in an email or a message...I feel much more comfortable as an icon or an avatar which is weird because I'm happy with myself. (Heather, Aus)

For Australian case participants, online forums also connected locals with shared interests. One participant spoke of having one meeting each week with a different female business owner she has connected with online. Another of "*going on a pilgrimage*" to meet some of the people he has met online "*in real life*". One research participant spoke of being more comfortable connecting with others online as opposed to in person, demonstrating the growing importance of ICTs in connecting people.

6.6.3 Settling

While work and lifestyle factors proved significant in attracting participants to a particular place it was community that largely encouraged participants to stay and even establish roots in the case for the majority of Australian case participants. For Bali case participants living away from home, coworking spaces provided a valuable source of community as has been previously discussed. The majority of Australian case participants had been based in their location for a significant length of time, with many choosing to raise families in that location. This is where key differences between the two case studies became apparent. A future of digitally enabled flexibility and travelling the globe can conjure up images of an exotic lifestyle, however there are important reasons why people establish roots in one location. The challenges of being away from family and feelings of isolation impacted many Bali based participants living away from their home country. The significance of having a home base and/or sense of community was a key finding of this research. While flexibility can allow DEs freedom it also has the potential to set them adrift:

Today, I certainly want less ephemeral things in my life and a home that I consider my home… I didn't live an isolating life when I lived in San Francisco, I had lots of friends and a dog. I liked where I lived. I think that has to replicate now that I'm older. Family life is really important to me…pedestrian life is really important to me, where you walk down the street and see people you know. (Jack, Bali)

I'm in a process of perpetual relocation. I would like to pick somewhere to be in a more long-term capacity. There is a rotating cast of characters in a place like this…I would prefer to be in a place where either I intend to stay for longer or it's just less transient.…it would be nice to have a home and travel and nice things and be able to afford children and all without having to make professional decisions because of finance. (Amy, Bali)

The "*revolving cast of characters*" to which several Bali based participants referred, sits in stark contrast to the embedded relationships discussed by some of the more settled, Australian based participants. For a significant proportion of the DEs based in Bali, the search for a base and less transient relationships was part of their reality, with several expressing views that suggested a desire for something that resembled a more settled life. One DE, the co-founder of a software development company, spoke of the characters in the coworking hub as replacing each other in quick succession. As she approaches thirty, having children and a stable place to call home appear to be becoming more important considerations. Despite the enthusiasm with which DEs spoke of their businesses, researcher impressions captured a pervading sense of loneliness in several narratives, such as those below:

What people show is always the amazing parts – the beach, the parties, the meeting people but it's really challenging because you get here usually by yourself and you have to push yourself out of your comfort zone. People only show the glamourous part but of course it's challenging because it's such a high paced place. You're meeting people and they come and go and sometimes you struggle to connect with someone on a deep level because everything just goes on a ridiculous rhythm…sometimes you feel everything is so volatile, you get to know people and you connect immediately but you feel like it can be (pauses)…not superficial, but it has an end date already because one of them is leaving. Sometimes you do things differently because you know some of them are leaving and you don't do a bigger effort to connect with those people. That person is leaving in two weeks so what's the point. That's a real thing actually. (Harry, Bali)

You make friends really quickly here and then they leave. That can be a bit difficult. When you first arrive, you have this big network and gradually they all leave and I find myself at that point where you're like 'oh everyone's gone apart from three people' but it is very easy to meet people here. So, I don't find myself

being lonely I just find myself saying oh that's a shame that person's gone. Hopefully they come back and then they don't. (Tania, Bali)

On the surface, the image of the location independent entrepreneur or digital nomad can appear exotic but there are challenges to living and working digitally, as explored further in section 6.9. While connections could be formed quickly, they had a tendency to dissolve just as quickly, which could lead to feelings of isolation.

6.6.4 Location to fit Task Orientation

Several DEs articulated that different destinations appealed to certain aspects of their character and/or that they liked to match alternate locations to different work activities. One DE spoke of using one location as a retreat, one to catch up with friends and a third for inspiration and "*a new lease of life*". Another DE, with business interests in multiple locations stated, "*the location has to fit the task I'm working on*". Several DEs maintained connections with multiple places that they chose to visit (and work) regularly:

> My childhood home I've inherited from my mother. I hold onto the house because it gives me a bit of emotional stability and connection. I was born (here) and I only come back because it's my hometown and I still have a little bit of family here. If I was purely focussed on money, I would have sold the house a long time ago... And Bali is this new frontier that I've discovered, it gives me a new lease of life. I have an emotional connection with Bali. I'm actually happier in Bali than I am in Australia, I've noticed over the last year or so (pauses). In Bali I feel free and like exploring new things. (Jason, Bali)

Jason maintains two homes in Queensland and divides his time between these properties and Bali. He holds on to his childhood home as it connects him to his mother and established community. Alternately, Bali provides him with freedom and adventure. In Australia and Bali, he has found alternate homes and communities that bring out different aspects of him. Participants also spoke of alternating between different locations regularly depending on the task or goal and were either already doing this or had plans to in the future, as presented in table 6.8.

Table 6.9 Location to Fit Task Orientation

Location to fit the task	*The location has to fit the task I'm working on. I stumbled across San Sabastian and set up a business there...also interested in Medellin, Columbia. (Brett, Bali)*

	My goal is to be location independent, but I always want to have a base where I can go. My dream is 6-3-3, 6 months Brisbane, 3 months London, 3 months wherever else. (Marie, Aus)
	I'm aiming to spend one month out of every three in Bali. My two months in Australia I see as hit the ground running where I achieve goals and my month in Bali is my time to reflect and recover and holiday and rest and set new goals for when I come back to Australia (Jason, Bali)

In Jason's case, Bali is a place for planning and reflection and Queensland, for focused work and goal achievement. Marie plans to move between three locations while operating her business, and Brett bases his choice of location on task orientation. Figure 6.2 illustrates the concept of aligning location with task orientation, for location independent work. The DE moves between locations depending on the task, or the aspect of themselves, that they are trying to tap into. The locations shown in Figure 6.2 are subjective, the diagram is a visualisation of how a DE may orient themselves and their tasks in relation to their location.
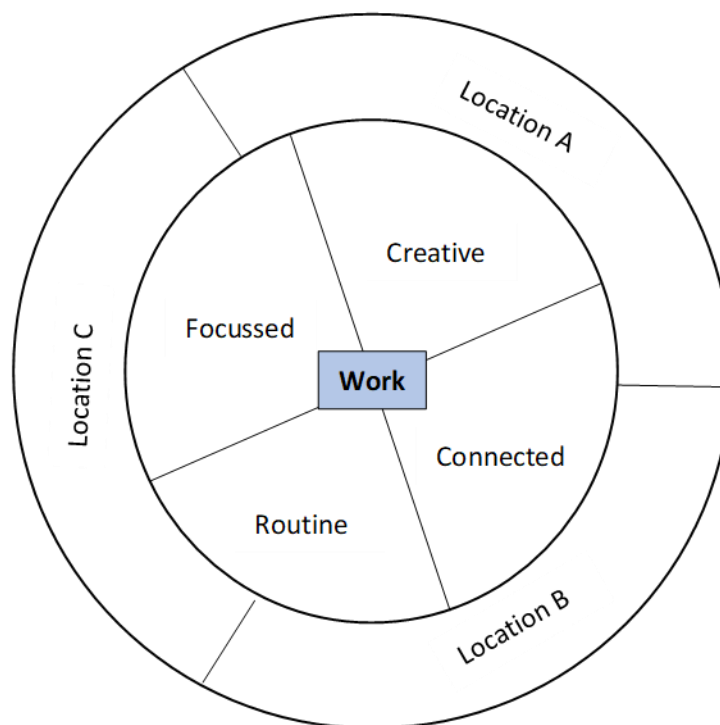
Figure 6.2 Location to fit Task Orientation

6.7   DE Motivations – Push-Pull Model

Throughout the presentation of the five key themes in the previous sections, common factors emerged as driving and incentivising DEs' decisions to create a digital business. This section draws together those factors to provide insight into the first research question. A model is proposed of DE motivations for digital business creation, within the context of the digital landscape and in view of the broader economic and sociocultural environment.

6.7.1 **Push Factors**

The push factors that emerged from the data as significant, in participants' decisions to start a digital business, are presented in Table 6.10. These factors, evident in the themes presented throughout the previous sections (as represented by the section numbers in Table 6.10), provide an overview of the subjective push factors driving participants away from their past circumstances. These subjective factors are influenced by the external economic and sociocultural environment (features of which were discussed in chapter 2).

Table 6.10 Push Factors in Digital Business Creation

Push Factor	Quotation and Relevant section(s) in this chapter
Dissatisfaction (with corporate environment, lifestyle or location)	*I was frustrated with my work environment and the company I was working for…the structures and processes of the company made it structurally incapable of developing good software. (Cliff, Aus); Section 6.5*
	I didn't want to live in the UK. So miserable and everyone's always sad and here everyone you meet is so interesting and exciting and they're like 'wow you do that, cool, oh you're from there wow' Whereas in England everyone is 'ugh I hate my life'. It's so depressing. (Tania, Bali); Section 6.6
Lack of autonomy	*I don't respond well to authority...I didn't want someone to tell me no you can't do this, no you can't do that. (Phil, Bali); Sections 6.2, 6.4, 6.5*
Feeling of wasted potential	*Internal turmoil all the time. I'm sitting at a desk and thinking I could be doing so much more with my time. I've got so much to share and so many people I could be helping. I felt limited in the impact I could make...I felt like I was trapped and capped. (Julia, Aus) Sections 6.3, 6.4*
Lack of work-life balance	*There's too many rules. I had no work life balance and was burnt out. (Sonia, Aus); Sections 6.5, 6.6*
Capped earning potential	*Driven to break scarcity lifestyle...pissed off with lack of reward for effort and ceiling on earning potential (Mark, Bali) Section 6.5*
Necessity	*There were no local jobs for me, I had no local contacts...difficult to get a good job (Trevor, Aus); Section 6.5*

The major push factor was dissatisfaction, either with the corporate environment and/or their previous lifestyle or location; for example, several DEs had downshifted by moving to a regional area. DEs articulated a lack of personal autonomy, corporate bureaucracy, boredom, a feeling of wasting their potential and/or capped earnings as among the factors that drove them to create a business. Another identified push factor was necessity; several DEs had been made redundant, had employment contracts that were ending or had faced a lack of desirable employment options in their preferred location.

6.7.2 **Pull Factors**

The key factors incentivising digital entrepreneurship and operating as pull factors are combined in Table 6.11. These factors have been evident in the themes presented throughout the previous chapter (as identified in Table 6.11) and combined present an overview of the subjective pull factors incentivising entrepreneurship.

Table 6.11 Pull Factors in Digital Business Creation

Pull Factor	Quotation and Relevant section(s) in this chapter
Autonomy	*I knew that if I was going to do something that made me truly fulfilled, I would need to do it myself. When I decided that, I basically stopped looking for jobs and started looking for opportunities to create my own job. (Chess, Bali); Sections 6.2, 6.4, 6.5*
Temporal flexibility	*Looking for freedom. Being the master of your own time is my biggest drive to do any business, that's number one. (Jacques, Bali); Section 6.2*
Accelerated learning and growth	*The experience of putting yourself out there and having to learn all these skills in a short space of time is something that my job would have never been able to provide me. (Natalie, Bali); Section 6.4*
Financial self-sufficiency	*A couple of different things, the financial goals that you set and being able to live the lifestyle you want and have your expenses covered and beyond that. (Julia, Au); Section 6.5*
Spatial flexibility	*Freedom to work from anywhere. My family is scattered all around Australia and overseas and I want to travel and bring (my child) up in a travelling world not in a classroom. (Chloe, Au); Section 6.6*
Lifestyle factors	*I love living in Asia and Island life. Both me and (partner) came up with idea when we were living on a very small island in Malaysia. We were working as scuba divers and we loved being in Asia, being able to dive but we didn't want to work as scuba divers. (Tania, Bali); Sections 6.5, 6.6*
Community and family	*Lots of time on boats doesn't gel with a new baby. [I'm the] main breadwinner and couldn't just be at home and support the family. (Chloe, Aus); Sections 6.5; 6.6*
	With digital business model, I can spend my time helping my family and community. (Clarke, Au); Sections 6.5; 6.6

The most significant pull factor was found to be autonomy, with temporal and spatial autonomy of particular relevance. Accelerated learning and growth, financial self-sufficiency, lifestyle and community and family were also important pull factors, as illustrated in the above participant responses. Like push factors, these subjective pull factors were influenced by the external economic and sociocultural environment (discussed in chapter 2).

6.7.3 **The Digital Landscape**

Digital entrepreneurship is thought to differ from traditional entrepreneurship in that the digital landscape provides an alternate context for business creation and operation (explored further in section 6.8). Throughout DEs narratives, it appeared that the digital landscape provided the opportunity for DEs to realise their subjective motivations, within the broader economic and sociocultural environment. In a sense, the digital landscape was both an enabler and a contextual pull factor; elements of the digital landscape were revealed as creating an environment that allowed the participant to harness and direct their motivational energy. These features are presented in Table 6.10 and will be further discussed, in view of nascent literature in section 7.8.

Table 6.12 Digital Landscape

Digital Landscape Factor	Quotation
Ease of entry	*There is lots of opportunity… keep adapting. (Ross, Aus)*
Dynamic environment	*I was frustrated with my work environment and the company I was working for…the structures and processes of the company made it structurally incapable of developing good software. (Cliff, Aus)*
	Technology changes so fast…once you've mastered one thing you have to master the next. (Heather, Aus)
Digital automation	*Software automation and technology allow me to earn recurring revenue. (Clarke, Aus)*
	Automation is what I love about business…leverage of time and resources. (David, Bali)
Digital manufacturing and distribution	*I manage the fact that I've got physical product by having a distributor that holds all the stock.(Lorna, Aus)*
Access to global market	*Main driver to go online is to have international client base. (Marie, Aus)*
Digital workplace	*You can become very international without being big because you can cover different countries and time zones… Some of my colleagues are in Europe and it's easier for them to manage collaboration with the U.S. (Sam, Bali)*

There were perceived opportunities available in the digital landscape and ease of entry into digital business. Features of the digital landscape included digital automation, which allowed participants to leverage their time. Virtual outsourcing, facilitating delegation of tasks, offered a further incentive as identified by the following quotation:

> It also appealed to me to do some sort of an online business where I could work flexibly, both timewise and geographically. So, the business model that I tried to put together is that I delegate as much as I can…so that I'm not doing everything myself. (Lorna, Aus)

Digital manufacturing and distribution provided the ability to outsource stock production and control. The internet provided access to global markets and opportunities to collaborate with team members in different international locations. These factors are combined in the Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship, presented below.

6.7.4 Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship

Push factors led to feelings of discomfort in many DEs that prompted them to make a change in their work and life. The digital landscape provided the opportunity and enabled change through creation of an online business. The business then provided a conduit through which DEs could direct their motivational energy and realise subjective pull factors. Specific push and pull factors, and their individual significance, differed between research participants. Figure 6.3 presents the dominant push and pull factors, emerging from the research findings. The broader economic and sociocultural environment, some of the relevant features of which were discussed in chapter 2, provide further context to the model. The model is discussed further in section 7.7.
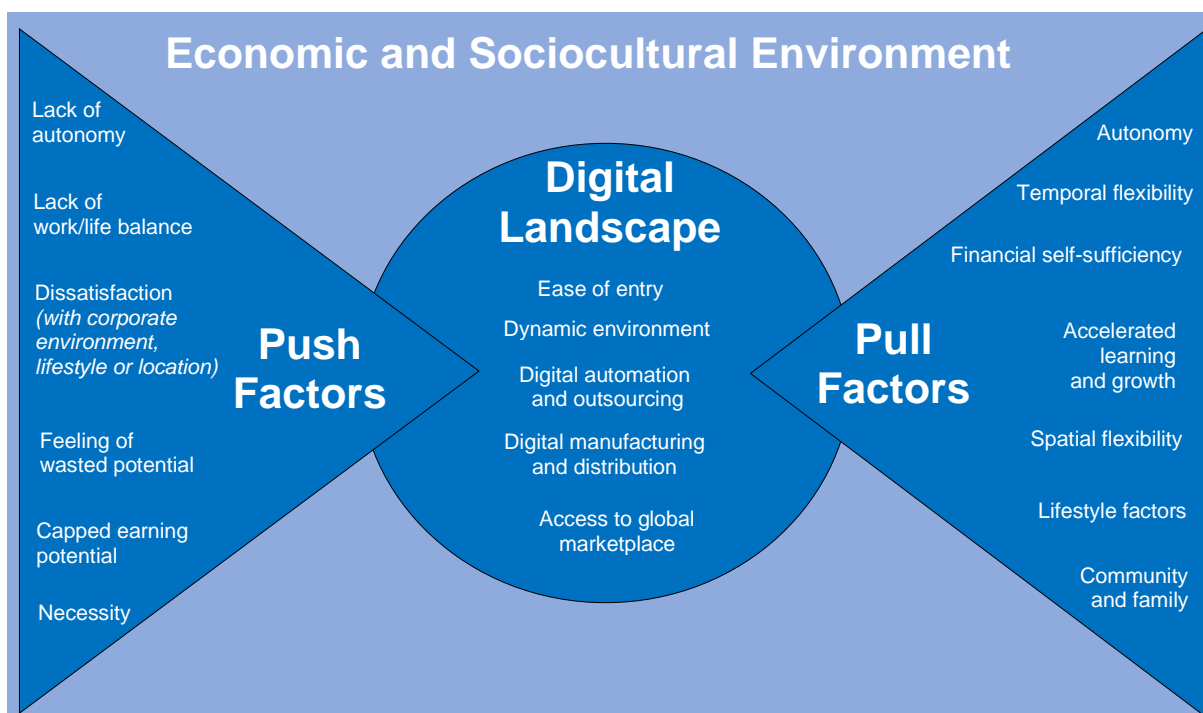
Figure 6.3 Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship

6.8 Defining the Digital Entrepreneur

During DE interviews, the researcher questioned DEs as to their interpretation of the term "Digital Entrepreneur" and these findings were examined during data analysis. In defining the digital entrepreneur, participants returned a diverse range of responses and factors to be considered. These factors included the differences between the DE and a traditional entrepreneur, the DE's role in business creation, the businesses' degree of digitalisation, and the spatial flexibility of the DE. In considering participants diverse viewpoints, it should be noted that there was significant variation in DE businesses and circumstances. These main differences included:

- Participant businesses operated in a range of industries as presented in section 4.7;
- Business stages ranged from start-ups to well established concerns;
- Several interview participants owned multiple businesses, both in the online and offline space;
- Several participants were transitioning their business from the offline space to being fully online; and
- The role of location varied for research participants, with some being more location independent than others.

These considerations highlight the difficulty in arriving at a widely acceptable definition of the term. All but a few research participants self-identified as a DE and key factors emerged that can be considered elements contributing to a definition.

6.8.1 DE as Entrepreneur

In defining the digital entrepreneur, several research participants made comparisons between the digital entrepreneur and the traditional entrepreneur:

> No different to any kind of entrepreneur who risks their own money. Digital is just a form of media. (Stan, Aus)

> Every business has a digital element, so I see no difference with any other entrepreneur. (Tony, Aus)

As expressed, these two research participants saw no difference between a digital entrepreneur and a traditional entrepreneur. Aligning with this, another Bali case study participant, with both online and offline businesses, viewed himself as an entrepreneur rather

than a digital entrepreneur; this self-image was held despite being location independent and managing his business interests remotely using technology. However, , the majority of DEs, perceived the digital aspect of the business as a fundamental differentiator.:

> I find this to be a sticky one because most businesses touch the internet in some way. If I was to say digital entrepreneur as opposed to any type of entrepreneur, I'd say the product or service is delivered online…or the means of business engagement, sales or marketing, is predominantly online. (Amy, Bali)

Digital business differs from traditional business in that digital tools and platforms provide novel ways to start and operate a business and access customer markets. The main difference identified by participants, related to the nature and degree of business digitisation as indicated in the above response. This is explored further in section 6.7.4. Significantly, in their definitions of a DE, research participants routinely indicated, either implicitly or explicitly, processes involving innovation and value creation:

> For myself it's being entrepreneurial and innovative in a digital landscape with digital technology. (Peta, Aus)

> Someone has the inner strength of creating products or building something to make someone's life better in some aspect. Create a product to make a difference and make the world a bit better. (Harry, Bali)

An innovative approach was required by research participants given the evolving nature of digital technologies and the need to keep up with continuous changes in the online marketplace:

> Digital changes constantly, staying up with the game. (Marisa, Aus)

Despite any differences between the traditional entrepreneur and the digital entrepreneur, the need to be entrepreneurial is a key aspect of digital business and innovation was viewed as part of being entrepreneurial.

6.8.2 DE as Business Founder

Indicative of the selection criteria for this study, a view widely held by research participants was that of the DE as founder or creator of the enterprise. All but a few of the research participants had been the founders of their business(es). Those who were not founders had significantly grown their own business or played a key role in the start-up of the business:

> Someone who starts a business online (Ross, Aus)

The participant perception of the digital entrepreneur as founder of their business is typified in the response above. Others expressed similar views, identified in terms such as *build* and *create:*

> I ask myself if I qualify for this, but I think I do…anyone who builds up their business online and earns his money through it. (Lucinda, Bali)

6.8.3 Degree of Digitisation

The nature and degree of digital reliance was emphasised by research participants. Some of the research participants viewed a DE's business as being completely digital as expressed in the following quotes:

> A businessperson having a venture that is possible to run completely digitally. (Jacques, Bali)

> Everything is online, products digital, work online, all focussed online. (Chloe, Aus)

> Someone whose business relies on a digital platform, so they couldn't operate their business without it. (Lorna, Aus)

Reliance on a digital platform does not necessarily equate to a "high tech" enterprise as many businesses rely on digital platforms to operate. Therefore, it appears that the inability to operate the business without digital technologies is key. It is worth noting that several research participants defined a DE more broadly:

> Someone who takes advantage of computer technology for their occupation. (Jack, Bali)

> Derives income from an online source or uses internet and digital means to enhance existing business. (David, Bali)

While such broad statements are not helpful in establishing a widely accepted definition of digital entrepreneurship, they indicate the range of views held by participants. Some DEs emphasised social media and growing an online audience as a critical and necessary aspect of their business strategy. For one research participant this even formed part of his definition of a DE, as someone who "*builds a brand and their following online".* Within this definition, social media influencers could be considered digital entrepreneurs.

6.8.4 **Spatial Flexibility**

For many of the research participants, location independence, or the ability to work from anywhere, formed part of their definition of a DE. While research question three explores the role of location for DEs, without any prompting research participants included location in articulating their definition, as expressed in the following quotes:

> Somebody who does the majority of their work online. Whenever I'm asked the location of my business, I always say the internet so that think that would be a great precursor, you don't have a location. (Chess, Bali)

> Not location specific; work from wherever they are. (Betty, Bali)

The ability to "*work from wherever they are"* is an aspect of operating a digital business that was reinforced throughout the interviews by many of the research participants. Some of the participants viewed the mobility of the DE as a key factor in defining them:

> Online business that can be conducted anywhere at any time. (Sonia, Aus)

> I use different jargon depending on how much they are moving…digital nomad if there is the freedom to work from anywhere. (Brett, Bali)

A segment of research participants who were part of the Bali case study, used the terms digital nomad and digital entrepreneur interchangeably and a number of them self-identified as digital nomads (this is discussed further in section 7.8.4.). Significantly, while a DE may have the ability to travel and work from anywhere, they may choose to be based in one location, as was the situation for most participants in the Australian case study. Alternately, the majority of Bali

case participants sat toward the nomadic end of the Digital Entrepreneur Mobility Scale (Figure 6.1. presented in section 6.6). Overall, it is DEs spatial flexibility rather than how they utilise it, that is significant for DEs.

6.8.5 Proposed Definition

Based on the interpretations of research participants, there are four relevant factors that contribute to the definition of a digital entrepreneur:

- the need to be entrepreneurial;
- the need to be involved in the creation of the business (DE as founder);
- the predominantly digital nature of their business; and
- the DE has spatial flexibility in the operation of the business.

These factors are further discussed in section 7.8, in view of nascent literature in this area.

6.9 DE Challenges

One of the aims of this study was to generate new understanding of the phenomenon of digital entrepreneurship. The research participants identified varying ways to live and work using digital technology and through their narratives the new possibilities for business creation are evident. However, digital business is not a panacea for designing one's ideal life as presented in Table 6.13 which outlines the main challenges identified by study participants.

Table 6.13 Challenges of Digital Entrepreneurship

DE Challenges	
Income insecurity	*There's been times when after I've paid out everyone I have 35 cents left in my account and you have to be willing to deal with that because you know that better times are coming. (Phil, Bali)*
	This has thrown a shadow on my happy, healthy self…shadow of working hard and not having cash flow (Trevor, Aus)
Time management	*You need to be super driven structured and organised. Lots of distractions and this can be a challenge for people. (Julia, Aus)*
	Every day I wake up and decide what I want to do with my time. Everyday becomes free, open, which is a challenge...how to use free time in a healthy way. (Jason, Bali)
Continual learning	*You can spend a lot of time improving your knowledge and a challenge is to show up and focus. (Sonia, Aus)*
	I think the complexity of it. You know the learning curve is incredibly steep and underestimated. (Lorna, Aus)
Technology	*Computer rage, I think faster than the computer can obey commands. (Stan, Aus)*

	Being an offline person and needing to understand technology. I'm not a tech head, I'm a tech user. I've found the technology piece draining. (Marie, Aus)
Tax/ banking	*The main issues are the tax issues. The world is not set up for us. It's really, really hard. (Natalie, Bali)*
	Bankers are just different from us, they see some guy, even if he's hard working and has no criminal convictions...in Bali they're going to think drug dealer. (Jack, Bali)
Lack of understanding	*For a long time when I was on this path of running my own business I felt I had to justify what I do. (Eva, Bali)*
	Lack of understanding from others that I'm working. I can't mind your kids; I know I'm at home but I'm working. My kids understand, I say this is live and you can't talk to me now, you'll have to wait till after. My ex-husband didn't get it. He said you just sit in front of Facebook all day and I said, well that's actually my work. Educating other people what your work is, is actually one of the hardest things. (Louise, Aus)
Loneliness	*Being a solo rural digital entrepreneur, the top issues are social and professional isolation. This is more about being rural than digital. There is no one to give positive and negative feedback. (Cliff, Aus)*
	Hardest element is the people I want to spend time with and the reason I created all this time freedom is to hang out with them but the truth is a lot of them are still working 9 to 5...so the connection of those two worlds just doesn't really match yet. (Mark, Bali)

In terms of challenges encountered, there appear to commonalities between DEs and traditional entrepreneurs, particularly evident in income insecurity and time management. Limited capital and cashflow impacted participants and the sustainability of their businesses. Two research participants (co-founders) were actively seeking employment as they had run out of funds to continue working on their business. This was not an attractive proposition for them, but they saw no alternative. Several others were doing freelance or consulting work to supplement their income while building their businesses. One research participant had returned to his previous employment to supplement earnings from his other business ventures, with the aim of resigning once he has sufficient capital. Time management also appears to be a common issue for entrepreneurs, whether in the digital or traditional space (this is explored further in section 7.2.2, as relevant to the second research question).

Significantly, the flip side of factors that initially drew participants to digital business presented challenges. For example, while business automation allowed participants to leverage time, how to use this time productively could then became a challenge. While participants were pulled toward learning and growth, upskilling themselves could be a distraction from focussing on business tasks. The technology, which participants relied on in the operation of their businesses, could also be a source of frustration.

There were also challenges with being early adopters of alternate ways of living and working. Bali based research participants spoke of difficulties in setting up bank accounts in a foreign

country and preparing tax returns to declare their earnings. Major challenges, common to participants of both case studies, were identified as loneliness and lack of understanding from others, as initially presented in section 6.6.3:

> I feel like a social outcast to be honest with you because 80 to 90 percent of people have traditional jobs where they're working 9 to 5 or they have to be at a certain place at a certain time. When we're in a conversation we don't really relate. (Phil, Bali)

Loneliness, which can also be a challenge for solo entrepreneurs, was a particular challenge for Bali case participants who were living away from home and their established communities. On the surface, the image of the location independent entrepreneur or digital nomad can appear glossy but beneath there can be a pervading sense of isolation. Many had friends working in traditional employment who did not fully understand the DE's business. This is expressed in comments such as, "*educating other people what your work is, is actually one of the hardest things*" and having friends and family ask them things like "*when are you going to come home and get a real job*". Research participants indicated that being constantly on the move can make it challenging to form deep connections with people (as discussed previously in section 6.6.3 and explored further in section 7.9).

6.10 Conclusion

This chapter presented the five key themes of the study, the first of which was "*time as currency*" (section 6.2), with temporal flexibility shown to be a key motivator for DEs. DEs operate in a different context to traditional entrepreneurs and the key finding was examined in view of these differences, specifically the virtual shop front, the impact of time zones, time management and boundary setting and business and life stage. A second theme was that of the "*integrated entrepreneur*" (section 6.3). A significant proportion of DEs expressed, explicitly or implicitly, that the boundaries between the business and themselves did not exist, with digital technologies enabling the business to permeate their daily existence to varying degrees. "*Accelerated learning and growth*" (section 6.4) was shown to be a strong motivator for DEs, many of whom had started on the entrepreneurial path driven to pursue personal and professional learning through their businesses. Business provided a vehicle for accelerated growth and inherent in this acceleration is the perception of time as a finite resource. For some, the growth of the business was aligned with the growth of the self. Coworking spaces were also discussed, as providing learning and connection.

The fourth key finding (section 6.5) explored the "*redefining of the 9 to 5*". The nine to five workday is a social construct that is being challenged through digital disruption, globalisation and the growing role of ICTs in daily life. Many DEs had sought to escape the 9 to 5 and what it represents to them in a changing world. Many participant perceptions of success were not congruent with the values that many in the western world have been weaned on, with travel and mobility assuming increasing importance. "*Home and Away*" (section 6.6) explored the balance between having a base and experiencing freedom. While travel and exotic locations can provide inspiration and adventure, home and community have their own appeal. The work, lifestyle and community factors significant for DEs were then presented and a model of location to fit task orientation introduced.

This chapter then presented three additional findings that contribute understanding to the DE phenomenon. In section 6.7, the Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship was introduced, illustrating the dominant push and pull factors impacting business creation with digital landscape providing a conduit through which participants could channel their motivational energy. In section 6.8, participant perspectives on the definition of the term digital entrepreneur were discussed. Four relevant factors emerged as contributing to a definition, including the need to be entrepreneurial, the need to be involved in business creation, the digital nature of the business and the spatial flexibility of the DE. In section 6.9, the challenges faced by digital entrepreneurs were presented. Digital entrepreneurship is not a panacea for designing one's ideal life; a digital business is ultimately a business, with income insecurity and time management factors to be managed. While technology presents new opportunities, dealing with the technology itself can be a challenge and working and living in new ways can bring loneliness and a lack of understanding from others. In the next chapter, these research findings are discussed in view of relevant literature.

Chapter 7 – Discussion

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research was to explore DEs' subjective experiences, in relation to work, lifestyle and location, to provide insight into their motivations and generate new understanding about this phenomenon. These insights can help lay theoretical foundations in this emerging area of research and generate new knowledge of this alternate way of living and working. The following research questions were central to the study:

Research Question 1: What motivates an individual to pursue an online business?

Research Question 2: How do DEs balance their work and lifestyle domains?

Research Question 3: How does location play a role in the work and life of DEs?

Data were collected by conducting 36 semi-structured in-depth interviews and analysed thematically, guided by the study's framework of motivational theory. Insights into these research questions are apparent in five key research findings which were presented in the preceding chapter:

1. Time as Currency – DEs highly value autonomous use of their temporal flexibility;
2. The Integrated Entrepreneur – the business and DE as entwined;
3. Accelerated Learning and Growth – personal learning and growth is a strong driver for DEs;
4. Redefining the 9 to 5 – DEs are consciously challenging the social construct of the 9 to 5 workday; and
5. Home and Away – in an emerging world of increased spatial flexibility, home and community provide moorings.

In Table 7.1, major themes revealed through the research findings are linked with the research questions, through relevant sub themes. The first part of this chapter interprets the major themes with additional findings presented where they enhance and solidify the discussion.

Table 7.1 Map of Key Themes Linked to Research Questions

Theme	RQ 1 - Motivations	RQ 2 - Balance	RQ 3 - Location
Time as currency	Autonomy - temporal flexibility	Work-life boundaries business and life stage	Time zones
The Integrated Entrepreneur	Intrinsic motivation	Integration of boundaries	Location as integral to business and lifestyle
Accelerated Learning and Growth	Autonomy, learning and growth, challenge	Personal growth linked to business growth	Coworking spaces
Redefining the 9 to 5	Dissatisfaction (Push), redefining success	Significance of leisure, time zones	Leisure and location
Home and Away	Spatial flexibility, location, community and belonging	Location and spatial flexibility impacting work and life	Travel and mobility, locational variables, community

The two case studies were compared and contrasted, in relation to study findings, and those results are also presented within each section. Nascent literature and motivational theory are woven into the discussion and compared with the findings. Certain findings, such as those in relation to autonomy and learning and growth, were clearly aligned with existing literature and the findings provided nuanced perspectives of such. Other findings, including views on business growth, showed limited correlation with existing literature. The second part of the discussion chapter centers on the study's additional findings, which are presented in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2 Additional Findings

Additional Findings	Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship
	Defining the Digital Entrepreneur
	DE Challenges

A Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship was introduced in the last chapter that brings together five key themes in a coherent model in response to the first research question. This model is interpreted and discussed in view of the motivational theories that inform this study, with additional literature presented where relevant (section 7.8). In the previous chapter findings relating to the definition of the term "digital entrepreneur" were introduced. This chapter will propose a new definition for this term, considering both the findings presented, and the existing literature in this emerging area (section 7.9). In section 7.10, the challenges

of digital entrepreneurship are discussed with the aim of providing a balanced view of the DE lifestyle. This discussion contributes new understanding to the DE phenomenon in the context of work, lifestyle and location.

7.2 Time as Currency

Theme	RQ 1 - Motivations	RQ 2 - Balance	RQ 3 - Location
Time as currency	Autonomy - temporal flexibility	Work-life boundaries, business and life stage	Time zones

> Being the master of your own time is my biggest drive to do any business, that's number one. (Jacques, Bali)

This key finding provides insight into each of the three research questions. In relation to research question one, temporal flexibility is an incentive for DEs in creation of their business(es) (section 7.2.1). Time is a primary resource allocated to balancing economic and lifestyle orientations, pertinent in providing insight to research question two. DEs' alternative views to creating boundaries between work and life were presented in the research findings and will be discussed further in section 7.2.2. Business and life stage also impact DEs' ability to balance work with other life domains (section 7.2.3). The third research question explores the role of location for DEs and is particularly relevant to section 7.2.4 as time zones impact the currency of time in an international context.

7.2.1 Temporal Flexibility as an Incentive

In this study, a significant finding that emerged from the data was DEs' need for autonomy in relation to their use of time. As discussed in chapter 3, the importance of autonomy is highly recognised in studies utilising Push-Pull Theory (Dawson & Henley, 2012; Gilad & Levine, 1986; Marcketti et al., 2006; McKeown & Hanley, 2009) and also a major pillar of SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Recent research continues to claim that autonomy is significant for entrepreneurs (Dutot & Van Horne, 2015; Stephan et al., 2015; Reichenberger, 2018). Temporal flexibility is particularly relevant for entrepreneurs operating in the digital space, as digital technology facilitates choice in when and where they work. Further, digital systems and tools provide DEs with the capacity to automate and streamline key business functions, further leveraging time. Deci and Ryan (2000) refer to autonomy as the need to self-organise one's behaviour. Temporal flexibility is a form of autonomy in that it allows an individual to exercise control and self-determination in their use of time. Autonomy is well-established within the

literature as a primary motivational factor for entrepreneurs (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Hessels et al., 2008; Stephan et al., 2015; Van Gelderen, 2016), associated with increased levels of satisfaction and engagement (Baard et al., 2004). As presented in chapter 3, studies using Pull-Pull Theory have shown autonomy to be a major pull factor (Dawson & Henley, 2012; McKeown & Hanley, 2009), as well as a push motivation (Giacomin Guyot, Janssen, & Lohest, 2007, Segal et al. 2005). Autonomy is also particularly significant in that self-determined behaviour is the vehicle through which other motivational needs can be fulfilled (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Most interview participants expressed a strong desire for flexibility and temporal autonomy. These findings were discussed in section 6.2 and while DEs' preferred use of time varied, their ability to exercise control over its use was a critical motivator. Many studies discuss autonomy in terms of entrepreneurial control over *what* work is performed and *how*, rather than *when* work is performed. Though the *what* and *how* of work are significant for DEs, this research found autonomy, in the form of *when* (temporal flexibility), to be a key motivator. This distinction is captured by Stephan et al. (2015) who, in presenting independence and autonomy as a primary dimension of entrepreneurial motivation, discuss the desire to be in control of one's own time and work and the flexibility to combine work and personal pursuits (section 3.10.2). Temporal flexibility as a motivating factor is not a new finding; the freedom "to create a more flexible and tailored life outside of externally imposed structures" was a key finding of Reichenberger's (2018, p. 9) study of digital nomads, discussed in section 2.10. Reichenberger's (2018) research is congruent with the current study in that the desire for temporal and spatial flexibility were found to be significant motivational forces for research participants.

Temporal flexibility allowed participants to develop a work schedule aligned with their work preferences. For example, some DEs preferred to work early in the day, others felt more productive during later hours. Some DEs favored scheduling work around leisure activities, socialising and/or family commitments, others prioritised work. Many DEs enjoyed working in intense bursts, over a period of days, followed by extended time off. Regardless of their individual approach, temporal flexibility was highly valued by DEs as an advantage of digital business. The rise of flexible work was discussed in section 2.4, with technology increasingly taking work beyond the conventional workplace (Lake, 2016). As flexible ways of working become more widespread, and globalisation advances, restructuring the workday from the standard 9 to 5 is becoming increasingly feasible. As such, it is anticipated that flexible work will continue to rise, allowing families and individuals to more effectively manage work commitments with other life domains. However, researchers posit that while mobile

technologies can facilitate greater flexibility in managing work boundaries, they can also distort understanding of what a healthy work–life balance is (Pauleen et al., 2015).

Within the literature, the relationship between entrepreneurship and time is often expressed in terms of time as a resource to be leveraged for business outcomes. Bird and West III (1998) discuss traditional approaches to the interface between entrepreneurship and time as grounded in Western logic, where time is linear, fixed and in limited supply. They posit that time may be the "only real resource that nascent entrepreneurs possess, the conversion of which enables them to marshal and acquire other tangible resources as their new ventures develop" (Bird & West III, 1998, p. 8). In the digital age, small firms or start-ups can have a competitive advantage in that new products may be brought to market faster, as they are not weighed down with bureaucracy and slowed by entrenched cultural barriers (Slevin & Covin, 1998).

However, the DE subjects of this study viewed time differently. Many research participants discussed their business as aligned with their values and fulfilling their personal mission or purpose in the world. The desire to "*make a difference*" and "*empower and inspire others*" formed part of the DE narrative. From this perspective time is viewed more holistically. The supply of time is limited to a life and the drive to is create a positive impact within that lifetime. Having a positive impact is linked to social entrepreneurship with creating sustainable economies and community contribution reported to be among the social benefits, as discussed in section 2.8 (Jayawarna et al., 2013; Kostetska & Berezyakb, 2014). The desire to contribute to one's community through business or philanthropic endeavours is also suggested to be a motivational incentive (Stephan et al., 2015), or pull factor.

While making a positive impact was important to some research participants, even those DEs who did not express such altruistic motives indicated that taking control of their time, was a key driver. This was expressed in terms of wanting to learn and grow and to reach their full potential. In the discussion of SDT in section 3.9, Deci and Ryan (1985) posit the fulfillment of needs including autonomy, via entrepreneurship, as leading to enhanced well-being and realisation of individual potential. In relation to the second and third research questions, lifestyle, broader experiences and travel were complementary motives facilitated by temporal flexibility. How DEs managed these complementary motivations was evidenced in their approach to boundary setting.
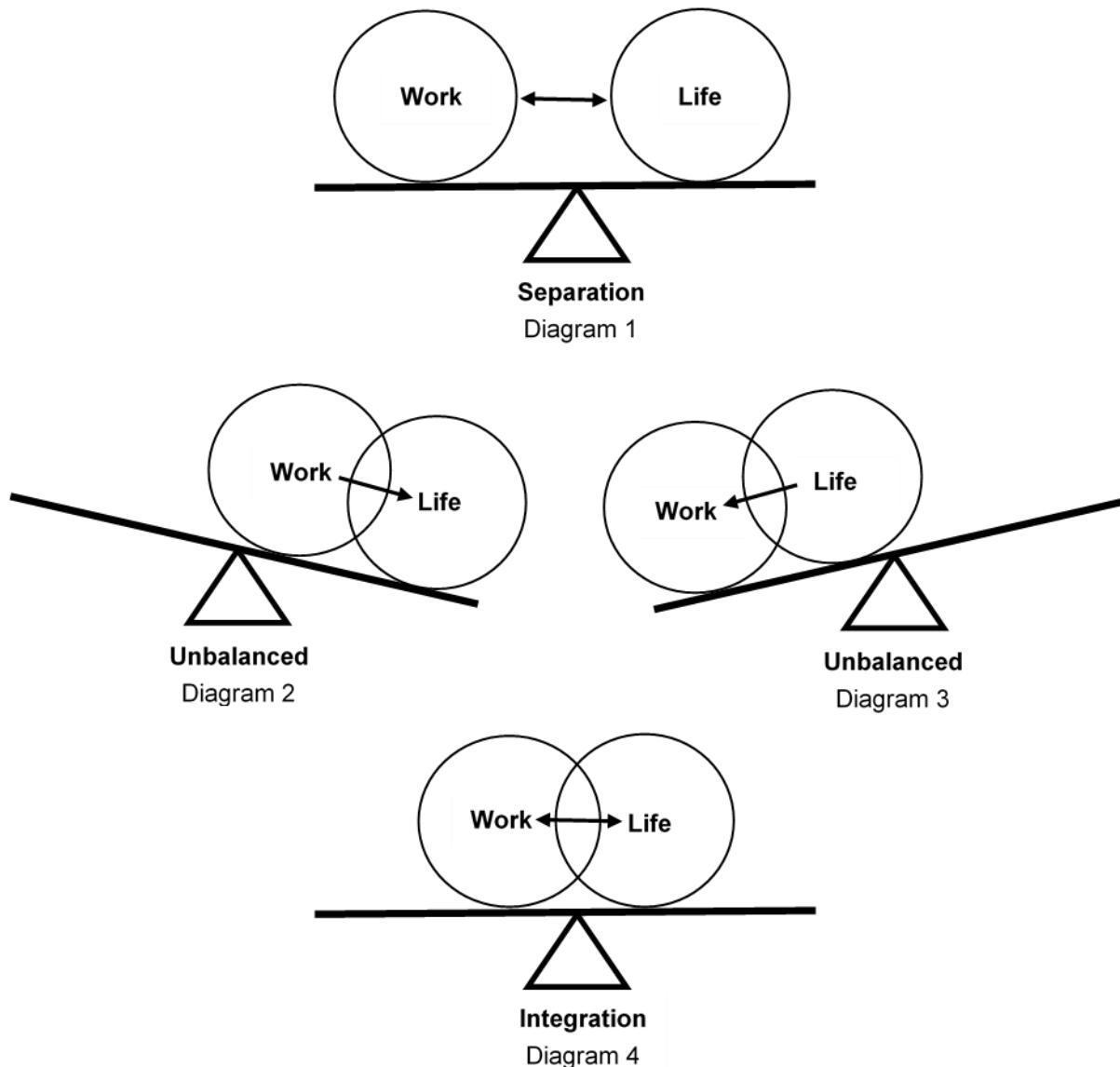
7.2.2 **Time Management and Boundary Setting**

In managing their time, DEs can leverage digital tools and systems, which have the ability to support all manner of entrepreneurial activities (Nambisan, 2017). The study's findings on DEs use of automation to leverage time were discussed in section 6.3.1. This section explores how DEs made use of the time they were able to leverage. In the research findings, many DEs reported time for family, leisure activities and/or community engagement as ways they exercised their temporal flexibility (section 6.2.3). For reasons including necessity, social status and identity, work often has key importance in people's lives (Hilbrecht, 2007). Managing the balance between work and other life domains is significant for well-being and central to the second research question is how DEs manage this balance. In positing this question, work and lifestyle are viewed as separate, though inter-related, domains. Lifestyle is defined as time outside of work activities, in much the same way as sociologists have approached defining leisure (Waring, 2008).

The separation of work from other life domains was introduced in section 2.4, with Boundary Theory presented as a method for managing these competing domains (Ashforth et al., 2000; Bulger et al., 2007; Nippert-Eng, 1996). Nippert-Eng's (1996) research posits that a separation-integration continuum exists within which individuals are likely to fit (as discussed in section 2.4). Discussion of boundary setting is highly relevant to DEs, given the degree to which they depend on mobile technologies and the ability of such devices to infiltrate multiple domains of modern life (Pauleen et al., 2015). For example, the virtual shop front (section 6.2.2) is an aspect of online business that DEs may need to manage, depending on the nature of their business. As with the mobile technology users in Pauleen et al.'s (2015) study (section 2.4) balance was shown to be a subjective experience. The findings of this study suggest DEs create temporal boundaries in separating work and lifestyle domains in order to manage these subjective constructs. The findings, in section 6.2.3, revealed three distinct approaches DEs take in managing their temporal flexibility. Figure 7.1 depicts the differing approaches that DEs use in balancing with other life domains, relevant to research question two.

- Those who set clear boundaries (Diagram 1);
- Those who do not set clear boundaries and struggle as a result; in those cases with work either spilling into lifestyle domains (Diagram 2) or lifestyle domains impacting on work (Diagram 3); and
- Those who do not want to set boundaries and take an integrated approach to balancing work and lifestyle domains (Diagram 4).

Work ↔ **Life**

Separation
Diagram 1

Work → **Life**

Unbalanced
Diagram 2

Life → **Work**

Unbalanced
Diagram 3

Work ↔ **Life**

Integration
Diagram 4

Figure 7.1 DE Work-Life Balance Approaches

There are parallels between Ezzedeen and Zikic's (2017) study of Canadian technology entrepreneurs, discussed in section 2.4, and this study. Aligned with current study, some DEs used time-based strategies to set clear boundaries and to effectively segment life and work. There were also research participants who did not desire balance and preferred an integrated approach to managing work and lifestyle domains. However, unlike Ezzedeen and Zikic's (2017) study there were research participants who saw the value of balance and experienced discontent at not having managed to achieve it, with work negatively impacting lifestyle domains or vice versa.

The findings of this study indicate that while temporal and spatial flexibility can assist DEs in achieving work-life balance, digital entrepreneurship is not a panacea for designing one's ideal life. Personal and work factors, including business and life stage (discussed in section 8.2.3), individual priorities, work preferences and even time zone (as explored in section 7.2.4) impacted perceived balance. However, it is ultimately the DEs' management of their time and effective use of separation or integration strategies that determines satisfaction with work-life balance. Boundaries may vary in strength, according to their flexibility and permeability (Bulger et al., 2007). *Flexibility* relates to how readily boundaries expand or contract relevant to the demands of other domains (Clark, 2000), *permeability* on the extent to which elements of one domain can be found in another (Bulger et al., 2007). Where there is high flexibility and permeability, *blending* is said to exist (Clark, 2000, p. 757).

A large segment of research participants managed to set clear temporal boundaries between work and lifestyle. For those who did not set clear boundaries, the findings indicate that work permeated non-work aspects of their lives. This resulted in discontent, with lack of boundary management impacting the interface between personal and work domains (Bulger et al., 2007). As discussed by Van Gelderen (2016), while individuals may enjoy discretion over working hours, they can find themselves drawn to working very long hours. Alternately, for a number of DEs lifestyle considerations were reported to adversely impact work, as was the case for the mother of a young child, who was working from home (discussed further in section 7.2.3).

As those with autonomy work longer hours, the phenomenon of work-life integration becomes more complex than simply personal choice (Lewis, 2003). Researchers suggest that individuals may take an integrated approach to work and leisure in order to prioritise work, with the venture intruding into personal lives (Ezzedeen & Zikic, 2017). Achieving balance and effectively segmenting work and lifestyle is becoming more complex in a post-industrial work context, with work "becoming indistinguishable from leisure" (Lewis, 2003, p. 343). The use of social media highlights this conundrum. As presented in section 6.3, a significant segment of research participants were consciously building their social media profiles as a key element of their business strategy. Whether building social media influence could be considered work or leisure depends on a range of factors, including motivations and authenticity.

There is almost certainly an aspect of emotional labour involved in building an online persona. Mardon, Molesworth and Grigore's (2018) netnographic study of YouTube beauty entrepreneurs found that balancing the tension between the desire for profit with their commitment to their tribe (or community of subscribers) necessitated not only significant

emotional labour of the entrepreneur but also of the entrepreneur's tribe. Further discussion of this aspect is outside the scope of this study; this is an area for future research, as discussed in section 8.6. For the purposes of this study, it is most relevant to focus on how social media presence formed part of the integrated approach that some DEs took to managing work and lifestyle, examined in section 7.3.

7.2.3 Business and Life Stage

Business and life stage were found to be particularly relevant to research question two, providing insight into participants' perceptions of balance between work and lifestyle domains. During certain stages, such as business start-up, work can dominate life (Winn, 2004). There are also life stages in which personal circumstances have a larger than usual impact. Previous studies have found a relationship between entrepreneur perceptions of work life balance and venture stage, as well as family demands and the arrival of children (Ezzedeen & Zikic, 2017; Foley et al., 2018; Kirkwood, 2009). As discussed in section 3.10, Kirkwood (2009) suggests the role of children, and the ability to combine work with family roles, should be recognised as having importance in motivational theory.

A significant difference between the two case studies was that many participants of the Australian case study had young children living at home. Family circumstances were found to impact the available time for some DEs, particularly those with very young children, and compromise their ability to perform certain work tasks, such as making video calls and video content creation. However, the business could also provide DEs with the flexibility to manage family responsibilities, such as transporting school age children to and from school and involvement in school activities, thereby assisting them to manage multiple domains. In contrast to the Australian case study, only one participant of the Bali case study had dependent children. As was presented in the findings, some Bali case study participants identified as digital nomads, as well as digital entrepreneurs. Thompson asserts that "digital nomads very rarely have children and balance their work life nearly exclusively with leisure, and occasional visitation with family and friends" (2019, p. 4). Family commitments did not impact the management of work-life domains for Bali based DEs, with many taking an integrated approach to managing these domains.

While most research participants had previous business experience, many DEs had created their businesses within the last one to two years and were in the start-up phase (particularly participants of the Bali case). Start-ups can require intense front-end effort with little financial return; entrepreneurs can discover that they have less flexibility than anticipated as they

undertake a multitude of tasks involved in new venture creation (Winn, 2004). Despite the reduced cost and relative ease of entry into online business, DEs still need to meet their daily expenses. This required many DEs to live off their savings, rely on spousal or family support, combine business ownership with other work (for example, freelance consulting work), decrease their expenses and/or move to a country where their dollar travelled further (as was the situation with many participants of the Bali case study). Such factors could be stressors for the DE and impact work-life balance. Pressure on entrepreneurial resources during the labour-intensive start-up phase of the venture may shift as the business becomes more established, making it easier to form boundaries (Ezzedeen & Zikic, 2017). As well as the stage of the business, the business model itself was also a factor impacting balance. One DE remarked that the subscription business model required constant changing, even if only slightly.

In section 6.3, the integrated approach used by a significant proportion of DEs to manage their work and life was presented. An integrated approach tended to be used by those DEs without family commitments. As discussed in section 2.4, research suggests that while latitude in decision making and schedule control are predictors of role blurring (Glavin & Schieman, 2012), family can act as a border keeper (Clark, 2000). This research found that those DEs with family commitments perceived it as necessary to treat work and personal domains separately, with varying degrees of effectiveness. While some DEs viewed the online nature of the business as assisting them to manage work and family roles, others perceived it as placing pressure on their marriage and/or personal relationships. Research suggests that both women and men can underestimate the economic and emotional demands of starting a new enterprise and the impact on the family unit (Winn, 2004). This study supports that such is the case for online business, as well as traditional business.

7.2.4 **Time zones**

The impact of time zones on business operations has been the subject of previous research. Among the challenges for firms internationalising, is the potential liability of coordination across time zones and over distance (Arenius, Sasi & Gabrielsson, 2005). In the findings (section 6.2.1), the importance of time zones in relation to managing client relations and/or remote staff was presented. Some locations were not considered as potential bases for DEs, given the time zone challenges they would present. Such findings are not new; however, a potentially novel finding is the significance of location in managing one's business/lifestyle mix. It was revealed that by strategically choosing a location, in view of the time zone, DEs could schedule and prioritise lifestyle-based activities, such as surfing and salsa dancing, around

client demands. The researcher could not identify any other studies, in relation to the impact of time zone in combining business and leisure. Given the potential for increased flexibility and mobility as new ways of working evolve, an area for future research (section 8.6) is time zone as a business *and lifestyle* enabler for entrepreneurs. Time zone is relevant in relation to research question two, as impacting work and lifestyle balance, as well as research question three on the role of location, with time zone a key consideration for DEs in managing their businesses.

7.3 The Integrated Entrepreneur

Theme	RQ 1 - Motivations	RQ 2 - Balance	RQ 3 - Location
The Integrated Entrepreneur	Intrinsic motivation	Integration of boundaries	Location as integral to business and lifestyle

> I'm at the stage now where there is no clear delineation between my personal life and my business life. (Phil, Bali)

As presented in the research findings (section 6.3) many research participants articulated having an integrated approach to combining work and lifestyle domains. This finding relates to research question one, in that many research participants taking an integrated approach to their business, appeared to find their work intrinsically motivating. In addition, this finding is related to research question two, as integration is a work-life balance strategy, as discussed in section 7.2.2. Furthermore, there is a relationship with research question three, as location is an integral part of how DEs manage the integration of the business with their personal lives (as discussed in section 7.2.2).

7.3.1 Intrinsic Motivation

According to SDT (discussed in section 3.9) intrinsic regulation, on the far right of the self-determination continuum, indicates an individual with a highly autonomous orientation. Ryan and Deci (2000a) refer to work as intrinsically motivating when it is "inherently interesting or enjoyable" (p. 55). When an individual engages in an activity they find interesting, wholly volitionally (Gagne & Deci, 2005) and without dependence on external reward (Deci & Ryan, 2000), such activity is considered to be intrinsically motivating. Where DEs expressed a lack of separation between work and their other pursuits, their interview data revealed that they found their work highly engaging. Deci and Ryan (2002) posit that a coherent sense of self involves integration of knowledge, personality and experience.

As presented in section 2.5.3, entrepreneurship may present an opportunity for a better quality of life and more meaningful work (Marcketti et al., 2006). Kuratko et al. (1997) posit that intrinsically motivated entrepreneurs may seek challenge, excitement, and personal growth. Implicit in the narrative of many DEs was enjoyment of their work; for many DEs work itself was their preferred activity, such was their intrinsic motivation and engagement with their business. For some, there was little reported separation between work and lifestyle domains and thus integration between their work and personal lives (illustrated in Figure 7:1, Diagram 4). Some of these integrated DEs reported feeling in alignment with their business and this congruence provided them with a sense of meaning and fulfillment. As an example, several DEs in the health and wellness industry appeared to embody the lifestyle they were promoting, in prioritizing exercise, healthy eating and an active lifestyle (i.e. surfing).

Flow theory explores an individual's intrinsic engagement in an activity; a state of flow refers to intense engagement in a task, such that one can lose track of time and persist with the activity despite fatigue, hunger or discomfort (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). In discussing the long hours devoted to their work and reported engagement with it, many research participants seemed to experience episodes of flow. For most research participants, the process of creating their business appeared to be as important, if not more important than any anticipated outcome. Participants spoke about "loving" their work, feeling "passionate" about it and viewing their business as part of who they are. Passion, as an aspect of intrinsic motivation, is described by Smilor (1997) as "enthusiasm, joy, and even zeal that come from the energetic and unflagging pursuit of a worthy, challenging, and uplifting purpose" (p.342). Intrinsic motivation, linked to an internal locus of causality, was discussed in section 3.9 as an aspect of Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self Determination Theory. Significantly, researchers have argued that while high self-efficacy is one factor in sustained entrepreneurial effort, a second factor is love, more accurately, "passionate, selfish love of the work." (Shane et al., 2003, p. 268).

There has been some research on the role of passion in entrepreneurship (Shane et al., 2003), passion and purpose emerged as codes in this research, from DE narratives in discussing their businesses. Similarly, this study found that work-life integration often resulted from the pleasure DEs found in their work, the alignment of the business with their personal values and sense of purpose through work. Personal congruence or fit with work has been found to result in desirable outcomes (Kreiner, Hollensbe & Sheep, 2006) and intrinsic motives reportedly increase entrepreneur satisfaction more than economic ones (Borzaga & Tortia, 2006). Eudemonia, a state of happiness and pleasure, can be the result of engagement in meaningful endeavours (Ryan et al., 2008). It appeared that for the majority of research participants, such

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states could be accessed through their work, however, work could also be a source of conflict and result in feelings of isolation (explored further in section 7.6.3).

While an integrated approach to work indicated intrinsic motivation, extrinsic factors, or externally based rewards as motivating factors, were also viewed as significant. Intrinsic motivators are reported to coexist with extrinsic motivations (Carsrud & Brännback, 2011). Several research participants spoke of the desirability of being an entrepreneur in the current age. Society places value on work-based achievement and work can become an important source of identity and self-esteem (Lewis, 2003). Researchers posit that the need to be perceived as unique and somehow different is a fundamental human motive and to self-identify as an entrepreneur provides an opportunity to fulfil this need (Shepherd & Haynie, 2009). Further, an entrepreneur's identity can be significantly intertwined with their business (Cardon, Zeitsma, Saparito, Matherne & Davis, 2005). The entrepreneur appears to have become somewhat of an icon of the technology era, perceived as tech savvy, forward thinking and independent. Findings indicated that identification with this image appeared to be an extrinsic motivator for a minority of DEs. Role identification occurs where an individual defines oneself (to varying degrees) according to a particular role (Ashforth et al., 2000). It appears that for some DEs, identification with this emergent way of living and working may offer an extrinsic reward. Embodiment of this lifestyle appears to provide evidence that one is ahead of the curve, regardless of other indicators of success in their business or life.

In her study on digital nomads, Reichenberger (2018), referred to research participants as striving for a holistic approach to life where leisure and work are not separate (spatially or temporally) but viewed as equally contributing to self-actualisation and fulfilment. There are parallels between the findings in Reichenberger's (2018) study and this research, particularly for those DEs who took an integrated approach to work. However, there are also key differences as presented elsewhere in the findings, suggesting that prioritisation of work was also an indicator of limited responsibilities outside of work. As noted previously, research has shown that family can act as border keepers in separating work from home (Clark, 2000). This was found to have relevance in this study in that family commitments factored into the work-lifestyle equation and often required DEs to separate work from other life domains.

7.4 Accelerated Learning and growth

Theme	RQ 1 - Motivations	RQ 2 - Balance	RQ 3 - Location
Accelerated Learning and Growth	Autonomy, learning and growth, challenge	Personal growth linked to business growth	Coworking spaces

I'm addicted to learning and can't stop. (Clarke, Aus)

The findings revealed that most entrepreneurs were motivated by learning and growth as discussed in section 6.4, and relevant to the first research question. Learning and growth are well established motivational factors for entrepreneurs (Coulson, 2012; Marcketti et al., 2006), recognised within Push-Pull Theory (Mitchell, 2004), SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and Stephan et al.'s (2015) dimensions of entrepreneurial motivation (chapter 3). Combined with time as currency, DEs have the ability to self-direct the pace and extent of their learning and growth. This finding was also relevant to research question 3 as coworking spaces, particularly for Bali case participants, provided a location to access learning and growth through organic socialisation with other DEs, as well as through hub organised activities.

Intrinsic motivation (as discussed in the preceding section) is an aspect SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985), associated with the tendency to seek challenges, explore, extend one's capabilities, and learn (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). (Al-Jubari et al., 2019) refer to individuals as having a natural tendency toward growth and therefore moving toward those activities that satisfy their "inner resources of development and optimal functioning" (p. 1324). DEs articulated overcoming challenges as part of the process of learning and growth. Competence is part of overcoming challenges and one of the three human needs that form part of Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT), a sub-theory of SDT (Deci & Ryan 2000). Together with many of the challenges of operating a traditional business, keeping up with the technical aspects of operating an online business (discussed in section 2.7) involves learning and development. Evolving social media platforms, new algorithms, and increasing online noise and competition, were among the daily challenges facing DEs in the online environment. DEs expressed confidence in their abilities to learn and adapt in the face of challenges, thus fulfilling their competence needs (González-Cutre & Sicilia, 2012) and providing a sense of achievement (McClelland, 1961).

Researchers argue that for small to medium enterprises (SMEs) to grow, entrepreneurs must have the capacity to learn from their mistakes, from past experience, and from their networks (Deakins & Freel, 1998). Thus, while business growth was not necessarily a primary motive for research participants in this study, their drive to learn (in both personal and professional contexts) can be seen as a precursor to future business growth. In Buttner and Moore's (1997) study of women entrepreneurs, they found that participants appeared to measure success by internal measures, including improving one's skills and personal growth, rather than external measures such as profit or business growth. For participants of this study, internal measures

were shown to be integral for the majority, though external measures of success also had importance to varying degrees.

Evidenced in the findings were DEs' perceptions of personal growth as linked to business growth. This was often implicit in the DE narrative, with personal growth goals underlying business goals (presented in section 6.4.1). Cope and Watts (2000) discuss personal and business development as parallel processes and acknowledge the necessity for the entrepreneur to adapt and change as a business evolves through its lifecycle. Overcoming personal limitations and blocks, evolving into the best version of self and fulfilling personal potential factored as ways in which DEs aspired to grow personally. This is aligned with Reichenberger's (2018) study of Digital Nomads, a group sharing some commonalities with DEs, which found the search for self-actualisation as significant.

Dissatisfaction with the corporate environment was among the push factors that had preceded the creation of their business for many participants. Workplace dissatisfaction was discussed in section 2.5.1 as a driver in the move toward entrepreneurship. While traditional organisations can be a source of stress for individuals, they can also be a source of boredom (Mitev, de Vaujany, Laniray, Bohas & Fabbri, 2019). Lack of opportunities for growth and development were often expressed as frustration factors for participants of this study (section 6.5.1). Shir, Nikolaev and Wincent (2019) describe the limitations for growth in traditional organisations by stating that work tasks in such contexts are largely based on existing routines and procedures, which can limit the scope of opportunities for work-task engagement. Alternately, they claim that the work tasks associated with entrepreneurship do not have such limitations and therefore encourage more self-motivated behaviours and thus generate greater wellbeing (Shir, Nikolaev & Wincent, 2019). The opportunity for accelerated learning and growth, offered by business ownership, was expressed as a key pull factor for DEs in the research findings (section 6.4).

Other studies have found a lack of developmental opportunities as a driver for business creation. For example, Cohen and Mallon (1999) analysed two qualitative data sets involving interviews with 39 professionals who had made the transition from paid employment to setting up their own businesses or developing their own portfolio of work. Over half of research participants had been dissatisfied with a perceived lack of opportunities for professional development while employed, both in terms of promotional opportunities and those for professional learning and growth. Interestingly, the data revealed that while participants were able to 'dust off' and use some skills underutilised in their previous roles, affording the

monetary and time-based cost of high-quality training for new skill development was a challenge in the context of their own business (Cohen & Mallon, 1999).

In relation to this study, participants were not asked about formal training courses. However, findings revealed that mastering the tasks associated with the business was a key source of learning. Innovation happens through practice, not by just learning about it (Mitev et al., 2019). Several female research participants, based in Queensland, mentioned that the WiRE Program (Women in Rural, Regional and Remote Enterprises) had been a source of learning and support in the creation of their businesses. For Bali-based DEs, coworking spaces provided access to shared learning and support (discussed further in section 7.4.2). DEs also mentioned other forums, both physical and online (i.e. Facebook groups), as facilitating collaboration.

7.4.1 Coworking Spaces

As discussed in section 2.4, coworking spaces can provide access to shared learning and are growing rapidly around the world. Rus and Orel (2015) argue that the reason the number of coworking spaces, and people choosing to use them, has "exploded" is due to culture of sharing they facilitate (p. 1017). For participants of the Bali case study, coworking hubs provided access to "like-minded" people and opportunities for idea generation, innovation and collaboration, as discussed in section 6.4.2, corroborating nascent literature in the area (Bouncken & Reuschl, 2018; Johns & Gratton, 2013, Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017). News media refer to Bali as the setting for a booming start-up ecosystem for entrepreneurs, attracted by low overheads and beautiful surroundings (Sile, 2015).

Designed to cater for creative workers (including entrepreneurs), and break their isolation in a collaborative environment, coworking spaces have been referred to as "serendipity accelerators" (Moriset, 2013, p. 18). Participants spoke of accessing collaborators, mentors and partners, and hiring staff through coworking spaces, at different times and stages of their business; such relationships proved invaluable as a source of support and advice. Collective learning and can be a valuable social resource for DEs (Johns & Gratton, 2013). For Bali-based research participants, coworking space organised workshops, events and programs were forums for shared learning and collaboration, such as "FuckUp Nights", a bimonthly event celebrating stories of business and project failure, aimed at changing to the conversation around business failure. At another coworking space, a "Barter Board" facilitated skills trades between community members.

Historically, geographical closeness has increased the likelihood of social bond formation and researchers posit that this is still the case in the age of the internet (Chen & Wellman, 2009). Morning yoga, lunchtime events, BBQ's and sundowners were coworking hub-organised opportunities for connection with a more social slant. Bouncken and Reuschl (2018) acknowledge the learning and positive features of coworking spaces but also refer to the potential risks they bear - of competition, opportunism and self-exploitation - which can reduce the positive aspects. A participant of the Australian case study spoke of a coworking space poaching one of her employees. Peters et al. (2009) assert that the independent mindedness of the entrepreneur can result in difficulty when it comes to accepting external advice or participating in clusters. This was evidenced in the number of participants of the Australian case study who spoke, with pride, about not having any external assistance in establishing their business.

Flexible working arrangements and non-standard ways of working will continue to rise, amplified by digital technologies, including human and object geolocation (Valenduc & Vendramin, 2016). As digital technologies enable increasing degrees of flexibility in relation to work, it appears the traditional office is becoming less necessary. Local networks have been acknowledged as a source of learning for entrepreneurs (Johns & Gratton, 2013; Szarka, 1990) and as the traditional office becomes increasingly redundant, coworking spaces appear to be filling the gap. The findings of this study suggest that coworking space community managers fill an important role in connecting people. This view is supported by Brown (2017), who highlights the role such managers play as "curators" of coworking spaces in coordinating "serendipity" (p. 10).

7.5 Redefining the 9 to 5

Theme	RQ 1 - Motivations	RQ 2 - Balance	RQ 3 - Location
Redefining the 9 to 5	Dissatisfaction (push), Redefining success	Significance of leisure	Leisure and location

> Having technology and the internet has completely shifted from my generation onwards…how we think about business and life and making money and what we need. (David, Bali)

In section 6.5.1, the findings revealed that dissatisfaction with the corporate environment had been a push factor for most participants in starting their businesses. This finding provides

insight to research question one and helps inform the Push-Pull Model discussed in section 7.8. Digital business creation provided an opportunity for many participants to reexamine their personal definition of success (section 7.5.2). For some, the significance of leisure and/or location assumed a higher priority, which provides insight to the second and third research questions.

7.5.1 Dissatisfaction

Necessity is an established push factor for entrepreneurs, especially in locations where access to resources is constrained (Hessels et al., 2008). While necessity operated as a push factor for a minority of DEs, dissatisfaction with the corporate environment (see section 2.5.1; Brockhaus, 1982), combined with new opportunities, more frequently factored into their decision to create a business, as presented in the research findings (section 6.5.1). The reasons for dissatisfaction were varied and included micro-management, corporate politics and lack of focus on results. There were also research participants who articulated a sense of wasting their potential and/or lack of corporate fit. This is aligned with Cohen and Mallon's (1999) research indicating that inconsistency between an organisation's values and an individual's values is a reason for leaving employment. Would-be entrepreneurs may be pushed to start their own ventures where they find the mainstream corporate culture unappealing (Hofstede, Noorderhaven, Thurik, Uhlaner, Wennekers & Wildeman, 2004). Push factors alone were not responsible for DEs leaving the corporate environment. Within DEs' subjective reality, influenced by their environment, an interplay of push and pull factors led to venture creation. These factors are discussed further in section 7.8.

7.5.2 Redefining Success

A number of factors emerged from the data as ways in which DEs were creating their own versions of success. As discussed in the research findings (section 6.5.2), while a minority saw online business as a way to *uncap* their earning potential and even manifest ambitious financial goals, there were other priorities that factored into their choices. These factors included leisure, location and community, time with family, learning and growth and travel and mobility (discussed further in section 7.8). For some participants, business creation provided the opportunity to redefine success. Downshifting (a push factor introduced in section 3.10), provides one example of the ways in which participants were creating their own versions of success.

Entrepreneurial success factors have been traditionally analysed from an economics perspective and associated with an extrinsic need for profit, business growth, success or social status (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004), as discussed in section 2.8. However, for this study's participants, learning and growth and quality of life were common motives. These findings share commonalities with Coulson's (2012) research on entrepreneurs in the creative industries, who created livelihoods in enterprising ways, rather than being motivated by economic factors. Autonomy and temporal flexibility offered strong incentives for this study's participants and such motives may be negatively associated with growth intentions and preferences (Wiklund, Davidsson & Delmar, 2003). Rather than living to work, with commuting and maintaining an expensive lifestyle taking up temporal and energic resources, freedom from the bureaucratic confines of corporate employment opened new possibilities for research participants. Implicit in the findings, many participants appeared to have redefined what success means to them.

For some there was the opportunity to transition from greater material and economic goals to a more minimalistic philosophy (which is also very practical for mobile DEs). Consumerism and satisfying escalating material wants has resulted in increased consumer debt and pressure to work longer hours (Hamilton & Mail, 2003). Research participants referred to "*downshifting*" and "*leaving the rat race*" in order to change their lives (Williams et al., 1989) of which creation of their businesses formed part. The phenomenon of voluntary downshifting refers to a voluntary reduction of working hours, and thus income and material consumption, in order to focus on fulfilling non-material goals such as improved relationships and leisure time (Schor, 2001). Downshifting offers the opportunity to do things in a more leisurely manner (Juniu, 2000) and, in escaping busyness, to experience a more fulfilling life. Many research participants spoke of a new happiness in living in a more self-determining manner. In reflecting on their businesses and lives, creativity, challenge, learning and personal growth formed part of a shared narrative. For many, transforming their lives and downgrading material goals allowed space for alternative perspectives to emerge. This presents a different lens through which to view entrepreneurship, contrary to the dominant discourse which places an emphasis on material motives for entrepreneurship.

Pervading the shift in priorities, and implicit in the narratives of the DEs, was the loss of personal fulfillment in their previous situations. In downshifting, one DE no longer drove a Mercedes, having made the switch to a more economical form of transport. For another DE, hearing his stressed-out, executive clients complain about private school fees and family spending habits, had forced him to question if there was a better way to live. Jackson (2005) posits that the conventional economic view of consumption of goods and services can be

simplified as "an attempt to provide for our individual and (at the aggregate level) collective well-being" (p. 21). Citing rising rates of depression, despite higher standards of living, Jackson (2005) suggests that sustainable consumption, which the downshifting movement supports, offers the double dividend of living better by consuming less, together with reducing environmental impact. For digital entrepreneurs who are mobile, travelling necessitates putting one's material baggage in focus and the action of packing and moving, an assessment of what will be left behind and what belongs with the evolving identity of the DE. For many, this assessment goes beyond the material, which could be part of the reason DEs are so drawn to personal growth.

7.5.3 **Significance of Leisure**

This section explores leisure, as it relates to research participants; in the research findings, participants reported time for family, leisure activities and community engagement as among the ways they exercised their temporal flexibility (section 6.2.3). Bowers (2007) refers to the digital age as enabling a constant stream of communication, multi-tasking and expectation to flood daily life, leaving little room for a leisurely life. Juniu (2000) postulates that while in modern times leisure is often viewed as secondary to work, in ancient Greek society leisure was viewed as required time for one "to engage in intellectual, aesthetic, and civic endeavours" (p. 69). As discussed in section 2.5.1, research has shown increasing importance being placed on leisure (Pyöriä et al., 2017; Twenge et al., 2010) and leisure can enhance engagement, well-being and creativity (Buzzanell & Lucas, 2013). Research participant leisure activities included surfing, mountain biking, boating, fishing and dancing. While some participants appeared to prioritise work, others prioritised leisure by organising work around leisure, as impacted by weather conditions (i.e. surfing, boating), class activities (i.e. yoga, salsa dancing), travel and family schedules. As reported, many DEs indicated that work was their preferred use of time, making the distinction between work and leisure more obscure. Leisure can be conceived in many ways, including as empty time to be filled with activities of perceived value (Bowers, 2007) or as contributing to one's identity (Waring, 2008).

It appears that in providing opportunities to redefine their relationship with leisure, digital technologies can also provide DEs with some respite from their work commitments, allowing them to contemplate alternate choices. As discussed, learning and growth emerged from the data as important for DEs, whether achieved through knowledge or practice, work or leisure. The opportunity to fully engage with one's own growth is a significant form of freedom. Participants could also choose, and some reported doing so, to spend time bingeing Netflix,

scrolling social media or engaging in other less productive uses of time (this is explored further in section 7.10). Significantly, they had the flexibility to choose when they spent time on these activities and the priority such activities were given, in relation to work and other pursuits.

7.6 Home and Away

Theme	RQ 1 - Motivations	RQ 2 - Balance	RQ 3 - Location
Home and Away	Spatial flexibility, location, community and belonging	Location and spatial flexibility impacting work and life	Travel and mobility, location variables, community

> I firmly believe that when it comes to choosing where you live community is the
> most important thing. (Lorna, Aus)

Among the potential freedoms that exist for DEs, is spatial freedom and the flexibility to choose between geographical stability or mobility. While travel and mobility offer inspiration and adventure (discussed in section 7.6.1), home and community provide moorings (7.6.3). Di Domenico et al. (2014) posit that the taxonomy of mobility is dependent on how one views the relationship between mobility and home. As presented in the research findings (section 6.6) the most significant difference between the two case studies was that the majority of participants in the Australian case study were settled, whereas participants of the Bali case study were experiencing geographical freedom and mobility. Emergent ways of working, including location independent working and digital nomadism are becoming more feasible and gaining popularity (Müller, 2016; Reichenberger, 2018). The two case studies in this research project provide unique perspectives on the experience of being mobile (section 7.6.1) and alternately what draws one to remain in one location (section 7.6.3). Also discussed, are the locational factors that emerged from the data as significant to study participants (section 7.6.2) and the concept of location to fit task orientation (section 7.6.4).

7.6.1 Travel and Mobility

The ability to work from anywhere, facilitated by ICTs, is a topic of emergent research (Harmer & Pauleen, 2012; Pauleen et al., 2015; Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2017). The flexibility to choose the location in which to work and live, was an important motivational factor for research participants, whether the desire to leave the "*rat race*", settle in a certain location (as was the case for most Australian case participants), or to live more nomadically and experience a

variety of places (largely Bali case participants). As discussed in section 3.10.1, it appears that locational factors can act as either push and/or pull forces. As presented in chapter two, nomadic living and working is discussed in literature exploring the phenomenon of the digital nomad (Makimoto & Manners, 1997; Muller, 2016; Reichenberger, 2018; Thompson, 2019). Many Bali based research participants self-identified as digital nomads (defined in section 2.10) and aspired to a highly mobile way of life.

Participants expressed that a highly attractive aspect of online business was the potential to be location independent, even for those DEs who had been based in a single location for many years. However, the ability to be truly location independent is affected by a multitude of factors. Elements of the business itself, including the location of clients and staff, may have an impact on business mobility. Lifestyle aspects of the location, including affordability and quality of life, dictate whether basing oneself in a certain location is sustainable. Several research participants mentioned the relative cost of living in Bali, as opposed to more expensive destinations, including New York and Singapore, with finances impacting one's true mobility or lack thereof.

Most research participants expressed that travel was important to them (section 6.6.1) regardless of where they were based. New destinations and experiences are linked with learning and growth (Reichenberger, 2018) and by developing their businesses in non-familiar locations, some DEs had the opportunity to further accelerate their learning. For those participants working from a more permanent base (settled), alternative destinations beckoned to varying degrees. For grounded participants, travel aspirations included exploring Australia in a camper van, visiting family and friends overseas, discovering somewhere new and living in another country for an extended period. There were also those who sought to regularly travel between the same few destinations routinely (discussed in section 7.6.4). Like the participants of Reichenberger's (2018) study, the findings revealed that travelling was perceived as a form of freedom, meshed with autonomy and independence. How and where DEs exercised their spatial freedom was of significant interest and the interplay of work, lifestyle and community factors that drew them to place are explored further in the following section.

7.6.2 **Locational Variables**

As new opportunities to combine work with leisure and travel continue to evolve, of significant interest is what will attract workers, including DEs, to a specific place. As discussed in section

2.6, there a positive link between entrepreneurial activity and economic growth (Faggio & Silva, 2014; Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004; Mair & Marti, 2009; Schumpeter, 1934). Entrepreneurship also contributes to building culture, improving quality of life (Crnogaj et al., 2014) and strengthening connections (Mottiar et al., 2018). While the contribution of DEs specifically, to the areas they inhabit, is an area for future research (section 8.6), for policy makers seeking to attract DEs to those locations, the findings revealed key work, lifestyle and community factors considered important by participants in relation to their location. These factors are outlined in Table 7.3 and discussed in this section.

Table 7.3 Work, Lifestyle and Community Factors impacting Digital Entrepreneurs

Significant Locational Factors for Digital Entrepreneurs		
Work	**Lifestyle**	**Community**
ICT Infrastructure and Wi-Fi	Quality of life	Family members/ friends
Time-zone	Governance and safety	History
Accessibility/transport	Affordability	Culture and diversity
Office/Skype space	Climate	Work-lifestyle communities
Local opportunity	Infrastructure	Online communities
	Leisure and entertainment	

Work Factors

The majority of DEs expressed that their online business allowed them the ability to be able to work from anywhere (section 6.5.3), with the internet providing access to global markets (Zaheer et al., 2019). However, certain work, lifestyle and community factors were fundamental in their ability to live and work from a particular location. In relation to work and the operation of their business(es) DEs considered the factors in Table 7.4 as important to varying degrees.

Table 7.4 Work Factors impacting Digital Entrepreneurs

Significant Work Factors for Digital Entrepreneurs
ICT Infrastructure and Wi-Fi
Time-zone
Accessibility/transport
Office/Skype Space
Local Opportunity

As discussed in the research findings, a primary consideration for participants was the availability of ICT and Wi-Fi, as necessary to perform tasks associated with their business (Harmer & Pauleen, 2012; Muller, 2016). Thite (2011) considers that regions around the world have started to embrace the "smart cities" concept to develop a competitive advantage based on their ability to harness people and resources and turn innovative ideas into commercial

offerings (p. 624). Giffinger, Haindlmaier and Kramar (2010) discuss the smart characteristics of a competitive economy as including entrepreneurship, international embeddedness and the ability to transform, with the availability of ICT infrastructure identified as a key consideration. Research participants required fast download speeds for activities such as uploading videos to the internet. NomadList is a popular online community forum for remote workers that ranks the best cities to live and work remotely, with cities awarded a nomad score based on a range of factors, one of which is internet speed (Levels, 2014).

Time zone is an important consideration for research participants, who needed to be able to communicate with customers and staff based in other locations. Managing the expectations of clients, customers and staff was central to business operations. A significant consideration is that the majority of research participants were able to manage these relationships remotely. Only a small number of research participants perceived that the nature of their businesses necessitated a face to face relationship with certain stakeholders. For example, one Australian case participant expressed that the business to business relationships she maintains with local suppliers are integral to the success of her venture, which has a national and international customer base. Time zone was also revealed to be a lifestyle enabler as discussed in section 7.2.2.

Participants discussed the importance of access to an international airport, as well as affordable local transport options. Local and international accessibility, together with sustainable, innovative and safe transport systems have also been identified as characteristics of smart cities (Giffinger et al., 2010). As discussed in section 7.4.1, coworking spaces served a variety of functions for research participants and provided access to learning and support, a finding supported by the literature (Bouncken & Reuschl, 2018; Johns & Gratton, 2013). Coworking spaces offered video chat rooms, private offices, and general work areas and were particularly well utilised by Bali case participants. By comparison, many Australian case participants were living in their own homes and were able to perform some or all of their work-related tasks from home.

As discussed in the findings (section 6.6.2.1) several research participants mentioned that their location had provided inspiration and assisted them to identify a gap in the market, or alternately, being based in their location had given them an advantage over online competitors. Also significant is that living in a regional location could have certain disadvantages. Several DEs mentioned the limitations of living outside a capital city, in accessing suppliers, attending events and managing staff. However, such issues could be largely overcome with a readiness to travel, video conferencing and/or by managing staff virtually. Participants largely viewed

any challenges presented by their location within the overall context of that location, in view of other benefits (for example, lifestyle benefits).

While language is not included in the factors listed above, it is worth considering. Several participants mentioned that their target customers were located in the English-speaking world. While no one mentioned language as a significant factor in choosing where to base themselves, implicit in the narrative of many DEs was the assumption that English would be widely spoken. This was also found in a study of thirty-eight digital nomads in Spain, all spoke English with twenty-two speaking only English. Thompson (2019) states that many participants "relied on the dominance of English to permeate the countries they visited" (p. 7). English as widely spoken could therefore be an additional factor for DEs speaking only English.

Lifestyle Factors

The lifestyle factors outlined in Table 7.5 were found to be significant, to varying degrees, for participants of both cases in choosing where to base themselves and are the focus of this section.

Table 7.5 Lifestyle Factors impacting Digital Entrepreneurs

Significant Lifestyle Factors for Digital Entrepreneurs
Quality of Life
Governance and Safety
Affordability
Climate
Infrastructure
Leisure and Entertainment

Australian case study participants reported access to health care and education as particularly important. Bali case participants were attracted in part to Bali's affordability (as discussed in section 7.6.1). The NomadList Forum founder suggests the primary factors for individuals wanting to take part in the remote working lifestyle are cost of living and quality of living (Levels, 2014). Quality of living, or smart living is also a consideration for smart cities and identified as including safety, quality housing, education and cultural facilities, and attractiveness of natural conditions (Giffinger et al., 2010).

Quality of life is largely based on individual preferences but there are a number of indicators that appear common throughout the literature including community safety, public transportation, environmental quality, health care and recreation and lifestyle amenities (Donald, 2001), all of which were mentioned by research participants (Table 7.5). Further, the

case locations in which research participants were based are areas rich in natural attractions and lifestyle benefits, as presented in section 5.2. These areas are also popular tourism destinations and researchers posit that the aesthetic qualities of a destination play a key factor in attracting tourists (Baggio & Moretti, 2018); attractiveness to tourists is also a smart city consideration (Giffinger et al., 2010). An area's reputation with tourists can provide an indication of its desirability as a lifestyle location, and as well as Bali, Vietnam, Medellin and Cambodia have become hot spots for digital nomads (Thompson, 2019). Prior to arriving, many Bali case participants had heard about its tourism appeal and start-up ecosystem through media or friends who had been there.

Community Factors

As discussed in section 2.10, networks, communities and places play a pivotal role in providing the context for entrepreneurship (McKeever et al., 2015). The community factors outlined in Table 7.6 were particularly significant for Australian case participants. However, as mentioned in the previous section, access to a community (i.e. through a coworking space) was important for Bali case participants.

Table 7.6 Community Factors impacting Digital Entrepreneurs

Significant Community Factors for Digital Entrepreneurs
Family members/ friends
History
Culture and diversity
Work-lifestyle communities
Online communities

According to SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2000), relatedness is a primary human need (discussed in section 3.7.3). Relatedness is the need for connectedness, satisfying personal relationships and feeling part of a community (Kaplan & Madjar, 2015). For Australian case participants, family and friends and shared history with a location had often drawn participants to a location and/or kept them there. In contrast, the more mobile participants who were part of the Bali case were living away from family, usually single, and had more transient community connections. These concepts are discussed further in the following section. As presented in section 6.9 of the findings, loneliness and forming connections with people was often challenging for DEs, particularly Bali case participants.

Rus and Orel (2015) refer to community as a warm place that offers protection from outside threats, with members who are willing to listen, share and offer assistance. Social cohesion is a significant community feature (Donald, 2001) and both physical and online communities

served valuable roles in creating a sense of inclusion and belonging in participants (section 6.6.2). In this study, physical and online communities had a tendency to overlap and spill into each other. Participants mentioned that Facebook groups and online forums for like-minded people (other DEs or digital nomads) were a valued way to connect with others. Coworking spaces also had social network groups, which provided alternate ways for members to share and connect. For participants of the Australian case study, Facebook and Meetup groups provided a way for them to connect with other DEs in their area; these connections often spread into the physical realm or vice versa. Social media also provided a way for DEs to connect with those in their home countries or other family and friends based internationally. Similarly, participants of Paris' (2012) study used ICTs and social media platforms to retain a sense of connection within existing social networks while travelling. A sense of connection to home and family was significant for DEs in this study, loneliness can be a challenge for DEs and findings revealed that social media and ICTs can help bridge the distance (discussed in section 7.9).

For travelling DEs, coworking spaces served a particularly valuable role in providing a sense of community and a forum for learning and connection (discussed in section 7.4.1). Findings revealed that, while Bali coworking communities consisted largely of Western born, English speakers, the local population and landscape offered culture and diversity. Bali has a reputation for its friendly people and rich cultural landscape (Hakim et al., 2009). Many Bali based DEs were on return visits and some had established local connections with Bali's people and environment. In relation to digital nomads, researchers state that variation in contexts provided by travelling encourages them to accept and value diversity (Kong, Schlagwein & Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2019), as was also found to be the case with DEs based in Bali.

As presented in chapter three, community contribution is a dimension of entrepreneurial motivation postulated by Stephan et al. (2015). Community contribution (Jayawarna et al., 2013) may serve relatedness needs (aspect of BPNT, Deci & Ryan, 1985) and act as a pull factor for DEs. Many study participants, particularly those more settled DEs, actively contributed to their local community (for example, through committee or board positions and/or Chambers of Commerce). In both cases there were also participants who valued spending time volunteering or otherwise assisting in their local communities (discussed in section 6.5.2). The contribution of DEs to location, economically and in other respects, is an area for future research (section 8.6).

7.6.3 **Settling**

This section discusses the concept of settling, or remaining in a location for an extended period, despite potential location independence. The most important difference between participants in the two case studies was their business and life stages (discussed in section 7.2.3). As noted previously, most of the participants based in Australia were relatively settled, whereas those in Bali were living away from their home country on a temporary basis. This is where a contrast in perspectives became apparent; many participants of the Australian case study had children living with them, their own homes, relatively diverse community connections and strong ties to their location. Bali-based participants had differing family circumstances to many Australian case study participants; they either did not have children (yet) or their children had grown up and left home. Only one participant with young children was part of the Bali case study and he and his family have since returned to Australia and become more solidly based.

Relatedness, discussed in the preceding section, is a pillar of Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT), a sub-theory of SDT (Deci & Ryan 2000) and can also act as a pull factor (community and social motivations). As discussed in section 7.6.1, travel and geographical freedom held appeal for the majority of research participants. Makimoto and Manners (1997) suggest that new technologies and mass transportation networks will return humans, in general, to a more nomadic way of life. While humans have an increasing degree of spatial flexibility, the research findings (section 6.6) present an alternate desire. While travel and mobility have appeal, there are important reasons people seek a base to call home. Family and community created a sense of belonging that encouraged some DEs to stay and even put down roots. The desire to remain in a certain place can be an incentive to create a business in order to remain, as is reported to be the case for lifestyle entrepreneurs (Marchant & Mottiar, 2011; Marcketti et al., 2006; Williams et al., 1989). As presented in section 2.9, the phenomenon of lifestyle entrepreneurship examines living in a particular location as an incentive to entrepreneurship. Previous studies on lifestyle entrepreneurs focus on tourism entrepreneurs and touch on only a small portion of occupations, industries and business types (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Marchant & Mottiar, 2011; Marcketti et al., 2006; Williams et al., 1989). This study found that digital entrepreneurship can be a vehicle for individuals who are motived for lifestyle reasons to live in a particular area.

Over the course of history, humans have only spent a few millennia as settlers (Makimoto & Manners, 1997) but even nomadic tribes have had a connection to place. For example, Aboriginal people have a deep spiritual sense of belonging to the land to which their family is connected (Rigsby, 1999). Humans are grounded in family lineage, their own history and that

of loved ones, and personal connections. Researchers discuss one's own home as symbolic of material and social security and intertwined with an individual's self-identity; they discuss "settling down" by remaining in a fixed place as facilitating the processes of starting a family and establishing a home (Hoolachan, McKee, Moore & Soaita, 2017, p. 68). For participants of the Australian case, among the reasons for business creation for many, was a desire to remain or move to a certain area. Some had chosen a particular area as a place to raise their families, with connections to an area including the nature and location of a partner's work, children's schooling, family history and past holidays.

The findings revealed that entrepreneurship can be a lonely journey (discussed further in section 7.9), particularly when one is working online. For participants rooted in community, the need for belonging could be satisfied by roles outside the entrepreneurial role (Shepherd & Haynie, 2009). Many Australian based DEs found this through their role as a parent or family member, sporting team member, local community member or other group. For participants based in Bali, coworking hubs and share accommodation (section 6.4.2) provided a chance to connect with others. Participants also found a sense of community through endeavours such as surfing, dancing, the local gym, and volunteering.

7.6.4 Location to fit Task Orientation

A novel finding of this research is the concept of utilising spatial flexibility to align task orientation with location. DEs have the ability to move between locations depending on the task they are working on and/or the aspect of themselves they would like to tap into. The research findings revealed DEs attitudes in relation to this concept (section 6.6.4), which is shown diagrammatically in Figure 7.2. The findings revealed that several DEs moved between two or more locations, depending on the task they were working on, or their needs at that time. One DE articulated spending time in Bali to reflect and plan and time in Queensland to achieve goals. While the tasks and locations (depicted in Figure 7.2) would be subjective, the diagram illustrates how a DE may orient themselves and their tasks in relation to their location. In each location the DE can potentially build networks and connect with different communities further enhancing task related synergies. The location to fit the task concept could have broader implications in relation to the emerging world of work and the office(s) of the future, though further research is needed to determine its scope and applicability (discussed in section 8.6).
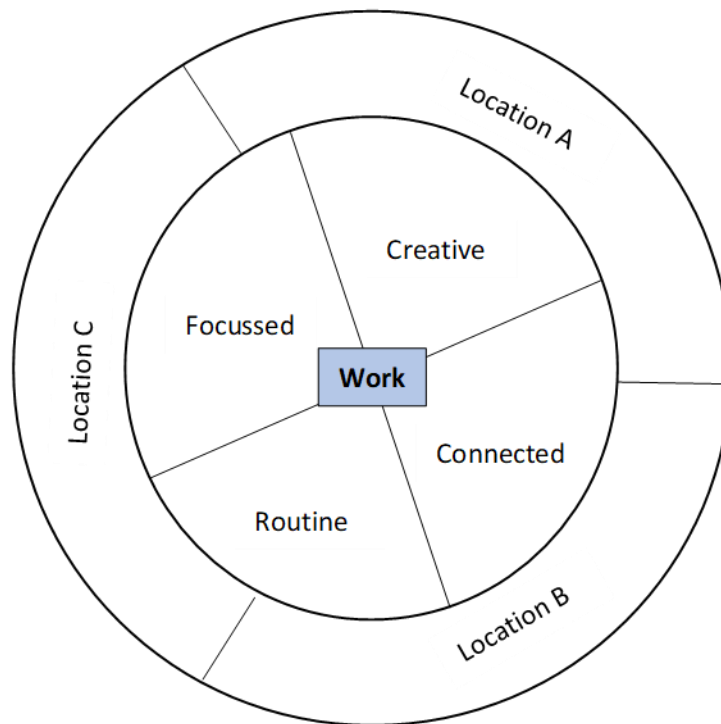
Figure 7.2 Location to fit Task Orientation

As discussed in section 2.1, workers have envisioned a future of globalisation and digitisation bringing more autonomy, increased flexibility and work patterns organised to fit a desired lifestyle (Davis & Blass 2007). Different locations provide different experiences and the opportunity to interact with different communities, as was reported by one research participant, who also made room for new travel experiences in between. The office of the future is not restricted to a particular time or space, nor is it limited to a single domain. Studies show that workplace wellbeing and productivity are influenced by workplace setting (Hills & Levy, 2014) and restrictions of time, space and distance can be overcome utilising internet technology (Lee et al., 2012). Workers of the future (including DEs) may choose to inhabit a multitude of spaces, in different geographical locations, depending on the project they are working on and the aspects of self they want to encourage to emerge.

7.7 DE Motivations – Push-Pull Model

> I was not directed and there was frustration…I shifted from negative factors into positive when I read about location independence. I was ready for something new and wanted professional development. (Carl, Aus)

This chapter re-visits literature relevant to the Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship which was introduced in chapter 6 and addresses the first research question. The findings revealed the predominant push and pull factors underlying digital business creation, which were also evident in the five key themes discussed earlier in this chapter. Motivational theory framed this research and this section details the literature relevant to each of the push and pull factors identified. There is rarely a single motive for entrepreneurial activity, with such activity often resulting from a simultaneous overlapping combination of motives and circumstances (Radović-Marković, 2013). As discussed in section 2.8, the decision to start a business can be result from a complex mix of values, desires, goals and motives (Bredvold & Skalen, 2016). The digital landscape provides a conduit for DEs' motivational energy and together with the broader economic and sociocultural environment, these factors are combined in the Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship.

7.7.1 **Push Factors**

Table 7.7 presents the key factors which emerged from the research findings (section 6.7.1) as operating to push research participants toward entrepreneurship.

Table 7.7 Push Factors in Digital Business Creation

Push Factor	Description and relevant literature
Dissatisfaction (with corporate environment, lifestyle or location)	Dissatisfaction with previous working arrangement (Brockhaus, 1982; Cohen & Mallon, 1999; Hofstede et al., 2004; Segal et al., 2005; Stephan et al., 2015), Downshifting (Williams et al., 1989)
Lack of autonomy	Autonomy as a push motivation, for example where an individual feels dominated at work and takes self-determined action as a result (Giacomin et al., 2007)
Feeling of wasted potential	Lack of learning and growth (Mitchell, 2004; Stephan et al., 2015)
Lack of work-life balance	Work-life imbalance as a result of workplace dissatisfaction (Hughes & Bozionelos, 2007)
Capped earning potential	Restriction in relation to achievement of financial goals, Achievement theory (McClelland, 1961)
Necessity	Necessity i.e. lack of employment options (Cheung, 2014; Hessels et. al, 2008; Stephan et al., 2015), especially in locations where access to resources is constrained (Hessels et al., 2008)

The major push factor for DEs was dissatisfaction with the corporate environment. Dissatisfaction with previous working arrangement is a well-established motivational driver or push factor (Brockhaus, 1982; Cohen & Mallon, 1999; Hofstede et al., 2004; Segal et al., 2005; Stephan et al., 2015). Dissatisfaction with corporate bureaucracy, micro-management and

their lifestyle and/or location (i.e. downshifting), were among the push factors articulated by participants. Another identified push factor was necessity (Cheung, 2014; Hessels et. al, 2008; Stephan et al., 2015); several DEs had been made redundant, had employment contracts that were ending or there was a lack of desirable employment options in their preferred location. Necessity is also a push factor, particularly in locations where access to resources is limited (Hessels et al., 2008). Other push motivators included lack of autonomy (Giacomin et al., 2007), work-life imbalance (Hughes & Bozionelos, 2007), capped earnings and a feeling of wasted potential. These push factors created a sense of dis-ease in the majority of research participants propelling them to search for new opportunities and providing them with the willingness to take action in order to facilitate change (Baumeister, 2016).

7.7.2 **Pull Factors**

Table 7.8 presents the key factors which emerged from the research findings (section 6.7.2) as operating to pull research participants toward entrepreneurship.

Table 7.8 Pull Factors in Digital Business Creation

Pull Factors	Description and relevant literature
Autonomy	Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), Push-Pull Theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986), Independence and autonomy (Stephan et al., 2015), Professional freedom (Reichenberger, 2018)
Temporal flexibility	A form of autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Hessels et al., 2008; Stephan et al., 2015; Van Gelderen, 2016), Professional freedom (Reichenberger, 2018)
Accelerated learning and growth	Autonomy, learning and growth, challenge using entrepreneurship to fulfil the desire for personal development (Mitchell, 2004; Stephan et al., 2015)
Financial self-sufficiency	Financial independence and security (Segal et al., 2005), income security and financial success; desire for financial rewards from entrepreneurship (McClelland, 1961; Stephan et al., 2015)
Spatial flexibility	A form of autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Hessels et al., 2008; Stephan et al., 2015; Van Gelderen, 2016), Spatial freedom (Reichenberger, 2018)
Lifestyle factors	Lifestyle entrepreneurship - motivations centred on a desired lifestyle, often linked to location (Marchant & Mottiar, 2011; Marcketti et al., 2006; Williams et al., 1989)
Community and family	Relatedness (Kaplan & Madjar, 2015), Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), Community and social motivations (Stephan et al., 2015).

The primary pull factor was found to be autonomy, with temporal and spatial autonomy of particular relevance. Autonomy is a well-established motivational factor for entrepreneurs as

recognised in Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and Push-Pull Theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986). Independence and autonomy also factor as a primary entrepreneurial motivator in recent studies (Stephan et al., 2015), including a study of digital nomads (Reichenberger, 2018). Temporal autonomy, or self-direction in the use of their time, was a significant motive for DEs and could be realised through their businesses. For example, the virtual shop front and automation software allowed many DEs to set their own schedules (discussed in section 7.7.3). As discussed in section 7.2.1, participants utilised their temporal flexibility to make time for preferred activities including family commitments, leisure activities and helping in their communities. For many DEs, it was not the *amount* of time away from work that was significant but the choice in *when* to take that time. This allowed DEs to plan their lives factoring in concerns such as family schedules, community activities, weather conditions, class timetables and individual work preferences (discussed further in response to research question two).

The perception of wasted potential, intertwined with the desire for autonomy and learning and growth, often appeared as push-pull factors underlying the entrepreneurial journey. The learning and growth motive featured highly (Mitchell, 2004; Stephan et al., 2015) and, fuelled by temporal autonomy on starting their businesses, participants were able to accelerate such by mastering unfamiliar tasks, staying abreast of constant changes in a dynamic digital environment and/or moving countries. Travel can provide inspiration for DEs and even be a catalyst for entrepreneurship (Marchant & Mottiar, 2011). A widely held view of DEs was that if their business disappeared, they would create another business, even if they did not need the income. The process of creating their business appeared to be at least as important as any anticipated outcome, with the opportunity to be creative and face and overcome challenges, central to digital business creation and part of learning and growth. According to Ryan and Deci (2000a) the tendency to seek challenges, extend one's capabilities, and learn and grow are part of the being human and many DEs were able to meet these needs through their businesses. The dynamic virtual marketplace, an environment of continual change (Hull et al., 2007), required DEs to constantly develop their skills in order to keep pace. Personal growth was seen by many as integral to business growth, with personal evolution and overcoming individual blocks and limitations, viewed as part of the entrepreneurial journey.

Implicit in the narrative of many participants was enjoyment of their work indicating that many participants were intrinsically motivated (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Ryan et al., 2008). For many, work itself was their preferred activity, such was their intrinsic motivation and engagement with their business, with work becoming indistinguishable from leisure (Lewis, 2003). For some, there was little reported separation between work and other life domains and thus integration between their work and personal lives (section 7.2.2). Some of these integrated DEs reported

feeling in alignment with their business and this congruence provided them with a sense of meaning and fulfillment. This is consistent with Reichenberger's (2018) findings where leisure and work are viewed as equally contributing to self-actualisation and fulfilment.

Financial security and the desire for financial rewards are widely recognised entrepreneurial incentives (Segal et al., 2005; Stephan et al., 2015), integral to Achievement Theory (McClelland, 1961). While uncapped earning potential was mentioned as a pull factor for some DEs, many had a holistic perspective of the rewards of digital business, with lifestyle and location factored into the equation. For many DEs, their economic goal for the foreseeable future was to be financially self-sufficient and able to enjoy their preferred lifestyle funded by the business (as discussed in section 7.5.2). Most had a constrained approach to business growth, in that they wanted the business to grow but only to the extent that it would not negatively impact their lifestyle. As posited in the literature (section 2.9), in considering the dichotomy between lifestyle and commercial goals, it is often a complex mix of factors that drive an individual to pursue entrepreneurship (Bredvold & Skalen, 2016; Morrison 2006). Some research participants had downsized their economic goals in order to exit corporate employment, with economics viewed as just one facet (albeit an important one) of the work, lifestyle, location fusion as discussed in section 7.5.2.

Spatial flexibility was also an important pull factor for most research participants, whether the desire to be based in a certain location, or to travel widely and utilise their geographical freedom. This is where the most significant difference between the two case studies became evident. As discussed previously, for the majority of participants of the Australian case study, the business allowed them the flexibility to base themselves in a particular location, enjoy the lifestyle benefits of that location (Marchant & Mottiar, 2011; Marcketti et al., 2006; Williams et al., 1989) and for many raise their families there. Conversely, for Bali case study participants, digital business provided them with the mobility to combine work with travel and new experiences, factors which have also been found to appeal to digital nomads (Makimoto & Manners, 1997; Muller, 2016; Reichenberger, 2018; Thompson, 2019).

There were also those who sought a combination of stability and mobility, discussed in section 7.6.4. Spatial flexibility also allowed DEs freedom to manage their business while reducing their lifestyle costs. Many Bali case participants had done this and as well as reduced living costs were able to harness learning and collaboration opportunities through local coworking hubs. The desire to spend time with family and wider community also operated as pull factors as discussed in the previous section (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Kaplan & Madjar, 2015; Stephan et al., 2015).

7.7.3 **The Digital Landscape**

As discussed in the research findings (section 6.7.3), the digital landscape provided opportunities for DEs to realise their subjective motivations. The digital landscape provided opportunities not only for a new way of working but for a different lifestyle. As posited by Anderson (2013), in relation to the Push-Pull framework, opportunity is a meeting of both self and circumstance. In this study the digital landscape is the conduit through which DEs could channel their entrepreneurial energy in a more fulfilling direction. While push factors had often been a precursor, pushing many DEs to leave paid employment, it was the perception of the new opportunities available in the digital marketplace that pulled them into their new endeavours. Some participants had often recognised a gap in the market for certain digital products and/or services. Others had recognised the opportunity to combine work and lifestyle goals through digital business; whether to work from home, not be tied to one place, live in their desired location, and/or combine work and travel. Broadly, the findings of this study reveal two main ways that digital business differs from traditional business:

1. Digital tools and platforms provide novel ways to create and operate a business, with the internet providing access to global customer markets; and
2. Digital business facilitates temporal and spatial flexibility for the digital business owner/operator.

The differences between digital and traditional business are further segmented by Hull et al. (2007), as presented in section 2.7. The findings of this study support the majority Hull et al.'s propositions, as outlined in the table below:

Table 7.9 Digital Landscape

Digital Landscape Factors	Description and relevant literature
Ease of entry	Refers to the ease in setting up a digital business and lower barriers to entry (Schjoedt & Shaver, 2007; Hull et al., 2007) refer to the time required to create a commercial website
Dynamic environment	Ease of modification and innovation of goods (Hull et al., 2007) and services. Reduced bureaucracy and lower cultural barriers (Slevin & Covin, 1998)
Digital automation	Hull et al. (2007) refer to this category as *digital service*, which may involve simply running an automated routine
Digital manufacturing and distribution	Hull et al. (2007) separate this into ease of manufacturing and storage and ease of distribution in the digital marketplace. While they refer to products, this can also apply to services (i.e.. online coaching)
Access to global market	Access to global markets (Zaheer et al., 2019)

Digital workplace	Ability to have employees and partnerships worldwide (Hull et al., 2007); this factor extends to networks and coworking

The digital landscape, presented in table 7.9, provided ease of entry into business for many research participants (Schjoedt & Shaver, 2007) but findings revealed that a competitive online environment often entailed the need to adapt continuously in order to stay relevant. Hair, Wetsch, Hull, Perotti and Hung (2012) point out that while digital entrepreneurship may be relatively easy to get into, increased competition can make it harder to be successful. With low barriers to entry, it is not difficult to create a product or service offering online but it may be challenging to translate this into an income. The dynamic digital environment allowed DEs to modify their offerings quickly and easily based on customer feedback. Products and services can be brought to market intentionally incomplete and continue to evolve, based on consumer input, after market introduction.

Automation software, making some tasks run digitally (Hull et al., 2007), was used by many DEs to manage routine customer enquiries and/or other business operation tasks. Connecting with customers appears to be key in the digital age; Hair et al. (2012) state that market orientation utilising computer-mediated communication (CMC) is essential for any digital entrepreneur who does not want to become "electronic road kill on the information superhighway" (2012, p. 11). Some DEs chose to outsource certain functions they did not enjoy (for example website maintenance), allowing them to further leverage their time. Third party platforms provided a forum for outsourcing (Goncalves et al., 2017) and coworking spaces a place for trading skills.

Digital manufacturing and storage provided the ability for DEs to outsource stock production and control, with the internet facilitating digital distribution of goods and services and access to global markets (Zaheer et al., 2019). A feature of the digital workplace is that it provides opportunities to collaborate with team members in different international locations. DEs were able to connect with staff, clients and partners internationally using online tools, social media and via videoconferencing. Nambisan (2017) asserts that emerging digital infrastructures, including social media platforms, have created new opportunities in terms of entrepreneurial agency and allow for more collective endeavours.

7.7.4 Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship

The subjective experiences of participants offered a rich tapestry of motives underpinning their decisions to create an online business. Push-Pull Theory was presented in chapter three as

the dominant theory framing this research. The findings in chapter six revealed, that for many research participants, both push and pull factors operated in their decision to start a business. Stephan et al. (2015) discuss approach (pull equivalent) and avoidance (push equivalent) motivation as operating simultaneously. They highlight that no goal is unambiguously positive in nature. For some research participants, push and pull motives operated simultaneously, as they tested their business idea while remaining in paid employment. For others, push factors dominated prior to digital business creation and then pull factors took over and provided incentive to direct motivational energy into the venture. The combination of push and/or pull factors was contingent on the DE's subjective reality. The digital environment offered both contextual pull, or opportunity, factors and acted as an entrepreneurship enabler through which DEs could harness and direct their motivational energy. Figure 7.3 offers a proposed descriptive framework of the Push-Pull motives, in the context of the digital landscape and broader economic and sociocultural environment. In chapter 2, relevant features of the economic and sociocultural environment were discussed, providing the broader context in which the model operates.
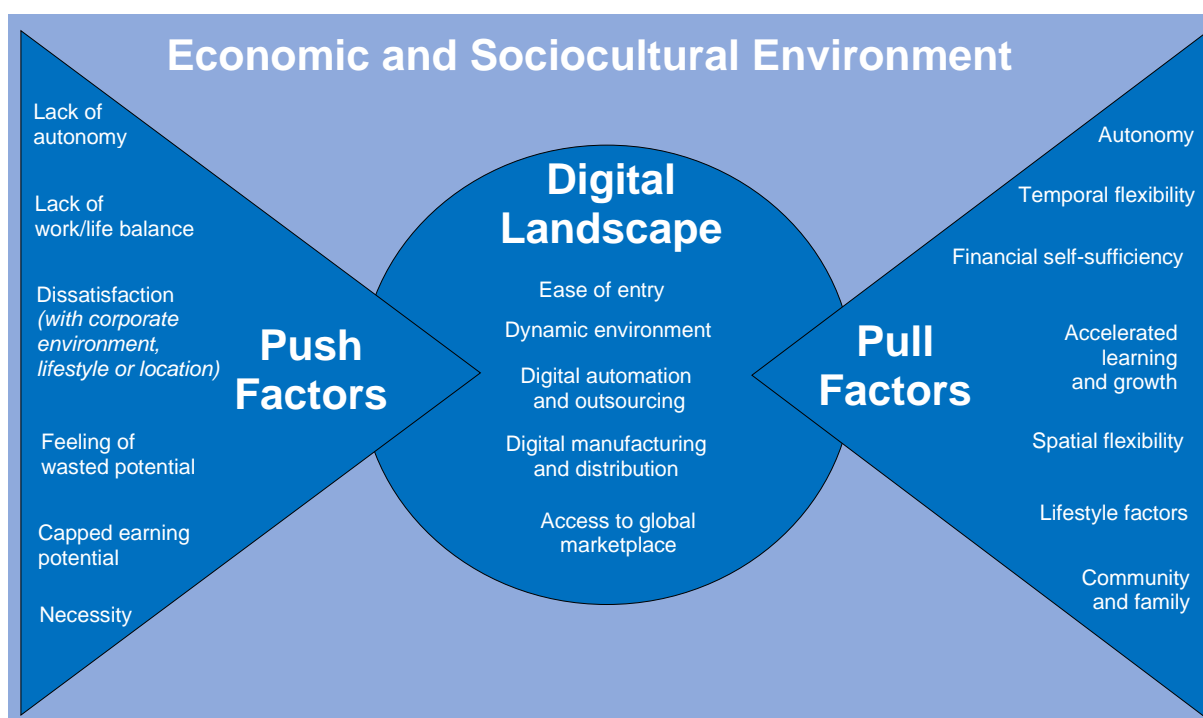
Figure 7.3 Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship

As discussed in chapter three, some studies have indicated that pull factors may provide stronger motivational influence than push factors (Shinnar & Young, 2008; Segal et al., 2005; Yitshaki & Kropp, 2016). Alternatively, Schjoedt and Shaver (2007) posit that the lower barriers to entry in the digital environment create a landscape where "the need for either a pull or a

push might simply be smaller" (p. 747). For the purposes of this research, the strength of individual push-pull factors were not measured. However, findings revealed that the digital landscape acted as an enabler for entrepreneurship and a conduit through which motivational forces could be directed. Researchers postulate that entrepreneurs' motives are complex and can combine opposing factors (Williams & Williams, 2012). Also, worth considering is that entrepreneurial motives change over time and researchers need to take into account these dynamic aspects (Hessels et al., 2008). Longitudinal studies in this area present an avenue for further research, as discussed in section 8.6.

7.8 Defining the Digital Entrepreneur

While the term Digital Entrepreneur is in common use, a widely accepted definition of the term does not exist. Researchers posit that a definition is required to advance this new area of research and its contribution to economic development (Bandera et al., 2016). As discussed in section 2.7, some researchers argue that in view of the challenges in defining entrepreneurship, considering how the individuals perceive themselves is useful in better understanding the entrepreneur and their enterprise (Di Domenico et al., 2014). Working from this premise, this thesis proposes a definition of the term digital entrepreneur drawing on the perceptions of the research participants. This definition takes into account the four factors emerging from the findings in participant narratives (discussed in Section 6.8):

- the need to be entrepreneurial;
- the need to be involved in the creation of the business (DE as founder);
- the predominantly digital nature of their business; and
- the DE has spatial flexibility in the operation of the business.

Each of these factors is considered in the following sections and then a definition of the term DE proposed.

7.8.1 DE as Entrepreneur

Firstly, inherent in the term digital entrepreneur is the requirement to be entrepreneurial. While research participants articulated some differences between traditional entrepreneurs and digital entrepreneurs, these differences pertained to the digital space. The need to be entrepreneurial was still considered requisite to the term DE. This is aligned with Di Domenico et al.'s (2014) view of home-based online business entrepreneurs, they are "first and foremost

entrepreneurs – self-employed, autonomous, self-managing actors using their extant resources, their own homes, to establish and operate their online businesses" (p. 3). In discussing pure digital entrepreneurship Nzembayie, Buckley and Cooney (2019) suggest it shares key attributes entrepreneurship – including uncertainty, a non-linear process and the search for opportunity.

The definition of the term entrepreneur warrants further consideration. As discussed in the literature review (section 2.6) there are alternate approaches to defining an "entrepreneur". A popular definition is someone "undertakes to organise, manage and assume the risks of running a business" (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 2004, p. 5). Kuratko and Hodgetts (2004) suggest a broadening of this definition to include an innovator or developer, who recognises opportunities, converts them into marketable ideas, implements them and realises the rewards of such efforts. In their subjective definitions of a DE, research participants often referred to "innovation" and "creating value", which is aligned with research findings by Gartner (1990) that suggest innovation and value creation are entrepreneurial behaviours. The speed at which information is spread via the internet provides an environment for innovation. Tidd and Bessant (2018) discuss innovators as driven by the ability to see opportunities and take advantage of them, not only in finding new markets but in serving established markets in new ways. Further, information technology facilitates producer-consumer collaboration in the development of new products and innovation can result from users solving their own needs (Füller, Mühlbacher, Matzler & Jawecki, 2009). In wake of digital technology, the term entrepreneur is itself evolving and may grow to encompass value creation through other types of innovative activities (Eftekhari & Bogers, 2015). For the purposes of this research the term entrepreneur is considered to imply an element of innovation.

7.8.2 DE as founder

The creation of a new enterprise was a requirement for participation in this study. The majority of research participants expressed "starting", "creation" or being "founder" of a business as part of their subjective definitions, as discussed in section 6.8.1.2. Low and MacMillan suggest that "entrepreneurship be defined as the creation of new enterprise" (1988, 141). This is supported by research claiming that entrepreneurs are engaged in activities involved in creating organisations (Gartner, 1990). Business creation was part of the study's working definition of the term DE, and a criterion for participant selection, at the commencement of the project. Therefore, the researcher acknowledges this may cause bias in the proposed definition.

While the DE as founder is carried into the emergent definition based on participant responses, it is worth considering the nature of digital technology is impacting entrepreneurial agency. Nambisan (2017) discusses digitisation as causing a shift in entrepreneurial agency from the entrepreneur as founder to entrepreneurial collectives, continuously evolving and encompassing diverse goals, motivations, and capabilities. While outside the scope of this thesis, this broader definition of entrepreneurship warrants further research.

7.8.3 Degree of Digitisation

According to Sussan and Acs (2017) "a significant gap exists in our understanding of entrepreneurship in the digital age" as a there is not a consolidated way for entrepreneurship researchers to study the impact of digitisation (p. 56). Nzembayie, Buckley and Cooney (2019) consider that similarities between entrepreneurship and pure digital entrepreneurship can obscure the uniqueness of the digitalisation of value creation. Within the context of entrepreneurship, the term *digital* refers to the degree of impact the internet and digital technologies have in the creation and operation of the business. This study's findings suggest that key features of the digital landscape are ease of entry, a dynamic environment, digital automation, digital manufacturing and distribution, access to global market and digital workplace. These findings are supported by research conducted by Hull et al. (2007). Researchers take various approaches in discussing the application of digital technologies to entrepreneurship. Some scholars suggest there are three dimensions to be considered in relation to the digital entrepreneur: "(1) physical or digital offering, (2) product or service, and (3) mass produced or custom" (Bandera et al., 2016, p. 5). As discussed in section 2.7, digital entrepreneurship has been defined by Hull et al. as "a subcategory of entrepreneurship in which some or all of what would be physical in a traditional organisation has been digitized" (2007, p. 5). This view of *some* aspects as being digital is shared by Van Horne et al. (2016) who discuss digital entrepreneurship as involving entrepreneurial activities associated with some form of digital activity or involving digital goods or services.

Asghari and Gedeon (2010) refer to the concept of "completely digital entrepreneurship" with information technology and the internet affecting the process of creating and managing the business, as well as impacting all phases of the business value chain through pre-seed, seed, start-up and expansion (p. 70). Alternatively, on the other end of the spectrum, Sussan and Acs (2017) suggest that service providers using third party platforms, such as AirBnB renters and Uber drivers, are business owners using digital technology but not digital entrepreneurs

as they are not doing anything creative. For the purposes of this research, the researcher suggests that the creation of a business, by the DE, is in itself a creative act.

The divergent views of researchers are mirrored by research participants; there is little agreement as to the nature and degree of digitisation. Some research participants considered digitisation of the DE's business as *extreme*, when viewed according to Hull et al.'s (2007) typology of digital entrepreneurship (discussed in section 2.7), with the business being digital in all aspects. Others considered the business as being online to some degree. However, the widely held view of research participants, which is adopted in the definition of a DE, is that the business is conducted predominantly online.

7.8.4 Spatial Flexibility

As discussed previously, the nascent literature posits that a mobile communication device and internet connectivity, can enable individuals to work from virtually anywhere (Pauleen et al., 2015; Muller, 2016). The potential for the DE to be location independent, in relation to their work, factored strongly for most participants of this study. This view fits with researchers' views of online business, with technology allowing entrepreneurs to overcome the spatial and geographic barriers that can restrict business growth (Di Domenico et al., 2014). Emerging business models can minimise any locational advantage (or disadvantage) by overcoming the traditional restrictions of space, time and distance (Lee et al., 2012).

The term digital nomad was discussed in section 2.10 and refers to a new lifestyle in which people have freedom from the constraints of time and location, due to high-speed communication networks and intelligent, mobile devices (Makimoto, 2013). As discussed in section 6.8.1.4, some research participants, who were part of the Bali case study, considered themselves to be digital nomads as well as digital entrepreneurs. There is overlap between digital nomads and digital entrepreneurs; digital nomads are discussed by researchers as freelance workers or remotely based employees, as well as entrepreneurs (Reichenberger, 2018; Thompson, 2019). A key aspect of digital entrepreneurship is having one's own business, as opposed to working as a remote employee or freelancer. In relation to the DEs mobility it appears that it is the potential for location independence that has primary importance. In other words, it is not necessarily the DEs' actual mobility (some DEs are quite settled) but their potential for mobility in relation to the operation of their business that is significant. Those DEs who are highly mobile may also qualify as digital nomads, but the two terms are not interchangeable.

7.8.5 Proposed Definition

Based on the findings of this research and in view of literature in the area, the following definition of a digital entrepreneur is proposed:

> An entrepreneur who creates a business(es) which is predominantly online and can be operated location independently.

This definition takes into account the four elements emerging from discussions with research participants:

- the need to be entrepreneurial;
- the need to be involved in the creation of the business (DE as founder);
- the predominantly digital nature of their business; and
- the DE has spatial flexibility in the operation of the business.

In proposing this definition, the researcher acknowledges certain limitations of this study. The research participants created their own businesses and the sample were located in lifestyle and tourism destinations. These factors give rise to the potential for bias in the proposed definition and additional research is required to validate this finding. Notwithstanding, this is the first definition of the term digital entrepreneur proffered that takes into account DEs' subjective interpretations.

7.9 DE Challenges

Kraus et al. (2019) consider the challenges of digital entrepreneurship as remarkably diverse, in an environment laced with high levels of uncertainty. The findings of this research illustrate the multifaceted nature of participant experiences in creating and operating an online business. In section 6.9, findings revealed the main challenges with living and working as a digital entrepreneur, which are now discussed.

Income insecurity

In terms of challenges encountered, there appear to commonalities between DEs and traditional entrepreneurs, such as worry over income insecurity. Studies have found the loss of a secure wage and financial concerns as stressors for entrepreneurs (McGowan, Redeker, Cooper & Greenan, 2012). Findings revealed that limited capital and cashflow impacted some participants and the sustainability of their businesses, with two DEs forced to abandon their

business. Hair et al. (2012) point out that while digital entrepreneurship may be relatively easy to get into, it can make it harder to be successful, due, in part to increased competition online. It is worth considering that the reduced living costs associated with living in Bali and parts of regional Australia (to a lesser extent) reduced the expenses of many participants.

Time management

DEs' desire for temporal autonomy was a key finding of this research. However, autonomy in relation to the use of time does not guarantee you will spend it wisely. In the research findings, participants spoke about the need to be structured and organised in relation to time spent on the business. Kong et al. (2019) claim, in relation to digital nomads, that there is a need to hold yourself accountable in holiday environments, where there is the lure to engage in recreational behaviour. This was particularly challenging for Bali based DEs. Further, with the excess time facilitated by digital features, such as automation, DEs spoke of the challenge of using time in healthy ways. How to use extra time productively may become an issue more broadly as ICTs continue to advance.

Continual learning

The steep learning curve of entrepreneurship was reported as overwhelming for some DEs. The continual evolution of digital technology can the negate the value of predefined business plan or blueprint (Kraus et al., 2019). As discussed in section 6.3, DEs expressed the need to learn new skills and adapt to the continual updates and changing algorithms that are a feature of the digital environment. Digital entrepreneurs must not only keep pace with advances in technology but also manage the positioning of their products and/or services within what may be a dynamic network, within and across various digital platforms (Srinivasan & Venkatraman, 2018). Research suggests that entrepreneurial ecosystem be viewed from the entrepreneur's perspective and have a focus continual learning (Isenberg, 2010). However, while learning and growth were significant motivators for DEs, the flip side was that learning itself could become a distraction from completing necessary business tasks.

Technology

Vesper (1980) asserts that technology has long influenced business success or failure. Digital entrepreneurs have a particular need to master the technical skills of creating and operating an online business, and more generally seizing the opportunities provided by new technology. For technology users, it can be frustrating when things don't go according to plan, with one research participant referring to his "*computer rage*".

Tax and banking challenges

Diverse taxation and legal regulations can pose exceptional risk for digital businesses operating globally (Kraus et al., 2019). Tax and banking created challenges for research participants, particularly those based in Bali, who suggested that the world is not set up for DEs. As discussed in section 2.3, the evolving digital economy can be place pressure on regulators who are operating within existing labour and taxation frameworks (Maselli et al., 2016), which can make it challenging for DEs hampered by ambiguous regulations and policy obstacles (Sun et al., 2015). There is also potential for DEs to slip the net of conventional regulation (Maynard (2015). As discussed by Isenberg (2008) countries' judicial, political, tax, regulatory, environmental and labour laws and systems vary, which can impact where entrepreneurs choose to base their headquarters and their returns and ability to raise capital. Research participants had chosen to establish their companies in locations including Singapore, Delaware, Australia and Europe, for differing reasons.

Lack of understanding from others

Lack of understanding from family and friends, in relation to the nature of their work and life choices, could be challenging for DEs and exacerbate feelings of loneliness. For DEs working from home this could manifest as others not understanding that the DE was busy with work and therefore not available for other things. DEs living overseas often felt disconnected from friends who had remained corporate employees. Kong et al. (2019) posit that there is a misalignment of values between digital nomads and corporate workers that generates a lack of understanding. The findings of this research indicate this misalignment may also have relevance for DEs.

Loneliness

One of the main challenges identified by participants was loneliness, as discussed in section 6.9. This has also shown to be the case for traditional entrepreneurs, who can suffer from feelings of social isolation (McGowan et al., 2012), particularly in the early stages of their business (Shir et al., 2019). For DEs these feelings may be enhanced, Spinuzzi (2012) states that "the freedom to work anywhere often means isolation, inability to build trust and relationships with others, and sharply restricted opportunities for collaboration and networking" (p. 401).

Despite the challenges outlined in this section, the vast majority of participants expressed satisfaction with their decision to pursue entrepreneurship and claimed they would do it all again. As reported in the literature, entrepreneurship, as opposed to non-entrepreneurial work

options, is associated with higher well-being. (Shir, Nikolaev & Wincent, 2019). Sexton and Bowman (1985) suggest that a tolerance for ambiguity and coping methods can help the entrepreneur to combat loneliness and stress.

7.10 Conclusion

The research findings presented the key themes that emerged from the research data and these were analysed in view of nascent literature in the area and motivational theory which provided the framework for this study. A significant finding of this research was that temporal flexibility is an important motivator for DEs, and three distinct approaches to managing such emerged from the data. Boundary theory and work-life integration strategies were discussed in relation to the differing approaches DEs took to managing their time. Given the global nature of DEs' businesses, the significance of time zone was explored as a business *and lifestyle* enabler for entrepreneurs. For integrated DEs, the interweaving of work and life domains was often an indicator of the enjoyment and sense of purpose they found in their work.

The ability to self-direct the pace and extent of one's own learning and growth was found to be a strong motivator for participants, with the digital landscape providing opportunities for accelerated learning and growth. Travel and new experiences, together with collaboration through coworking hubs were often perceived as sources of learning by DEs, many of whom had left the corporate environment frustrated by a lack of opportunities for growth. Business creation provided DEs with the ability to autonomously direct their energy to those subjective priorities most important to them. Online business provided DEs with the spatial autonomy to choose between geographical stability or mobility. The locational factors, including elements of work, lifestyle and community, that were found to be significant to DEs were presented and discussed. For most DEs, travel was viewed as an important motivator, however there were also sound reasons DEs chose to be more solidly based. This is where the most significant differences between the two case studies were found; differing business and life stages were part of the equation in the rationale for settling over mobility, with community and belongingness playing a key role. Given DEs' spatial freedom, perhaps the new balance is not only between work and other life domains but between home and away. A small minority of DEs are experiencing both; in a new era of work, there is increasing opportunity to choose the location to fit the particular work one needs to engage in or needs one seeks to fill.

This study helps lay theoretical foundations in this new area of research, with the Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship. This model proposes DEs' motivational drivers and incentives, in the context of the digital landscape, and broader economic and sociocultural

environment. As part of the emergent findings, a definition of the term digital entrepreneur was proposed;

> An entrepreneur who creates an online business(es) that can be operated location independently.

This definition takes into account the primary factors considered by DEs in expressing their perceptions of the term: the need to be entrepreneurial, the need to be involved in the creation of the business, the online nature of the business and the DEs potential for location independence. The chapter closed with discussion of the main challenges faced by research participants, in the context of their digital businesses. The findings revealed that there are common challenges for DEs and traditional entrepreneurs, such as income insecurity and financial concerns. Further that the digital environment may intensify certain challenges, including loneliness and time management. The digital landscape also creates new challenges, particularly those related to digital entrepreneurship in an international context, such as tax and banking issues.

Chapter 8 – Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

The aim of this research was to develop original insights into the DE phenomenon. In the preceding chapter, the findings of this research were discussed, framed within the five key themes and presented together with the study's additional findings. This chapter outlines the study's main conclusions and theoretical contributions to knowledge. Implications for practice will also be presented, together with research limitations, delimitations and avenues for further research. This research contributes insight into the motivations of DEs in creating their online businesses and more holistically, the interplay of work, lifestyle and location in the lives of DEs. Based on the research findings, this chapter will explicitly address the research questions introduced in chapter one:

> *Research Question 1:* What motivates an individual to pursue an online business?
> *Research Question 2:* How do DEs balance their work and lifestyle domains?
> *Research Question 3:* How does location play a role in the work and life of DEs?

The findings of this study provide evidence of digital entrepreneurship as a significant new area for research, with digital entrepreneurship providing new opportunities for business creation and operation. While there are similarities between DEs and traditional entrepreneurs (as discussed in section 7.8.1), the potential for temporal and spatial flexibility that online business offers, allows DEs to combine work and lifestyle in alternate ways and locations. The digital nature of their businesses provides a context for business ownership yet to be adequately addressed within the literature. This chapter outlines how this study contributes original understanding to the DE phenomenon and helps lay theoretical foundations in the field.

The findings relevant to research question one provide insight into DEs' motivations in creating their businesses and a model of digital entrepreneurship is proposed in which push-pull factors and the digital landscape converge (section 8.2.1). The findings in relation to research question two provide insight into how DEs balance work with other domains in view of the temporal flexibility possible for online business owners (section 8.2.2). Insight into the role of location for DEs, who have potential location independence in the creation and operation of their businesses, is presented in response to research question three (section 8.2.3). Based on the findings, this study offers theoretical contributions (section 8.3), as well as practical

implications for identified stakeholders including policy makers in regional areas and tourist areas, coworking hub operators and potential DEs (section 8.4).

The study has a number of limitations and delimitations resulting from the methodological approach and theoretical framework employed and the research scope, which are outlined in section 8.5. A further aim of this exploratory research was to identify possible avenues for future research. As a result of the findings, multiple related avenues for further research have been identified and are presented in section 8.6. The thesis concludes with a final summary (section 8.7).

8.2 Addressing the Research Questions

This section explicitly addresses the research questions and provides insights into DEs' motivations in the creation of their online businesses. While question one looks specifically at DE motivations, questions two and three explore lifestyle and location and the wider impact of such on DEs and their businesses.

### 8.2.1 Research Question 1 – DE Motivations

Research Question 1: What motivates an individual to pursue an online business?

Theme	Time as currency	The Integrated Entrepreneur	Accelerated Learning and Growth	Redefining the 9 to 5	Stability v Mobility
RQ 1 - Motivations	Autonomy, temporal flexibility (leveraging digital business model)	Intrinsic motivation	Autonomy, learning and growth, challenge	Dissatisfaction (Push), digital opportunities (Pull), redefining success	Spatial flexibility, location, community and belonging (relatedness)

This research question sought to uncover the dynamics of DEs' entrepreneurial motivation. It was anticipated that the motivational influences for DEs may differ from those of traditional entrepreneurs in view of the flexibility offered by new technologies. Broadly, there are two main ways that digital business differs from traditional business:

1. Digital tools and platforms provide novel ways to create and operate a business, with the internet providing access to global customer markets; and
2. Digital business facilitates temporal and spatial flexibility for the digital business owner/operator.

The findings revealed the predominant push and pull factors underlying digital business creation and operation, which were also evident in the five key themes discussed in the previous chapter (section 7.7). The digital landscape provided a conduit for DEs' motivational energy, within the broader economic and sociocultural context, and together these factors are combined in the Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship (reproduced in Figure 8.1).
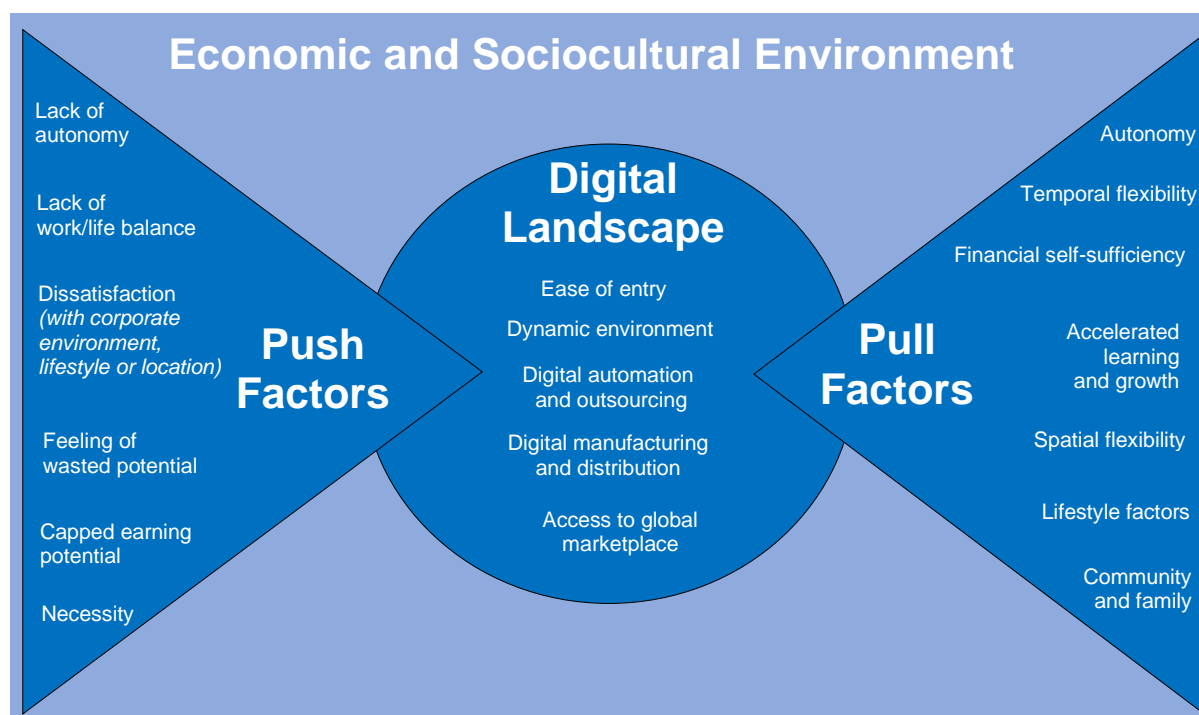
Figure 8.1 Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship

Push-Pull Theory, introduced in section 3.10, is the primary theory of motivation informing this research and has been well-tested in studying entrepreneurs (Anderson et al., 2013; Giacomin et al., 2007; Gilad & Levine, 1986; Kirkwood, 2009; Segal et al., 2005). A subjective mix of push and/or pull factors provided participants with the impetus required to create and operate their businesses. While push factors often provided the initial drive to search for opportunities, pull factors tended to take over once participants had identified and pursued such opportunities. Some factors could operate as both push and pull forces, for example , lack of autonomy could serve as a push factor and desire for autonomy operates as a pull factor.

The main push factor was dissatisfaction with the corporate environment for which a multitude of causes were articulated. Dissatisfaction with one's work is an established push motivator within the literature (Brockhaus, 1982; Cohen & Mallon, 1999; Hofstede et al., 2004; Segal et al., 2005; Stephan et al., 2015). Lifestyle and/or locational dissatisfaction were also push factors leading to the search for new opportunities through digital entrepreneurship. The primary pull factor was autonomy, which is supported by motivational theory including Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and Push-Pull Theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986).

Recent research continues to highlight the desire for autonomy as a strong motivating force for entrepreneurship (Dutot & Van Horne, 2015; Reichenberger, 2018; Stephan et al., 2015). The findings revealed that temporal autonomy had particular significance for DEs.

Another major pull factor was learning and growth, which fuelled by temporal autonomy, enabled participants to accelerate the operation of their businesses. Previous research using motivational theory as a lens has found that individuals may satisfy their desire for learning, challenge and personal growth through entrepreneurship (Ryan et al., 2008; Stephan et al., 2015). Mastering unfamiliar tasks, staying abreast of constant changes in a dynamic digital environment, and even moving between countries all contributed to learning and growth. For some DEs, travel was their preferred way to exercise their spatial flexibility, for others it was basing themselves in a preferred lifestyle location and becoming part of the local community.

It should be noted that for several research participants digital entrepreneurship was not sustainable. Businesses had not gained traction and with insufficient income and/or motivational energy to continue, the DE had abandoned the business. Further, as a number of participants' businesses were in the start-up phase (particularly in the Bali case study), it is unknown whether these businesses will become established and sustainable. This is discussed further, in section 8.5, as a limitation of the study's scope.

8.2.2 Research Question 2 - Balance between work and lifestyle domains

Research Question 2: How do DEs balance their work and lifestyle domains?

Theme	Time as currency	The Integrated Entrepreneur	Redefining the 9 to 5	Stability v Mobility
RQ 2 - Balance	Work-life boundaries, business and life stage	Integration of boundaries	Significance of leisure, time zones	Location and spatial flexibility impacting work and life

The second research question aims to address how DEs balance their work and lifestyle domains. This is significant because DEs are not restricted to standard working hours and how they manage their temporal flexibility may have broader implications, given the growing role of ICTs in the world of work. Increasingly flexible ways of working, accelerated by digital technology and globalisation, are providing new opportunities to combine work with other life domains. Boundary theory (discussed in section 7.2.2) posits that a separation-integration continuum exists in relation to managing work and personal domains (Nippert-Eng, 1996).

Findings indicated that there are several significant factors impacting how DEs manage work and lifestyle domains and their resulting perceptions of balance. The most significant factors were work preferences, business and life stage and economic verses lifestyle priorities. These factors influence how individual DEs balance work with lifestyle, and the boundary separation or integration approach employed. As discussed in section 7.2.2, four distinct approaches to balancing work and other life domains emerged, based on DEs' individual circumstances and subjective interpretations (figure 8.2). The approach taken to managing competing domains was indicative of DEs' perceptions of balance.

Separation
Diagram 1

Unbalanced
Diagram 2

Unbalanced
Diagram 3

Integration
Diagram 4
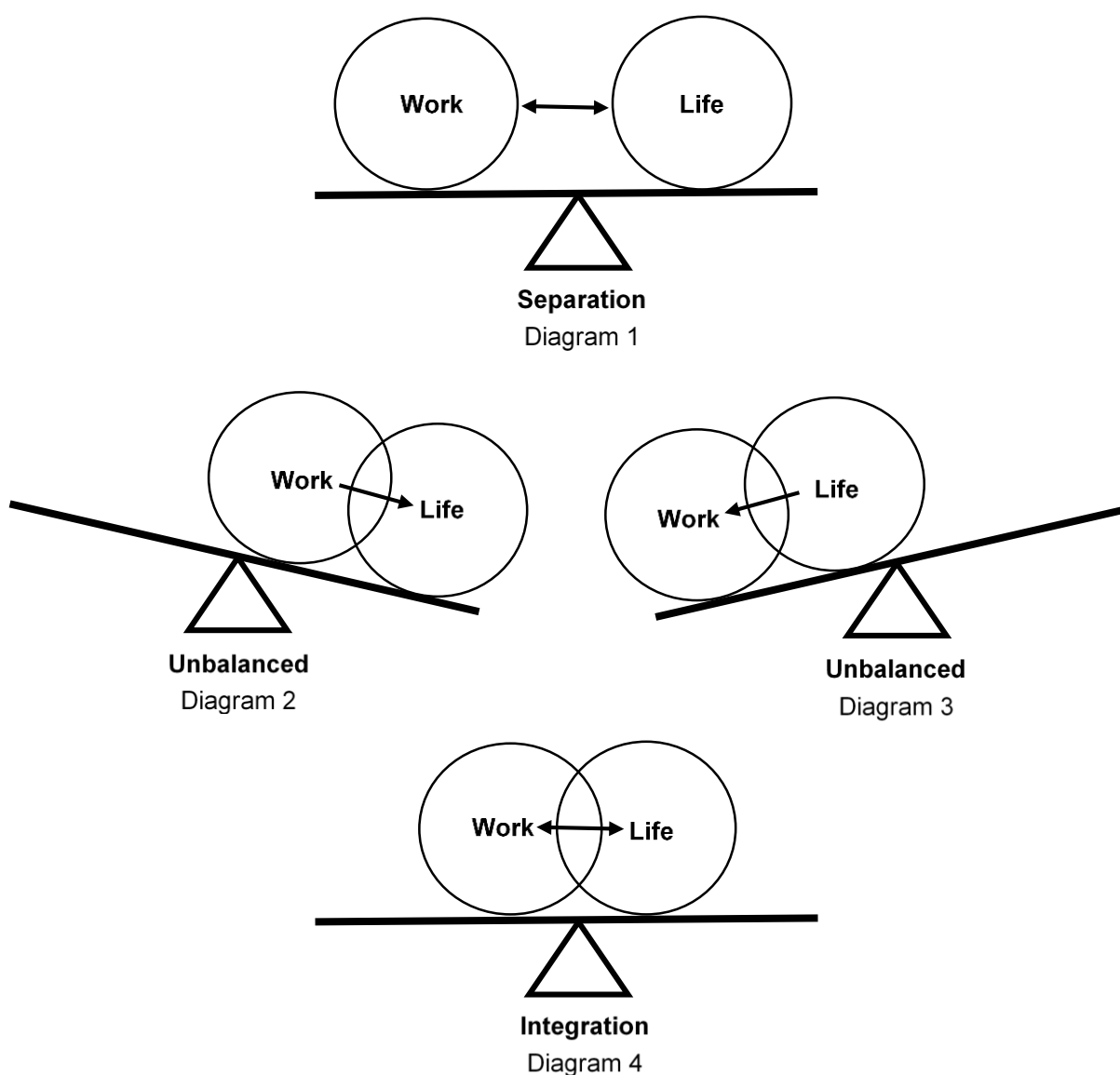
Figure 8.2 DE Work-Life Balance Approaches

As illustrated in Figure 8.2, some research participants managed to set clear boundaries between work and other lifestyle domains (Diagram 1). Others struggled to set clear boundaries with work either spilling into other life domains (Diagram 2) or alternatively life impacting work and resources available for the business (Diagram 3), these DEs struggled to maintain balance. Finally, there were those DEs who did not want to set boundaries and took an integrated approach to managing work with other life domains (Diagram 4). For DEs taking an integrated approach, work was often their preferred activity, and the lines between work and leisure blurred. The findings of this study indicate that while temporal and spatial flexibility can assist DEs in achieving work life balance, digital entrepreneurship is not a panacea for designing one's ideal life. Personal and work factors, including work preferences, business and life stage and individual priorities all influence balance. It is ultimately the DEs' management of their time and effective use of separation or integration strategies that determines satisfaction with work-life balance.

8.2.3 Research Question 3 - Role of location

Research Question 3: How does location play a role in the work and life of DEs?

Theme	Time as currency	The Integrated Entrepreneur	Accelerated Learning and Growth	Redefining the 9 to 5	Stability v Mobility
RQ 3 - Location	Time zones	Location as integral to business and lifestyle	Coworking hub activities	Leisure and location	Home and away, travel and mobility, location variables

The third research question explores the role of location in the lives and businesses of DEs. The findings of this study indicate that one's location is not necessarily a limitation for digital entrepreneurs and that it is possible to operate a digital business (even with a multinational customer base) outside a capital city or metropolitan area. A widely held view was that participants could operate their business from anywhere with an internet connection; this view is supported by literature in the area (Muller, 2016; Pauleen et al., 2015). The two case studies provided different contexts from which to address the third research question. Participants of the Australian case study had mostly elected to reside in specific regional areas for the medium to long term. Conversely, Bali case study participants were more mobile, with the majority based in Bali on a transitory basis. Therefore, the role of location took on different significance depending on whether an individual was passing through or more settled (as discussed in section 7.6). Overall, the findings revealed that the work, lifestyle and community

factors presented in Table 8.1 had significance, to varying degrees for participants, of both case studies.

Table 8.1 Work, Lifestyle and Community Factors impacting Digital Entrepreneurs

Significant Locational Factors for Digital Entrepreneurs		
Work	**Lifestyle**	**Community**
ICT Infrastructure and Wi-Fi	Quality of life	Family members/ friends
Time-zone	Governance and safety	History
Accessibility/transport	Affordability	Culture and diversity
Office/Skype space	Climate	Work-lifestyle communities
Local opportunity	Infrastructure	Online communities
	Leisure and entertainment	

Table 8.1 depicts those factors identified by DEs, either explicitly or implicitly, as important to them in deciding where to base themselves. Each of these factors is discussed in section 6.6.2 of the research findings. From a work perspective, a reliable internet connection is vital, and the time zone of the DE (in relation to customers and staff) is also important. Other work factors took on significance depending on the participant and their business. From lifestyle and community perspectives, while quality of life was important for participants of both case studies, different factors appealed to each group.

In summary, the findings suggest that DEs have significant spatial flexibility in the operation of their businesses and their primary requirement is an internet connection. However, there are other factors that can help facilitate digital business, particularly from lifestyle and community perspectives. For participants of the Australian case study, safety, freedom from crowds, educational facilities (particularly schools), proximity to beaches and being part of the local community had particular value. For Bali case study participants, affordability, leisure and recreational activities, climate and coworking communities were appealing. The participants of this study demonstrate different ways that online businesses can be created and operated from regional and tourist locations.

A finding of this study is the ability to combine lifestyle entrepreneurship (discussed in section 7.6.3) with digital entrepreneurship. The phenomenon of lifestyle entrepreneurship explores the desire to live in a location with lifestyle benefits as an incentive for entrepreneurship (Bredvold & Skalen, 2016; Carson et al., 2018; Marchant & Mottiar, 2011; Marcketti et al., 2006; Peters et al., 2009). Some participants of the Australian case study had created their businesses with the desire to reside in a specific location and the need to earn an income

while doing so. For those DEs based in Bali, reduced living costs, a 'laid-back' lifestyle and a thriving coworking community had appeal.

8.3 Contribution to Knowledge

Digital Entrepreneurship is a new field of study and a solid body of literature within the field is yet to be established. The findings of this research provide five distinct theoretical contributions and provide evidence of digital entrepreneurship as an emergent phenomenon.
The researcher posits that there are two main ways that digital entrepreneurship differs from traditional entrepreneurship:

1. Digital tools and platforms provide novel ways to create and operate a business, with the internet providing access to global customer markets; and
2. Digital business facilitates temporal and spatial flexibility for the digital entrepreneur.

In view of these differences, this research makes an original contribution to the literature in four ways. First, the study demonstrates how Push-Pull Theory, used widely to study traditional entrepreneurs, is relevant in the context of digital entrepreneurship and proposes a Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship. Second, the study presents the alternative approaches to work-life balance adopted by DEs, in the context of their temporal and spatial flexibility. Third, the study proposes the work, lifestyle and community factors significant for DEs, and other digitally enabled workers, in deciding where to base themselves. Finally, a definition of the term digital entrepreneur is proposed.

8.3.1 Contribution to Motivational Theory

As this study has found, digital entrepreneurs are a distinct group of entrepreneurs. This research makes a contribution to motivational theory, as it relates to the study of entrepreneurs, in that it provides insights in relation to this new group and the context in which they operate. Well-established motivational theory informed this exploratory research. While Push-Pull Theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986) was adopted as the principal theory, other major theories of motivation provided varying degrees of contribution (as outlined in chapter 3). These theories included SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985), Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory, McClelland's (1961) Need for Achievement Theory, Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964), Personality Trait Theories (Rotter, 1966; Bandura 1977; McCrae & Costa, 1987), Entrepreneurial Event Theory (Shapero & Sokol, 1982) and Azjen's (1985) Theory of Planned Behaviour. A qualitative, multiple case approach allowed the research to compare and contrast DE populations across

two countries. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews captured the subjective perceptions of DEs, with businesses in diverse industries. This approach resulted in rich data from which the researcher could extract meaningful themes and insights which make the following original contributions:

- A model, based on Push-Pull Theory, outlines the key push-pull factors relevant to the digital entrepreneur, within their unique context (Figure 8.1). This model helps lay theoretical foundations in the area of digital entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial motivation in the context of the digital environment.

- Five key themes emerged (outlined in chapter 7) in relation to the motivations of DEs, which help generate new understanding about this phenomenon and alternate ways of living and working:
  - ➢ *Time as Currency* – DEs highly value autonomous use of their temporal flexibility;
  - ➢ *The Integrated Entrepreneur* – the business and DE are entwined;
  - ➢ *Accelerated Learning and Growth* – personal learning and growth is a strong driver for DEs;
  - ➢ *Redefining the 9 to 5* – DEs are consciously challenging the social construct of the 9 to 5 work day; and
  - ➢ *Home and Away* – in an emerging world of increased spatial flexibility, home and community provide moorings.

- The research findings suggest the ways in which the digital landscape provides a nuanced context for entrepreneurship and the fulfillment of temporal and spatial autonomy.

- Researchers highlight that research into entrepreneurial motivations has largely been from an economic perspective (Low & MacMillan, 1988; McClelland,1961; Wach et al., 2016). However, digital entrepreneurship can provide a way to combine lifestyle and locational benefits with business ownership. A potentially novel finding of this study is the ability to combine lifestyle entrepreneurship with digital entrepreneurship.

8.3.2 Contribution to Boundary Theory

Research question two explored the different approaches that DEs took to balancing their work and lifestyle domains. Previous researchers have explored the increasing complexity of the separation of home from work, in view of the growing penetration of ICTs into everyday

life (Di Domenico et al., 2014; Gold & Mustafa, 2013; Pauleen et al., 2015), together with the blurred lines between work time and free time (Lewis, 2003; Reichenberger, 2018; Sun & Xu, 2017). Nippert-Eng (1996) proposed boundary theory in which a separation-integration continuum exists in relation to managing work and personal domains. The results of this study make an original contribution to boundary theory in proposing four distinctive approaches that DEs take in managing this balance. While there were participants that effectively used segmentation or integration strategies, two other groups were less successful in achieving balance. The alternative approaches that research participants took to balancing work with lifestyle domains are presented in Figure 8.2. This model may have wider applicability for other sub-groups of entrepreneurs and/or digitally enabled workers.

8.3.3 Locational variables

This research proposes a combination of locational factors, across the dimensions of work, lifestyle and community, specifically relevant for digital entrepreneurs. Prior to this research there has been limited understanding of the needs of DEs and the locational variables that appeal to them in choosing where to base themselves. Within the literature, there is discussion of the characteristics of "smart cities", with the availability of ICT infrastructure identified as a key consideration (Giffinger et al., 2010, p. 305). ICT infrastructure and Wi-Fi, together with other factors articulated by participants, either explicitly or implicitly, are presented in Table 8.1 (section 8.2.3). The study makes a contribution to literature on the future of work in that highlights the locational variables significant for digital working and living, which have not previously been identified. Insight into the work, lifestyle and community factors that appeal to DEs, may have broader implications for areas looking to attract digital workers.

8.3.4 Model of Location to fit Task Orientation

A further novel finding of this research, as depicted in figure 8.3, is the approach of utilising spatial flexibility to align task orientation with location. The nature of different locations may allow the DE to fulfil different needs. For example, one DE spoke of Bali as a place for planning and reflection and Queensland, for focused work and goal achievement. DEs have the ability to move between locations depending on the task they are working on and/or the aspect of themselves they would like to access. Figure 8.3 illustrates how a DE may orient themselves and their tasks in relation to their location. For each DE, the locations and work tasks are personally subjective. In each location the DE can potentially build networks and connect with different communities further enhancing task related synergies. Workers of the future

(including DEs) may choose to inhabit a multitude of spaces, in different geographical locations, depending on the project they are working on and the aspects of self they want to encourage to emerge. This may have implications in relation to the emerging world of work and is an area for further research (section 8.6).
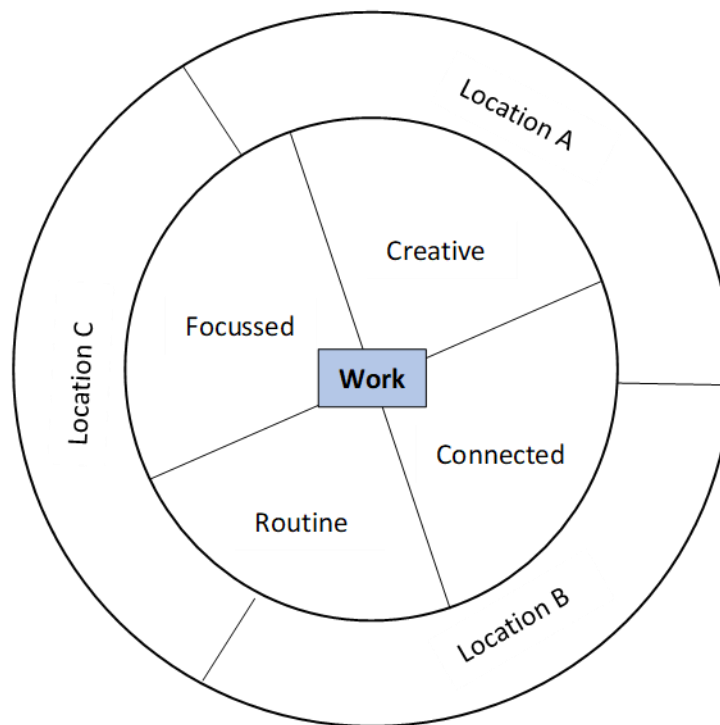
Figure 8.3 Location to Fit Task Orientation

8.3.5 DE Definition

Digital entrepreneurship is an emerging concept that is garnering increasing researcher attention (Bandera et al., 2016; Hafezieh et al., 2011; Hull, et al., 2007; Nambisan, 2017; Van Horne et al., 2016). However, prior to this research a widely accepted definition of the term digital entrepreneur has not been available within the literature. This study contributes a proposed definition of the term, based on the research findings. During interviews with research participants, they were asked to provide their own understanding a digital entrepreneur and four key themes emerged:

- the need to be entrepreneurial;
- the need to be involved in the creation of the business (DE as founder);
- the predominantly digital nature of their business; and
- the DE has spatial flexibility in the operation of the business.

Based on the findings of this research and in view of literature in the area, the following definition of a digital entrepreneur is proposed:

> An entrepreneur who creates a business(es) which is predominantly online and can be operated location independently.

In proposing this definition, the researcher acknowledges the limitations of this study and the need for further research in this new field. Notwithstanding, this is the first definition of the term digital entrepreneur proffered that takes into account DEs' subjective interpretations.

8.4 Implications for Practice

The findings of this study have implications for practice in a number of areas. As the future of work continues to evolve, digital entrepreneurship as a phenomenon looks set to grow as it provides new opportunities for business creation and new ways to further business and lifestyle goals. Insight into the work, lifestyle and community factors that attract DEs, may have broader implications in regions looking to attract digital workers. For government policy makers and leaders in regional and tourist areas the findings of this research offer significant considerations, in view of the growing impacts of technology. Coworking spaces are gaining popularity around the world and this research has implications for coworking space operators. This study's findings reveal that these spaces serve a valuable role, particularly for DEs in the start-up phase of business or living away from their home country. The coworking community can offer support and connection for DEs in what can be a lonely journey. Finally, for those considering digital entrepreneurship, while the digital landscape offers enticing opportunities, it is not without challenges. The findings offer insights into those challenges in order to paint a more complete picture of working and living digitally.

8.4.1 Regional and Tourist Areas

The results of this study, in particular the findings in relation to digital entrepreneurs' motivations and the role of location for DEs, will be useful for policy makers looking to attract entrepreneurship and encourage innovation, particularly in regional and tourist areas. Thite (2011) posits that to attract talented workers, regions must reach out and welcome newcomers and seek out, support and reward a range of talent, including entrepreneurs, innovators and technology workers. In regional areas, digital entrepreneurship can provide an alternative employment option for residents and encourage them to stay in the region. For those areas

wanting to foster digital entrepreneurship, the challenge may not only be in attracting them but also in supporting their business success and encouraging them to stay.

Given the flexibility that online business allows, understanding the role of location will assist policy makers to develop the workplaces of the future, cognisant of the impacts of technology. Findings revealed that it is not only work-related factors that have significance for DEs but lifestyle and community factors as well (as discussed in section 7.6.2). As the DE phenomenon grows, governments may attempt to attract DEs for the economic and community contributions they make locally. Researchers suggest that entrepreneurs tend to build strong community connections and networks (Mottiar et al., 2018). They can also play an important role in strengthening local culture, and generally improve the quality of life for themselves and those in their community (Crnogaj et al., 2014). Many participants of this study, particularly those establishing roots in their location(s), actively contributed to their region's development through committee and board positions, Chambers of Commerce and/or local innovation hubs. There were also various ways in which they contributed to the tapestry of educational, cultural, sporting and creative life in the communities they inhabited. Understanding the lifestyle factors that attract DEs and the infrastructure and services they require to conduct their business will therefore gain increasing importance. For example, ICT Infrastructure is critical for DEs who require a reliable internet connection. Fibre cable capacity and adequate download speeds are needed for some business activities, such as video uploads.

For most participants of the Australian case study, the business allowed them to sustain a certain lifestyle in their preferred location; hence, they could also be considered lifestyle entrepreneurs. However, unlike participants of previous studies on lifestyle entrepreneurs (Bredvold & Skalen, 2016; Marchant & Mottiar, 2011; Marcketti et al., 2006; Williams et al., 1989) they are not operating tourism businesses or reliant on local tourism trade in order to generate in income. DEs have the capacity to create their own incomes and contribute to economic and community development in the areas they are based.

For regional and tourist areas seeking to attract DEs internationally, coworking spaces serve an important function in providing connection, both virtually and physically. Initiating and/or supporting the development of a variety of such spaces, with different foci and environments (as discussed in section 7.4.1), is critical to developing a vibrant start-up ecosystem. Levels (2014), founder of NomadsList, discusses cost of living and quality of living, as primary considerations for digital nomads, aligned with the findings of this study. The availability of low-cost accommodation options (such as share housing) and a variety of leisure activities

can help to attract DEs, with findings suggesting that it is not just reliable internet that digitally enabled workers seek.

8.4.2 **Coworking spaces**

There are several factors emerging from the research findings which have implications for coworking spaces. Providing a variety of workspaces, available for DEs and other digitally enabled workers, is only part of the equation for coworking spaces. Research participants, in their narratives, presented coworking spaces as places to learn, collaborate, socialise and connect. Coworking spaces played an important role in providing a sense of community for DEs, particularly those living away from their home location (discussed in section 7.4.1).

As a starting point, coworking spaces need to provide reliable internet access and sufficient broadband to enable fast download speeds, which are required for tasks such as uploading content videos. Beyond this, learning and growth was found to be a key motivator for DEs and coworking spaces can support and encourage such through the holding of workshops, events, mentoring programs and other relevant learning opportunities. Providing an environment where discussions of business challenges and failures becomes part of the culture can also be helpful, as business owners learn to iterate early and often in order to compete in a competitive virtual marketplace. Collaboration also supports digital business and fostering a collaborative environment is essential. However, coworking space operators need to remain cognisant of the competitive aspects of business and potential risks coworking spaces can bear (Bouncken & Reuschl, 2018). DEs' business ideas, data and business assets (including staff) need to be adequately protected.

Community managers, aware of the revolving nature of coworking space membership, would do well to provide constants in the community. A number of research participants appeared tasked with informal roles in the coworking space, such as welcoming new members, aimed at facilitating community development and engagement. Creating active online communities, to support members and provide a way for them to stay in touch between visits and was found to assist in perceptions of belonging and a sense of continuity.

Thompson (2019) suggests that Western born digital nomads living in third world countries select a destination aimed at maximising their demographic privileges and hedonistic pleasures. However, they may then struggle with their social inequality with the locals and community contribution may provide a way to bridge this gap (Thompson, 2019). Participants

of this study spoke of their local volunteering involvement and demonstrated various ways that they contributed to the local community. One coworking space publicly displayed various community causes that members could positively contribute to. Such contributions need to be more than tokenistic and demonstrate an ongoing commitment to and integration with the broader environment. Coworking spaces may provide incentives, such as internet credit or room hire, for digital workers volunteering in the local community.

Several research participants articulated that the coworking environment was not conducive to focussed work, with excessive noise and socialisation detracting from work activities. Therefore, coworking spaces need to provide adequate quiet spaces to work that provide a sense of calm in a dynamic environment. Coworking spaces serve a valuable role, as this research has highlighted, and look set to continue to gain significance in the emerging world of work. However, coworking spaces can struggle to be economically viable (Durante & Turvani, 2018). The foundations on which these spaces are built require stability and strategic financial management, demonstrated by the 2019 crash of the global coworking enterprise, WeWork.

8.4.3 Prospective DEs

For prospective DEs, the findings of this research have a number of implications. While the findings provide evidence of the opportunities that exist for would-be-entrepreneurs in the digital domain, digital entrepreneurship is not a panacea for earning an income while travelling or living in the location of one's choosing. Digital business is still essentially a business; earning an income involves creating value for clients by offering a product or service that they are prepared to pay for. The relative ease of business creation in the online environment and intense competition can make it harder to be successful (Hair et al., 2012).

In terms of challenges encountered, there appear to be commonalities between DEs and traditional entrepreneurs, particularly evident in income insecurity and time management. Income insecurity was a key challenge for research participants, particularly those who were in the start-up phase of their business and yet to earn an income. Many other participants reported that they were seeking to generate further business income in order to fund their desired lifestyle and/or gain financial self-sufficiency.

A number of the perceived benefits of digital business appear to have a shadow side. For example, while temporal flexibility was a significant pull factor, managing time within the

context of an open schedule was an issue for many participants. Time management was approached in several ways, with varying degrees of success, as detailed in section 7.2.2. Continual learning was a key driver for participants but could also distract them from focusing on their business and technology, while an enabler, could be a source of frustration. Among the other main challenges for participants were loneliness and a lack of understanding from others; having a support network and community connection appeared to be vital for DE wellbeing. Despite the challenges inherent in digital entrepreneurship, many participants spoke of the significant opportunities available via the internet and had managed to create a successful online business or businesses. In offering their advice for prospective DEs, the rhetoric was overwhelmingly to "just do it". A widely held participant view was that if their business disappeared, they would do it all again.

8.5 Limitations of the research

While all research has limitations and delimitations, the role of the researcher is to be aware of these and address them where possible. There are a number of limitations relating to the methodology employed and while these were largely discussed in section 5.8, a brief overview of the main concerns is presented in this section. The limitations of the study's theoretical framework are also discussed, as well as delimitations in relation to the study's scope.

Firstly, thematic analyses were conducted by a single researcher without third party validation. While this was a limitation of the research, a rigorous and transparent approach to data analysis was taken. Braun and Clarke's (2006) phases of thematic analysis served to guide data analysis, as presented in chapter five. The researcher took steps to ensure validity and reliability (Riege, 2003), as presented in section 5.6, and an audit trail of the data collection and analysis process and any data related decisions taken is clearly visible (Merriam, 1998).

Secondly, this research relied on retrospection data, with hindsight and self-justification biases two potential limitations of studies using such data. Retrospection may lead to differing explanations as to reasons for starting a business and/or self-justification of decisions made (Cassar, 2007). To explore DEs' subjective experiences and address the research questions, a qualitative approach was the preferred method, therefore these limitations were inherent in the research design. However, the researcher remained cognisant of these limitations throughout the process.

Thirdly, like all research this project had time constraints and as a result data were collected during a limited time period. Study participants were interviewed between 2017 and 2019,

which represents a small window in time, allowing the researcher to capture a mere snapshot of DEs' subjective perceptions, impacted by their business and life stages. What is unknown is how these perceptions would change over time, with researchers suggesting that greater insights can be obtained with wider time frames (Low & MacMillan, 1988). A limitation of empirical studies on motivation's role in entrepreneurship is their static nature; the assumption is that entrepreneurs are of stable character, yet studies conducted over longer periods may yield different results (Carroll & Mosakowski, 1987).

Delimitations define the boundaries of the research and are those factors that constrain the study's scope (Ellis & Levy, 2009). Significant motivational theories, as they relate to the study of entrepreneurship were presented and discussed in chapter three, including Self Determination Theory, Need for Achievement and Personality Theory. These theories help inform the research and a number were applied to the data (for example as a priori codes). Other theory was also introduced in chapter seven, as applicable to the discussion (i.e. Flow Theory, Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). However, the researcher acknowledges that the main theory used in the research is Push-Pull Theory. While this theory has been widely used and is well tested in studies of entrepreneurial motivation (Ezzedeen & Zikic, 2017; Gilad & Levine, 1986; Kirkwood, 2009; Segal et al., 2005), it is recognised that a wide variety of theories of human motivation exist. Other motivational theories may provide nuanced or alternative perspectives to those presented in this thesis.

A second delimitation relates to the sample selection method. Researchers have suggested that sample selection bias is a methodological limitation of empirical research studies on entrepreneurs' motivations (Carroll & Mosakowski, 1987). The researcher is cognisant that while the purposive snowball sample approach was preferable in terms of locating willing research participants, this study represents a small sample of the growing DE population. Participants were located in the South West of Western Australia and the Queensland Coast (case study 1) and Bali (case study 2) at the time of this research. These participants represent various industry groups from multiple locations, however it is not known how well the sample groups will represent DEs generally.

By addressing these limitations and implementing these delimitations, this research provides methodologically sound findings regarding the motivations of individuals engaged in entrepreneurial decision making in a digital context. Such studies are necessary to advance the development of entrepreneurship theory (Shane et al., 2003) and as outlined in this chapter, this study provides numerous contributions to the development of theory.

8.6 Recommendations for Further Research

Further studies on the digital entrepreneurship phenomenon are required to develop the theoretical body of knowledge in this new area of research. This study contributes to foundational knowledge in this area and identifies avenues for further research. In this section, these avenues are presented and discussed. Firstly, the contribution of DEs and other digital workers to the locations in which they are based, including tourism and regional areas, warrants further consideration.

While this research contributes understanding as to the factors that attract DEs to a particular location, what is yet to be explored is the contribution DEs make to those locations. Aquino et al. (2018) suggest that traditional tourism entrepreneurship and development models lean toward a capitalist approach that may not be sustainable or benefit host communities in the long term. Accordingly, research that helps to inform future models of entrepreneurship and its impact on tourist locations is needed. For tourism destinations, attracting digital entrepreneurs may generate innovation and result in economic and community benefits. In both global and regional contexts, entrepreneurship and innovation are vitally important to the ongoing success and development of the tourism industry (Lopéz, Buhalis & Fyall, 2009).

For regional communities, attracting DEs may be a strategy enhancing local sustainability. Researchers suggest that, as well as being vital for economic development, entrepreneurs have an important role in building community culture (Crnogaj et al., 2014) and strengthening connections (Mottiar et al., 2018). This study begins to explore the role that digital entrepreneurs play within the communities they inhabit, as discussed in section 8.4.1, However, further studies are required in this area, in the context of the evolving world of work.

The findings of this research revealed the impact of time zones on international business. While there has been some research in this area (Arenius et al., 2005), further studies are required to ascertain how time zones can be leveraged in the context of multinational, digital businesses. The findings of this research revealed that time zones were a significant factor for DEs in deciding where to base themselves. For some, there were certain countries they would not consider basing themselves, largely due to time zone impacts on their business interactions. However, several DEs mentioned leveraging their time zone for business and lifestyle advantage (discussed in section 7.2.4). Alternatives to the standard workday warrant consideration, in order to allow families and individuals to more effectively manage work commitments with other life domains. Such alternatives may include the use of determined blocks of time for meetings and group work, acceptable across multiple time zones.

As discussed in the previous section, a limitation of the current study is that it only captures a single moment in time. Researchers posit that there are too few longitudinal studies on the entrepreneur (Hoy & Verser, 1994). Longitudinal studies are required to generate insight into DEs' changing motivations over time, as well as the sustainability of their businesses in a dynamic digital environment. Entrepreneurial motivations can change dynamically and interactively in relation to household, career and business life courses (Jayawarna et al., 2013). Longitudinal research is encouraged to assess DEs' shifting motivations over time and provide further insight into the sustainability of this way of living and working.

From a work perspective, of interest is the DEs' experience in the event that the business transitions from start-up to established concern and how this impacts DE motivations and goals. Further, digital business is highly competitive and dynamic, the sustainability of DEs' businesses over time is an area that needs to be further explored. From a lifestyle perspective, how do integrated DEs negotiate work-life boundaries with a new partner? For mobile DEs, if and when they start a family, do they establish roots in one location or manage to maintain their transient lifestyle? The participants of this research were located in regional and tourist areas. It is anticipated that the insights provided by this research would be largely transferrable across other regional and tourist locations. Remaining to be explored is how the findings would translate across major cities and urban areas. Similar research conducted in these locations would further the insights on the DE phenomenon provided by the current study.

Finally, research participants all used social media, to varying degrees, in their business operations. Many DEs spoke of social media as an integral part of their business strategy and for integrated DEs, their personal lives were highly visible through their social media interactions. There is emerging research the role of social media for entrepreneurs, such as Mardon et al.'s (2018) study of Youtube beauty entrepreneurs exploring the emotional labour aspect of building and maintaining an online persona. Further studies in this area can extend this new research direction and contribute to the understanding of entrepreneurship in the digital age.

8.7 Summary

The purpose of this research was to develop original insights into the DE phenomenon through the lens of motivational theory, in particular Push-Pull Theory (Gilad & Levine, 1986). A qualitative, multiple case study approach was adopted, allowing the researcher to compare and contrast different DE populations. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews captured the

subjective perceptions of DEs, from which the researcher could extract meaningful results. Drawing on all previous chapters, this chapter presents a conclusion to the study. The insights gained through this research have allowed the researcher to explicitly address the research questions.

The first research question examined DE motivations in the creation of their businesses. Findings revealed that a combination of push and pull forces operated to generate motivation. The digital landscape provided a conduit for DEs' motivation, within the broader economic and sociocultural environment, and together these factors are combined in the Push-Pull Model of Digital Entrepreneurship. This model, together with the five key themes presented in chapter seven, provide new understanding of DEs and the context in which they operate. Research question two explored how DEs balance work and lifestyle domains. Informed by Boundary Theory (Nippert-Eng, 1996), four distinct approaches to balancing work and other life domains emerged, based on DEs' individual circumstances and subjective interpretations. Findings indicated that there are several significant factors impacting how DEs manage work and lifestyle domains and their resulting perceptions of balance, including work preferences, business and life stage, and individual priorities. The third research question explored the role of location in the work and life of DEs, with the two case studies providing alternate contexts from which to consider this question. The study proposed a combination of locational factors, across the dimensions of work, lifestyle and community, specifically relevant for digital entrepreneurs. While various factors had importance for both case study groups, such as the availability of Wi-Fi, some locational factors had differing significance depending on whether the DE was mobile or more settled.

This study's original contributions to knowledge, in view of the research findings, were presented, including a proposed definition of the term digital entrepreneur. Included in this study's theoretical contributions are those to motivational theory, as it relates to the study of entrepreneurs, and boundary theory. This research also has practical implications for regional and tourist areas looking to attract DEs, for coworking space operators and for prospective DEs. These implications give the research practical application, in the evolving world of work. As with any research project, there are limitations and delimitations and the primary considerations of this study were also outlined. Digital entrepreneurship is an emerging area, lacking theoretical foundations, and as such this research was exploratory in nature. As a result, promising areas for further research were identified and highlighted which, along with this study, will help build foundations in this exciting new area.

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Appendix A – Interview Questions

This research will investigate digital entrepreneurs, particularly how they balance income and lifestyle goals.

Introduction

- Name (initial and number for confidentiality)
- Gender
- Age
- What do you see as the definition of a digital entrepreneur?
- Tell me about yourself and your business?
- Level of education and previous business experience.
- Business Structure
- Industry
- Physical location
- Major customers/clients – locations
- Length of time established
- Does online business income solely fund your current lifestyle?
- If not, current source of income:
    - Online business
    - Offline business
    - Paid employment
    - Savings
    - Other
- What significant milestones have you achieved in your business? (Relates to research question 2)

1. **What motivates an individual to pursue an online business**

- What factors pushed you into starting your own business?
- What factors do you feel pulled you into starting a business?
- Is there anything else that motivated you to start your own business?

2. How do DEs balance their work and lifestyle domains

- How do you define success?
- Do you feel you are heading towards achieving this?
- What is your main goal for your business in the next 12 months?
- What is your main personal goal in the next 12 months?
- How does being a DE allow you to balance economic and lifestyle goals?
- Which do you see as taking priority at this point, economic or lifestyle goals?
- How does being in business impact the quality of family life? (Positive and negative aspects)?
- Where do you find and enjoy social connection?
- How, if at all, do you connect with other DEs?
- If your business disappeared tomorrow (and money was no issue) what would you be doing?

3. How does location play a role in the work and life of DEs

- What role does location play in relation to these goals?
- What role does location play in your work?
- What role does location play in your lifestyle?
- Is there anywhere else you would prefer to live?

Other

- Which professional bodies have you had assistance from in setting up or running your business?
- Which online platforms/ tools do you use to run your business?
- What are the main challenges with being a DE?
- If you had to start your business again what would you do differently?
- What advice would you give to others considering starting an online business?
- Is there anything you thought I would ask you that I didn't?
- Is there anything you wanted me to ask that I didn't?

Appendix B – Informed Consent and Information Sheet

About This Study

Project Title: The motivations of digital entrepreneurs

Dear Potential Interview Participant,

I am looking to interview people who have started one or more online businesses and earn the majority of their income this way. This research will contribute to government policy makers' understanding of digital entrepreneurship and strategies for stimulating the digital economy, help researchers to understand this emerging phenomenon and assist digital entrepreneurs clarify their motivations and business goals.

Participation in this interview is voluntary, you can withdraw from it at any time and your answers will remain confidential. In the event you withdraw from the study, your information will also be withdrawn. No identifying particulars are sought, including your name, business names or commercial details.

If you would like to participate, the duration of the interview will be approximately one hour, either face to face at a mutually agreeable location, or via Skype. During the interview your motivations and experiences with digital work will be explored. Apart from time taken to complete the interview, this research does not pose any risk. Any information you have provided will be kept confidential and your identity will not be disclosed without your consent. No identifying information will be stored with the interview data. The information you provide will only be used for the purposes of this research project.

If you would like a copy of the research findings please notify me by email:
a.bancilhon@cqu.edu.au

Further Information

If you have any questions about the study, please contact me:

    Angela Bancilhon
    CQUniversity Australia
    38 Peel Terrace
    Busselton WA 6280
    Email: a.bancilhon@cqu.edu.au

If you would like to discuss any concerns or complaints about this study with an independent person please contact:

    Ethics Officer
    Research Division (Bldg 32 Level 2)
    CQUniversity Australia
    Bruce Highway
    Rockhampton QLD 4702
    Email: ethics@cqu.edu.au

Consent to Participate

If you are willing to participate in this study, please check the relevant boxes below:

I have read and understood the information above.

☐ Yes ☐ No

I understand that I can withdraw from this research project at any time without explanation or penalty.

☐ Yes ☐ No

I am aware I have the opportunity to ask questions by email (see below), and have had any questions answered to my satisfaction.

☐ Yes ☐ No

I voluntarily agree to be interviewed

☐ Yes ☐ No

I voluntarily agree that this interview may be recorded

☐ Yes ☐ No

Thank you for your participation. I will be touch to organise a day/time/location for the interview.
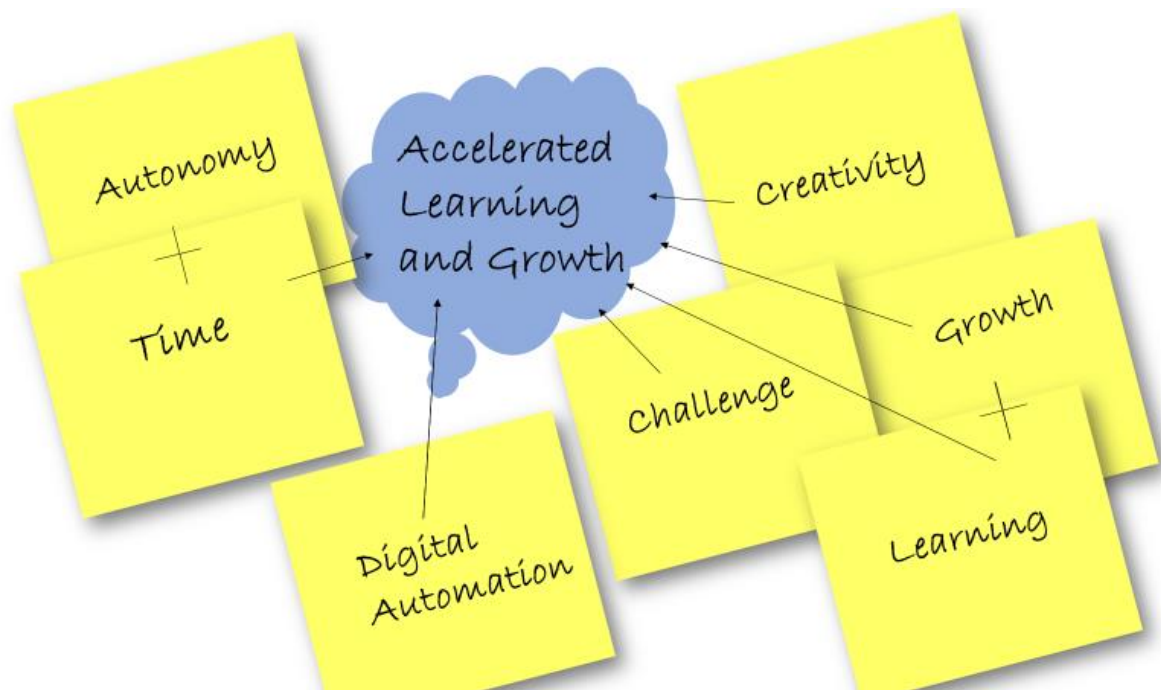
Yours Sincerely

Angela Bancilhon
PhD Candidate

Appendix C – Example Concept Map

Example Concept Map assisting theme development: Accelerated Learning and Growth

Appendix D – Ethics Clearance

Application reference: 0000020958

Title: The Motivations of Digital Entrepreneurs

This project has now been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee, either at a full committee meeting, or via the low risk review process.

The period of human ethics approval will be from 17/01/2018 to 22/11/2019.

The standard conditions of approval for this research project are that:

(a)   you conduct the research project strictly in accordance with the proposal submitted and granted ethics approval, including any amendments required to be made to the proposal by the Human Research Ethics Committee;

(b)   you advise the Human Research Ethics Committee (email ethics@cqu.edu.au) immediately if any complaints are made, or expressions of concern are raised, or any other issue in relation to the project which may warrant review of ethics approval of the project. (A written report detailing the adverse occurrence or unforeseen event must be submitted to the Committee Chair within one working day after the event.)

(c)   you make submission to the Human Research Ethics Committee for approval of any proposed variations or modifications to the approved project before making any such changes;

(d)   you provide the Human Research Ethics Committee with a written Annual Report on each anniversary date of approval (for projects of greater than 12 months) and Final Report by no later than one (1) month after the approval expiry date;

(e)   you accept that the Human Research Ethics Committee reserves the right to conduct scheduled or random inspections to confirm that the project is being conducted in accordance to its approval. Inspections may include asking questions of the research team, inspecting all consent documents and records and being guided through any physical experiments associated with the project

(f)   if the research project is discontinued, you advise the Committee in writing within five (5) working days of the discontinuation;

(g)   A copy of the Statement of Findings is provided to the Human Research Ethics Committee when it is forwarded to participants.

Please note that failure to comply with the conditions of approval and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research may result in withdrawal of approval for the project.

You are required to advise the Secretary in writing if this project does not proceed for any reason. In the event that you require an extension of ethics approval for this project, please make written application in advance of the end-date of this approval. The research cannot continue beyond the end date of approval unless the Committee has granted an extension of ethics approval. Extensions of approval cannot be granted retrospectively. Should you need an extension but not apply for this before the end-date of the approval then a full new application for approval must be submitted to the Secretary for the Committee to consider.

The Human Research Ethics Committee wishes to support researchers in achieving positive research outcomes. If you have issues where the Human Research Ethics Committee may be of assistance or have any queries in relation to this approval please do not hesitate to contact the ethics officers, Sue Evans or Suzanne Harten or myself.

Yours sincerely,

A/Prof Tania Signal

Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee