



Handelshøyskolen BI

GRA 19703 Master Thesis

Thesis Master of Science 100% - W

Predefinert informasjo Startdato: 09- Sluttdato: 03- Eksamensform: T	n 01-2023 09:00 CET			
Startdato: 09- Sluttdato: 03- Eksamensform: T	01-2023 09:00 CET			
Sluttdato: 03- Eksamensform: T		Termin:	202310	
Eksamensform: T	07-2023 12:00 CEST	Vurderingsform:	Norsk 6-trinns skala (A-F)	
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Master's Thesis

Becoming Mainstream: What Makes You a Digital Nomad?

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Examination code and name: GRA 1974 Thesis Master of Science

Program: Master of Science in Business Analytics

Acknowledgment

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our supervisor Prof. Christoph Lutz for his invaluable guidance and support throughout the process of our thesis. Some obstacles made things difficult, but whenever we needed to clarify and go over some details or had a question about the research, he was always there to help and guide us, whether online or in person.

We would also like to thank all the participants in our study. Their willingness to share their insights has made this thesis possible. Thank you for your time and contribution.

Bhavishya: I would like to thank my friends and family, fellow students both past and present, for their support and friendship, without which we would not have been able to complete this journey.

Yunhao: The journey has been arduous but immensely fulfilling. I am grateful for the unwavering support and guidance I received from all those who assisted me academically and spiritually. Thank you.

Abstract

In this fast-paced era, digital nomadism articles dominate social networking platforms, capturing the attention of individuals seeking an alternative to their mundane 9-to-5 lifestyles. While academic studies have explored this global phenomenon, most rely on qualitative interviews to provide a general understanding.

In contrast, our study collected 207 valid survey responses online and employed the PLS-SEM approach. We extended the original TPB by incorporating two new constructs: life satisfaction and policy expectation. Additionally, we examined the mediating role of individual attitude and policy expectation, as well as the moderating role of perceived behavioral control in the policy expectationintention relationship.

Results indicate that all five constructs significantly impact individuals' intention to become digital nomads domestically and internationally. Perceived behavior control has the most significant influence on domestic intention, while policy expectation has the most potent effect on international intention. While individual attitude mediates all proposed paths, policy expectation does not mediate multiple paths leading to domestic intention. Furthermore, perceived behavior control only mediates the relationship between policy expectation and domestic intention, not international intention.

Our study uncovered the drivers influencing the decision-making process of individuals becoming digital nomads. Furthermore, we reviewed the effectiveness of current policies, products, and services in facilitating and supporting this global phenomenon, contributing to developing a sustainable future for the digital nomad lifestyle.

Keywords: Digital nomadism intention, extended TPB, PLS-SEM, life satisfaction, policy expectation

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List of Abbreviations

AVE	Average Variance Extracted
BC	Behavior Control
BI	Behavioral Intention
CA	Cronbach's Alpha
CB-SEM	Covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling
CMB	Common Method Bias
CR	Composite Reliability
DI	Domestic Intention
DN	Digital Nomad
DV	Dependent Variable
ETVE	Expectation of Travel Visa Exemption
HTMT	Heterotrait-monotrait Ratio of Correlations
IA	Individual Attitude
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
II	International Intention
IV	Independent Variable
LS	Life Satisfaction
OSMASEM	One-Stage Meta-Analytic Structural Equation Modeling
PE	Policy Expectation
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SN	Subjective Norm
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
WFA	Working-From-Anywhere
WFH	Working-From-Home

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1 Introduction

1.1 Research background

The rapid advancement of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has emerged as a potent catalyst for digitalization. Simultaneously, spurred by the COVID-19 pandemic, online learning and remote work have transitioned from public health measures to novel modes of lifestyle—where traditional office spaces are no longer necessary (Hermann & Paris, 2020). Individuals can now carry out their tasks from the comfort of staying at home, chilling in a local café, or even sitting on a beach chair, provided they possess a computer and have access to a reliable wireless network in most cases (Mouratidis, 2018).

In recent times, the term "digital nomad" (DN) has gained increasing popularity, not only reflecting the rapid progress of ICTs but also serving as an emblem of liquid modernity (Ahuja et al., 2020a), where individuals are constantly changing and adapting to their life situations. Essentially, DNs encompass a cohort of individuals who traverse cyberspace. Furthermore, according to Hannonen's (2020) review, they constitute a rapidly expanding community of highly autonomous professionals. These individuals achieve their mobile lifestyle by incressantly traveling while concurrently engaging in online work. However, to attain such a remarkable level of life freedom, DNs must possess travel documents with sufficient global mobility to enable their unrestricted international travels (Thompson, 2019). Consequently, it is understandable why a majority of DNs originate from developed Western nations and opt to reside in developing countries with distinct cultures and weaker economies. By doing so, they not only encounter multicultural experiences but also benefit from the advantages provided by geo-arbitrage and geo-hacking (Woldoff & Litchfield, 2021).

According to the statistics provided by Nomadlist (2023), an online platform for DNs, several evident trends can be observed among its registered user base. Firstly, among all the registered users, nearly half (48%) are citizens of the United States, indicating a dominance of American individuals within the DN community. Besides, the majority of DNs are of White ethnicity, constituting 60% of the total user population. Secondly, there is a notable gender disparity in the choice of professional fields among DNs. Male DNs are more prominent in information technology-related roles such as software development, web development, and startup entrepreneurship. On the other hand, female DNs exhibit a closer association with artistic endeavors, including marketing, the creative industry, and blogging.

While for many individuals, the idea of digital nomadism may be associated with alluring social media photographs and an appealing escape from the traditional work routine, this lifestyle has become more accessible to the general public, particularly in the post-pandemic era. We have witnessed a steady increase of searches on Google over the past five years, and the number of subscribers to Reddit r/digitalnomad is mounting over the same period, reaching over 2 million in 2023 (subredditstats, 2023). Several countries, such as Iceland, Croatia, Spain, and Portugal, have implemented favorable policies to encourage and facilitate digital nomadism. As a result, the global count of DNs is expected to reach 35 million, highlighting this phenomenon's widespread adoption and global nature (MBO Partners, 2022; Müller, 2016).

1.2 Research question

To date, a considerable body of scholarly research has been dedicated to investigating the digital nomadism phenomenon. Given its novelty and relative rarity, many scholars have sought to describe and elucidate the characteristics of digital nomadism in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of this emerging lifestyle (Ahuja et al., 2020b; Hannonen, 2020; Hermann & Paris, 2020; Schlagwein, 2018). Numerous studies rely on qualitative interviews or online content analysis as primary research methods to investigate the intricacies and nuances associated with this lifestyle (Aroles et al., 2022; Cook, 2020; Ehn et al., 2022). Although these interviews offer numerous personal thoughts and insights from DNs, they fail to contribute to the development of a comprehensive understanding of the digital nomadism phenomenon, particularly from a quantitative perspective.

Despite the growing body of literature on digital nomadism, few studies have explicitly delved into the motivations and ethos underlying DNs' decision to embark on this lifestyle. While some scholars have started examining the entrepreneurial aspects of digital nomadism (Bozzi, 2020; Stumpf et al., 2022), research specifically focused on the initial reasons individuals choose to become digital nomads, as well as the decisive factors influencing this decision-making process, remains limited. Consequently, our study aims to explore and provide insights into the following research questions:

- 1. What driving constructs lead to people's intention to become DNs, and how are the constructs potentially interacting with each other?
- 2. Are there any noticeable disparities between the domestic and international intentions to become DNs?
- 3. How do the influences on people's intention to become DNs differ from those on people's intention to travel/expatriate?

1.3 Research significance

Engaging in a DN lifestyle entails a transformative change in one's life circumstances, characterized by frequent relocations, navigating unfamiliar environments, and distancing oneself from established social networks, including family and friends. While this lifestyle offers novel experiences, it also presents numerous challenges. Surprisingly, academia has not extensively examined this significant life decision in great detail.

Consequently, this study draws upon theories from the fields of tourism management, digital nomadism entrepreneurship, and relocation and expatriates to explore potential factors and establish causal relationships associated with the decision-making process. In this paper, we will extend the original TPB model by introducing two novel constructs: life satisfaction and policy expectation. Although these two constructs have been verified in related fields such as tourism and expatriates (Ho et al., 2016; Song et al., 2017), their examination in the context of digital nomadism remains insufficient, despite our assumption of their high relevance. Furthermore, in response to do Valle and Assaker (2016), we will be using an emerging method, PLS-SEM, to conduct quantitative analysis, validating the proposed research model and demonstrating the significant role of each potential construct. Despite being in its infancy, our model provides a comprehensive synthesis of several domains pertaining to digital nomadism. It elucidates the theoretical frameworks underpinning people's intention to adopt the digital nomad lifestyle in contemporary society and meticulously examines the salient drivers that exert influence on their decision-making process.

In addition to contributing to the scholarly understanding of the digital nomadism phenomenon, this study aims to present illustrative instances of innovative policies and regulations implemented by certain countries. Moreover, it seeks to elucidate the outcomes of these initiatives, with the overarching objective of offering valuable guidance to relevant governing bodies in formulating appropriate legal provisions. Additionally, the study endeavors to inspire industries to augment their offerings and services by addressing the multifaceted challenges and concerns DNs encounter throughout their decision-making.

The subsequent section will provide a concise overview of the literature about our study while simultaneously presenting the hypotheses derived from this body of existing literature. A visualization of our proposed model will be given at the end of the section. Section 3 will elaborate on the intricacies of our survey design and collection process. Additionally, this section will elucidate the rationale behind our choice of research methodology. Section 4 will adhere to established guidelines and present the comprehensive results and findings. Lastly, Section 5 will draw the research to a conclusion by offering theoretical insights and practical implications derived from our analysis and interpretation.

2 Literature review

2.1 Digital nomad (DN)

The term "digital nomad" emerged approximately two decades ago, coined by Makimoto and Manners (1997), who anticipated a shift in societal dynamics where individuals would oscillate between the roles of nomads and settlers. In recent years, the concept of digital nomadism has gained substantial visibility through its prominence on various social media platforms. DNs actively share their experiences and accomplishments from diverse global locations, utilizing social media to showcase their vibrant lifestyles and document their personal and spiritual growth (Mancinelli, 2020).

In contrast to the settled and stable lifestyle of individuals residing in a fixed location, nomads and migrants embark on journeys away from home, seeking new destinations (Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021). However, it is crucial to differentiate between nomads and migrants. While migrants may establish long-term or permanent residency in their new location, nomads engage in a cyclical process of leaving their current abode, moving to the next destination, and embarking on a new journey (Schlagwein, 2018). For instance, contemporary expatriate workers would be categorized as migrants rather than nomads, as their stay in a foreign country tends to be extensive or permanent.

DNs, as the name suggests, represent a modern incarnation of vagabonds who traverse the virtual landscape of cyberspace. The essence of their nomadic lifestyle has evolved from the primitive pursuit of sustenance to the realization of personal value (Bozzi, 2020). Aimless wandering has transformed into the freedom of travel, and the quest for sustenance has been replaced by online work (Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021). With the advent of 5G technologies, online information flow has supplanted traditional paperwork, further distinguishing DNs from traditional remote workers and business travelers (Thompson, 2018).

While remote workers often have the privilege of working from a location other than a fixed office, typically opting for a work-from-home (WFH) arrangement, DNs, characterized by their perpetual mobility, depart from traditional office settings and embrace a nomadic existence, immersing themselves in a distinct shared culture that encompasses co-working and co-living spaces. These spaces not only offer conducive environments for productive work but also assume the responsibility of fostering connections among DNs and providing them with emotional and spiritual support (Bozzi, 2020; Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021; Mouratidis, 2018). This has given rise to the practice of working-from-anywhere (WFA). In stark contrast to business travelers, DNs possess the unique freedom to select their destinations, actively following their personal inclinations rather than being constrained by the demands of their profession (Thompson, 2018).

Conversely, individuals who are part of the traditional workforce, confined to the routine of a 9-to-5 job, often harbor a sense of envy towards the lifestyle of DNs (Bonneau & Aroles, 2021). When confronted with stagnation and mounting stress within the office environment, individuals begin to yearn for a profound change in their lives (Fujita & Diener, 2005). This desire for change acts as a catalyst, prompting individuals to explore alternative lifestyles, such as that of a DN.

2.2 Theory of planned behavior (TPB)

Building upon the theory of reasoned action (TRA, Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), Ajzen (1991) postulated that human behavior is not entirely driven by volition but is subject to certain forms of control and introduced the concept of perceived behavior control to elucidate the determinants of behavior further. According to his theory of planned behavior (TPB), behavioral intention (BI), which indirectly influences behavior, is shaped by three key factors: (individual) attitude (IA), subjective norm (SN), and perceived behavior control (BC). The TPB framework has been extensively utilized in research within many fields, including marketing management, tourism management, and human resources management, e.g., relocation and expatriation (Engle et al., 2015; Han et al., 2020; Ho et al., 2016; Song et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2022).

2.2.1 Individual attitude (IA)

Individuals engage in an evaluative process known as attitude formation, wherein they assess a particular behavior, assigning either positive or negative evaluations based on their perceptions of the potential outcomes and associated experiences (Ciasullo et al., 2017). Logically, people will develop a favorable attitude toward things that will produce a positive outcome (Han et al., 2020); consequently, a positive attitude towards a particular behavior increases the likelihood of individuals exhibiting a higher level of BI. Given the extensive validation of the impact of IA on an individual's BI, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1.a/b: Individual attitude has a significant and positive effect on people's domestic/international intention to become DNs.

2.2.2 Subjective norm (SN)

SN refers to the perceived social pressure individuals experience when deciding whether to engage in a particular behavior. This pressure is contingent upon the normative beliefs held by influential reference groups (Ajzen, 1991). Putit and Arnott (2007) asserted that individuals from collectivist societies place greater importance on the collective perception of their group and society than on their own individual beliefs. Moreover, during COVID-19, social pressure emanated not only from peers but also from authoritative figures, intensifying its impact on individuals' decision-making processes. Such a change can be exemplified in the research conducted by Wang et al. (2022), which examined the pandemic context and unveiled a more pronounced effect compared to prior studies conducted in related domains. Building upon these studies, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2.a/b: Subjective norm has a significant and positive effect on people's domestic/international intention to become DNs.

2.2.3 Perceived behavior control (BC)

BC encompasses individuals' perceptions of their ability to perform a given behavior effectively, contingent upon their control beliefs (Ciasullo et al., 2017). Several aspects can be evaluated under this construct, e.g., disposable time and income, resources, and opportunities. Thus, it is reasonable to infer that individuals with greater control over their behavior are more likely to generate a higher level of BI as they can initiate the process more efficiently and take on higher risks. For example, Wang et al. (2022) demonstrated a significant influence of individuals' financial capabilities, safety measures, and pandemic-related information on their intention to travel during the COVID-19 pandemic. Drawing upon the evidence presented, we propose the following hypotheses: *Hypothesis 3.a/b: Perceived behavior control has a significant and positive effect on people's domestic/international intention to become DNs.*

2.3 Extension of TPB

According to Ajzen (1991), the TPB allows for the adaptation of its original constructs by modifying paths and incorporating additional variables. This adaptability enables a more comprehensive representation of the variance in both intention and behavior, enhancing the explanatory power of the TPB model (Han et al., 2011). This practice is widely accepted, also within the tourism and organizational expatriate research (Andresen & Margenfeld, 2015; Ho et al., 2016; Song et al., 2017); and Perugini and Bagozzi (2001) have described such a practice as theory broadening and deepening. In order to portray a more comprehensive depiction, we extend the original TPB model by incorporating two new constructs (life satisfaction and policy expectation) and paths (signifying mediating and moderating effects) derived from extant literature spanning the domains of digital nomadism, tourism, and expatriate.

2.3.1 Life satisfaction (LS)

LS encompasses the perception and evaluation of various aspects of individuals' life, constituting a multifaceted construct. Within the scope of our study, the pushpull factor theory, initially proposed by Dann (1977), offers insights into the dynamics of individuals' motivations. According to this theory, we can deduce that push forces pertain to an inclination to seek escape, rest, and relaxation (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Individuals who experience dissatisfaction in various aspects of their lives, such as health, career, or family, may contemplate transitioning from their current circumstances. Stumpf et al. (2022) observed that for many DNs, the initial pursuit of digital nomadism stemmed from a sense of banality, dissatisfaction, and even depression in their previous lifestyles.

Similarly, Ho et al. (2016) revealed the significance of LS in people's intention to expatriate: higher levels of dissatisfaction with their lives increase the likelihood of opting for expatriation. Additionally, Berger and Blomquist (1992) discovered that while LS did not significantly influence individuals' decisions to change their countries of residence, it played a crucial role in determining their choice of

specific destinations. Building upon the insights derived from these prior studies, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 4.a/b: Life satisfaction has a significant and negative effect on people's domestic/international intention to become DNs.

2.3.2 Policy expectation (PE)

Oliver (2014) conceptualized expectation as the likelihood of future outcomes, which is influenced by various sources of information, acquired knowledge, present circumstances, and past experiences, particularly within the context of consumer satisfaction from a behavioral standpoint. He highlighted the cognitive nature of expectation formation, suggesting that when individuals enter a specific situation, they hold diverse expectations, such as for policies, that span a spectrum from highly undesirable to highly appreciated (Oliver, 1981). Studies in psychology have underscored the significant role of expectations in the decisionmaking process (Giorgetta et al., 2021). For instance, Yen and Lu (2008) confirmed the substantial impact of bidders' PE on the disconfirmation of auctioneers, subsequently influencing their own re-purchase intention. Closer to our study, the policies are related to, for example, work, travel, and tax.

The advent of ICTs has brought about a transformative impact on the work domain, giving rise to the prominence of remote work as a viable alternative. The global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated the adoption of such practices, prompting a growing number of individuals to prioritize job opportunities that provide remote work options (de Almeida et al., 2021; Hermann & Paris, 2020). Notably, the implementation of specific work policies related to remote work and travel facilitation contributes to fostering trust and enhancing the attractiveness of digital nomadism as a lifestyle choice (Benton & Hooper, 2022).

Likewise, travel-related policies, such as visa exemption, demolish the barriers for people to travel. Therefore, simplified or removed visa requirements promote international tourism (Han et al., 2011). As DNs have been transforming the economy by rejecting standard employment and stopping paying taxes, preferable local taxation regulations should play a vital role in the phenomenon (Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021; de Almeida et al., 2021). Building upon the insights derived from these prior studies, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 5.a/b: Policy expectation has a significant and positive effect on people's domestic/international intention to become DNs.

2.3.3 Domestic and international intention (DI & II)

Although prior research in the domains of tourism and relocation has predominantly treated DI and II as indistinguishable constructs (Andresen & Margenfeld, 2015; Wang et al., 2022), our study endeavors to address the potential disparity between them by incorporating two separate constructs within our research model (Mignonac, 2008). Our primary objective is to unravel the nuclei of the digital nomadism phenomenon while assessing the differential impacts of these constructs on both DI and II. Preliminary investigations have already indicated that individuals tend to view domestic travel as a complementary component to international travel (Kim et al., 2019), thereby unveiling a discernible sequence or order of preference. Consequently, this finding has prompted us to propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6: People's domestic intention to become DNs has a significant and positive effect on their international intention.

The hypotheses mentioned above explore the primary causality of the TPB and other two factors regarding digital nomadism. The following subsections explore the mediating and moderating effects of some of these factors.

2.3.4 Mediating effect of IA and PE

Traditional TPB proposes that the three factors, IA, SN, and BC, act independently when it comes to the BI of an individual. However, researchers have conducted studies in various domains, exploring the interplay between the three original constructs within the theoretical framework, namely IA, SN, and BC (Engle et al., 2015; Han et al., 2011; Ho et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2022). However, these studies have yielded inconsistent findings, with some reporting significant results while others reporting nonsignificant results (Earle et al., 2020; Umeh & Patel, 2004).

Recent studies in socio-psychology have highlighted the limitations of existing theories in fully capturing individuals' behavioral patterns, warranting the exploration of additional causal pathways among constructs (Wang et al., 2022).

Particularly, SN reflects not only people's BI but also their IA. Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates a robust association between people's IA toward a particular behavior and the social pressure exerted by influential referents. For example, both Han et al. (2011) and Wang et al. (2022) have verified the presence of this additional path, while the latter highlighted its significance during the pandemic. Given that digital nomadism is still a relatively novel concept, people may rely on and be influenced by their social environment in forming their own evaluations of certain behavior. Thereby, it is reasonable to posit that more favorable word-of-mouth and lower social pressure would lead to a more positive IA. Likewise, some studies in tourism have supported the potential relationships among PE, IA, and BI (Qu & Lam, 1997; Whyte, 2008).

As previously noted, expectation formation is a cognitive process (Oliver, 1981). An array of studies conducted across diverse contexts have underscored the significant impact of cognitive factors on engendering favorable evaluation and appraisal (IA in our study), as well as influencing decision-making processes (Han & Back, 2008; Oliver, 1993). Han et al. (2011) corroborated that the expectation of tourist visa exemption has a positive influence on people's attitudes toward travel. Accordingly, it can be assumed that one's PE possibly triggers a favorable attitude towards digital nomadism and augments the likelihood of cultivating an intention to become a DN.

Hypothesis 7: Subjective norm has a significant and positive effect on individual attitude.Hypothesis 8: Policy expectation has a significant and positive effect on individual attitude.

As an additional volitional construct integrated into our conceptual model, PE represents an individual's resolute determination for policies that facilitate their desired behaviors. In the context of digital nomadism, various barriers, including but not limited to COVID-19 regulations, visa requirements, and taxation burdens, can impede individuals with a high level of interest in this lifestyle, those with limited available resources, and those currently in unfavorable circumstances. Consequently, the implementation of supportive measures becomes crucial in dismantling these obstacles.

Hypothesis 9: Subjective norm has a significant and positive effect on policy expectation.
Hypothesis 10: Perceived behavior control has a significant and positive effect on policy expectation.
Hypothesis 11: Life satisfaction has a significant and negative effect on policy expectation.

We acknowledge the intricacies of the relationships among all potential constructs, grounded upon the findings garnered from previous studies. Based on this foundation, we put forth the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 12.a/b: Individual attitude is a mediator between subjective norm and domestic/international intention to become DNs. Hypothesis 13.a/b: Individual attitude is a mediator between policy expectation and domestic/international intention to become DNs. Hypothesis 14.a/b: Policy expectation is a mediator between subjective norm and domestic/international intention to become DNs. Hypothesis 15.a/b: Policy expectation is a mediator between perceived behavior control and domestic/international intention to become DNs. Hypothesis 16.a/b: Policy expectation is a mediator between life satisfaction and domestic/international intention to become DNs.

2.3.5 Moderating effect of BC

Initially, BC was not conceptualized as a direct or indirect determinant of behavior, nor was it proposed to mediate intention. Its original conceptualization was as a moderator of the relationship between intention and behavior (Hagger et al., 2022). If BC accurately represents the level of actual control, it is expected to function as a moderator of the relationship between intention and behavior, whereby the strength of this relationship is greater when BC is high rather than low. However, research has shown that BC not only moderates the intentionbehavior relationship but also directly predicts behavior, as it is in TPB. In most studies, BC is considered a direct predictor of behavior alongside intention rather than just a moderator of the relationship (Hagger et al., 2022; see also McEachan et al., 2011). In recent years, extending from the original TPB, there has been a growing interest in investigating the moderating role of BC (La Barbera & Ajzen, 2021). According to La Barbera & Ajzen (2021), the majority of research has primarily concentrated on investigating the moderating role of BC in the intention-behavior relationship. However, only a limited number of studies have explored the moderating effect of BC on the relationships between attitude-intention and subjective norm-intention. Hence, in the same paper, the authors provided evidence indicating that the regression coefficient for the interaction between IA and BC was both significant and positive. Similarly, the regression coefficient for the interaction between SN and BC was also significant but displayed a negative relationship. (La Barbera & Ajzen, 2021). Nevertheless, in a more recent paper, Akter and Hasan (2023) have revealed that the interaction between BC and IA had a considerable and significant negative impact on halal tourism intention. On the other hand, the interaction between BC and SN displayed an insignificant positive effect on halal tourism intention.

Like the results above, many studies investigating the moderating effects of BC have yielded inconsistent findings, with discrepancies observed in the significance and even direction of coefficients. Hagger et al. (2022) acknowledged that these inconsistencies within the research on the TPB might stem, in part, from methodological artifacts present across different studies. In an attempt to address this issue, the authors employed a one-stage meta-analytic structural equation modeling (OSMASEM) approach to examine the interaction effects of TPB across a range of available studies on the theory. However, after analyzing 39 datasets from the Hagger and Hamilton labs, they did not identify any significant moderating effects of BC on the relationship between attitude and intention, nor the relationship between subjective norm and intention. Thus, these paths were not examined in our study.

Given our introduction of the new volitional construct of PE, our study aims to investigate the potential interaction between BC and PE. Specifically, we postulate that individuals with differing levels of BC will display varying levels of intention when PE is heightened. Drawing upon existing research, we hypothesize that the association between PE and DI/II will be more pronounced when BC is high. *Hypothesis 17.a/b: Perceived behavioral control significantly moderates the relationship between policy expectation and domestic/international intention to become DNs.*

Figure 2-1 presents the comprehensive research model proposed in this study. Hypotheses 1 to 11 establish direct paths connecting pairs of constructs. Hypotheses 12 to 16 elucidate the mediating effects of IA and PE. Hypothesis 17 signifies the moderating effect of PE.



Figure 2-1 Proposed research model

3 Methodology

3.1 Data source

3.1.1 Measures

The questionnaire employed in our study comprises three distinct sections: Section 1 consists of the definition of digital nomadism and includes screening questions; Section 2 focuses on measurement items encompassing the constructs of IA, SN, BC, LS, PE, DI, and II; Section 3 collects personal information.

In the realm of tourism research, various established scales have been utilized to gauge indicators based on the TPB in order to investigate individuals' travel intentions. Consequently, all items of the five TPB constructs in this study were drawn from previous research endeavors (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Han et al., 2011; Song et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2022). However, considering the dissimilarities between digital nomadism and traditional tourism, the wording of these items was adapted and modified during the questionnaire's pre-test phase. Additionally, the construct of LS, frequently addressed in the social science field, was adopted from the seminal Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS, Diener et al., 1985). The three items concerning PE were adapted from a study conducted by Song et al. (2017), which explored the influence of visa waivers on the travel intentions of Chinese citizens. All the aforementioned items were measured using a 7-point scale ranging from 1, denoting "Strongly Disagree," to 7, "Strongly Agree." The personal information section comprises multiple-choice questions that help us depict the respondent's image and help us investigate any additional effects imposed by these factors.

Table 3-1 Measurement items

Items	Description	Reference
IA1	I think becoming a digital nomad is interesting.	
IA2	I think becoming a digital nomad is valuable.	Han et al. (2011)
IA3	I think becoming a digital nomad is pleasant.	
SN1	My family would approve my decision to become a digital nomad.	
SN2	My friends would support my decision to become a digital nomad.	Han et al. (2011)
SN3	My colleagues would understand my decision to become a digital nomad.	
BC1	I have skills and abilities to become a digital nomad.	Han et al. (2011)

BC2	I can find resources and opportunities to become a digital nomad.	
BC3	Whether or not I become a digital nomad is completely up to me.	
LS1	In most ways my life is close to my ideal.	
LS2	I am satisfied with my life.	Diener et al. (1985)
LS3	So far, I have actualized/gotten the important things I want in life.	
PE1	Better travel policies (e.g., visa-free) will attract me become a digital nomad.	
PE2	Better work policies (e.g., remote work) will facilitate me to become a digital nomad.	Song et al. (2017)
PE3	Better taxation policies (e.g., reduced tax rate) will motivate me to become a digital nomad.	
DI1	I would love to become a digital nomad in my home country in the future.	
DI2	I hope to become a digital nomad in my home country in the future.	Song et al. (2017)
DI3	I intend to become a digital nomad in my home country in the future.	
II1	I would love to become a digital nomad abroad in the future.	
II2	I hope to become a digital nomad abroad in the future.	Song et al. (2017)
II3	I intend to become a digital nomad abroad in the future.	

3.1.2 Data collection

This study aims to target the global DN community, with a focus not only on the current state and decision-making processes of existing DNs but also on analyzing the perceptions of the phenomenon and future plans of individuals who are not yet practicing digital nomadism. To ensure a diverse pool of respondents, the survey did not impose strict filtering rules during the data collection process. All potential respondents, regardless of their prior awareness of digital nomadism, were eligible to participate if they met the following criteria: (1) being at least 18 years old, (2) demonstrating a willingness to participate, and (3) providing consent for the analysis of their personal data.

Given the inherently digital nature of the phenomenon per se, as well as the widespread presence of DNs on various social networking sites, the questionnaires were disseminated and collected through online platforms. From April to May 2023, the questionnaires were disseminated across multiple social

networks, including LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, and WeChat. The data collection and management process were facilitated using the Qualtrics platform.

3.1.3 Respondents' profile

A total of 214 questionnaires were received from respondents representing 27 countries across the globe. However, seven of these questionnaires were excluded from the final analysis, leaving a total sample size of 207. The exclusion criteria were based on respondents' failure to comprehend the meaning of digital nomadism, as indicated by their inability to pass the screening questions and subsequent failure to complete the survey as expected.

As depicted in Table 3-2, among the 207 respondents included in the analysis, the majority identified as female (female:male = 1.58:1.00). The age distribution of respondents revealed that a significant proportion fell within the relatively young age range of 25 to 34 years (61.4%). Furthermore, over two-thirds of respondents reported being single or never married, while the majority (86.5%) had no children. In terms of household income, 83.6% of the respondents reported earning less than US\$99,999 annually, with the most significant proportion (40.6%) falling within the income range of US\$20,000 to US\$49,999.

It is worth noting that all respondents in the study possessed at least an upper secondary education qualification, with 67 individuals holding master's degrees and 12 individuals holding doctoral degrees. Finally, the respondents exhibited diverse industry backgrounds, with the student category representing approximately one-fifth (22.7%) of the sample. Other prevalent industry sectors among the respondents included computing or information technology (14.0%), accountancy, banking, consultancy, or finance (10.6%), and marketing, advertising, or public relations (9.2%).

Variables	n	%
Gender	207	100%
Male	80	38.6%
Female	126	60.9%
Non-binary or genderqueer	1	0.5%
Transgender	0	0.0%

Table 3-2 Respondent characteristics

Other	0	0.0%
Age	207	100%
Under 24	40	19.3%
25-34	127	61.4%
35-44	17	8.2%
45-54	14	6.8%
55 and older	9	4.3%
Marital Status	207	100%
Single or never married	139	67.1%
Now married or domestic partnership	65	31.4%
Divorced	3	1.4%
Widow	0	0.0%
Separate	0	0.0%
Dependents	207	100%
none	179	86.5%
1	15	7.2%
2	10	4.8%
3	2	1.0%
4 and more	1	0.5%
Household income	207	100%
Less than US\$20,000	37	17.9%
Between US\$20,000 - US\$49,999	84	40.6%
Between US\$50,000 - US\$99,999	52	25.1%
Between US\$100,000 - US\$149,999	23	11.1%
Over US\$150,000	11	5.3%
Education	207	100%
Primary education or less	0	0.0%
Lower secondary education	0	0.0%
Upper secondary education	8	3.9%
Post-secondary non-tertiary education	14	6.8%
Bachelor's or equivalent level	106	51.2%
Master's or equivalent level	67	32.4%
Doctoral or equivalent level	12	5.8%
Occupation Industry	207	100%
Accountancy, banking, consultancy, or finance	22	10.6%
Computing or IT	29	14.0%
Creative arts or design	13	6.3%
Engineering or manufacturing	4	1.9%

Entrepreneur or businessperson	4	1.9%
Hospitality, leisure, or tourism	3	1.4%
Marketing, advertising, or PR	19	9.2%
Public services or administration	17	8.2%
Retail or sales	3	1.4%
Retiree	9	4.3%
Student	47	22.7%
Unemployed	11	5.3%
Other	26	12.6%

3.2 Data analysis

3.2.1 Partial least squares structural equation model (PLS-SEM)

In contrast to performing multiple regression analyses sequentially, the utilization of SEM allows for the examination of multiple relationships among independent variables (IVs) and dependent variables (DVs), as well as the inclusion of moderators and mediators (Ullman, 2006). SEM goes beyond mere correlation analysis by incorporating causal effects along defined paths, thereby emphasizing prediction in estimation and providing causal explanations (Sarstedt et al., 2022).

The existing literature has observed two commonly employed SEM methods: the covariance-based structural equation model (CB-SEM) and the partial least squares structural equation model (PLS-SEM). While ongoing discussions among researchers still persist regarding the estimation differences and advantages of one method over the other, it is important to note that both CB-SEM and PLS-SEM share the same theoretical foundations and are meant to be complementary (Jöreskog & Wold, 1982). Additionally, these two methods are capable of addressing various research topics in different contexts (Chin, 2010; Hair et al., 2011; Sarstedt et al., 2016). Consequently, researchers have advocated for the consideration of both CB-SEM and PLS-SEM, suggesting that the choice of method should be guided by practical considerations, encompassing the overall characteristics and objectives of the study rather than relying solely on the merits of a single method.

Table 3-3 presents the main differences highlighted by scholars between CB-SEM and PLS-SEM. Based on these differences, we determined that PLS-SEM was more suitable for our analysis due to the following reasons:

- Given the limited existing research on the determinants of individuals' intention to practice digital nomadism, our study adopts an exploratory approach with the aim of identifying the critical constructs of interest. In contrast, CB-SEM is often more suitable for theory confirmation (Hair et al., 2011).
- 2. The sample size in our study is relatively small. CB-SEM typically requires a minimum sample size of five to ten observations per indicator, resulting in a range of 105 to 210 responses in our case. However, PLS-SEM allows for a sample size of ten times the most significant number of structural paths directed at a particular latent construct, corresponding to 60 responses in our study (Hair et al., 2011). It is important to note that the actual required sample size should be determined based on the specific characteristics of each study. We will further elaborate on this issue in Subsection 3.2.3.
- 3. Some of the indicators used in our study do not follow a normal distribution. While CB-SEM may produce biased or inaccurate results under such circumstances (Reinartz et al., 2009), PLS-SEM is known for its reliability and robustness, making it more suitable for analyzing data with non-normal distributions (Sarstedt et al., 2016).

	Method		
Aspects	CB-PLS	PLS-SEM	
Estimation matrix	Covariance	Variance	
Research goal	Theory testing and confirmation	Predicting key target constructs and identifying key drivers	
Sample size	Requiring a relatively large sample size	Working well with both small and large sample sizes	
Distribution assumption	Requiring data to be normally distributed	Showing higher robustness with nonnormal data	
Goodness of fit	Well-established indicators such as Chisq, GFI, CFI, and RFI	No commonly agreed measurements well developed	

Table 3-3 Comparison between CB-SEM and PLS-SEM

All data analysis and model assessments were conducted using SmartPLS 4 software (Ringle et al., 2022). Following the guidelines provided by Hair et al. (2019) for a comprehensive evaluation process of PLS-SEM and recommendations for reporting, we will assess the measurement model and the structural model separately in subsequent sections. We will report relevant data associated with these models, including factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha (CA), composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT), variance inflation factor (VIF), R square (R^2), Q square (Q^2), f square (f^2), path coefficients, and significance levels. These measures will provide insights into the model's goodness-of-fit, reliability, validity, and explanatory power.

3.2.2 PLS-SEM and tourism

Within the tourism research domain, the dominant method of choice has traditionally been CB-SEM. However, since the publication of the first article on the application of PLS-SEM in tourism research in 2012 (Assaker et al., 2012), the adoption of PLS-SEM in this field has gained momentum over time. Numerous studies have explored various aspects of the tourism industry using PLS-SEM, including destination loyalty, perceived organizational quality, and travel intentions (do Valle & Assaker, 2016). Nevertheless, it remains essential for researchers employing PLS-SEM to provide clear justifications for their methodological choice, as we have previously presented.

Chin (2010) has emphasized the importance of including specific information in subsequent studies, such as details regarding the target population and sample, data distribution, conceptual model, hypotheses, and results which enable model validation and hypothesis testing. A summary by do Valle and Assaker (2016) revealed that reflective models accounted for more than half of the tourism research studies utilizing PLS-SEM. These models typically comprised an average of 5.60 latent variables and 7.23 structural paths. While key statistics such as indicator loadings, CR, AVE, path coefficient estimates, and explained variance (R^2) were reported in the majority of studies, cross-loadings and the Stone-Geisser index (Q^2) were less frequently reported, appearing in only 30.0% and 36.7% of studies, respectively. The authors' conclusion suggests that researchers in the tourism field have not maximized the potential of PLS-SEM, thereby overlooking

opportunities to provide further evidence for their findings and improve their analytical approaches. To harness the full advantages of the methodological extensions offered by PLS-SEM, we will leverage various functions and algorithms provided by SmartPLS to deepen our understanding of the data and the phenomenon of digital nomadism.

3.2.3 Sample size evaluation

The sample size is a critical factor in data processing, and therefore, it is crucial to obtain a sufficient number of questionnaire responses during the data collection phase. While a general recommendation of 100 cases has been suggested to enhance accuracy (Assaker et al., 2012), it is important to note that such a specific number may not be applicable or meaningful across a wide range of research studies. Consequently, scholars have proposed various methods to determine the minimum sample size based on the unique characteristics of each study.

- The "10-times rule" method, commonly mentioned and employed in many studies utilizing PLS-SEM, has several versions (Hair et al., 2011; Peng & Lai, 2012). The most frequently cited version of this method suggests that the minimum sample size should be at least ten times the maximum number of links directed at any latent variable in either the inner or outer model (Goodhue et al., 2012). In our study, this corresponds to 10 times the number of links directed at II, which is 6. Therefore, according to this method, the minimum recommended sample size is 60. However, it is important to note that this method may lead to "grossly inaccurate estimations of the minimum required sample size" (Kock, 2018, p.5). Hence, we seek additional confidence through alternative methods.
- 2. The minimum R^2 method, proposed in the influential work by Hair et al. (2022) in the field of PLS-SEM, presents another approach for determining the minimum sample size. This method is based on Cohen's (1988) power tables for least squares regression and considers three factors: the maximum number of links directed at any latent variable, the chosen significance level, and the minimum R^2 in the model. In our study, with six links directed at II and a significance level of 5%, the minimum sample sizes required for minimum R^2 values of 0.10, 0.25, 0.50, and 0.75 are 157, 75, 48, and 39, respectively.

3. The inverse square root method, introduced by Kock (2018) and informed by previous research in the tourism and hospitality field (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017), offers another approach to sample size estimation. Kock (2018) proposed that researchers should determine the acceptable values of path coefficients in future sample size estimation. Utilizing his method, which integrates Cohen's (1988, 1992) power assessment guidelines and Monte Carlo simulations, he recommended a minimum required sample size of 160, calculated with a minimum β of 0.197. Given that such a coefficient can be justified based on previous research on travel intentions, particularly within the framework of TPB and SEM (Han et al., 2011; Lam & Hsu, 2006; Rahmafitria et al., 2021), we consider this number to be relevant and reliable for our study.

Based on these values and considerations, we assert that the total of 207 collected responses in our study is adequate to proceed with our research and conduct an analysis of the relationships among the latent constructs.

4 Results

Chin (1998) proposed a two-moment assessment for PLS-SEM. The first moment is the evaluation of the outer model, i.e., "the part of the model describing the relationships *between* the latent variables and their relationships" (do Valle & Assaker, 2016, p. 701). If all the criteria of the outer model are satisfied, researchers can move on to the next moment — the inner model, i.e., "the part of the model describing the relationships *across* the latent variables that make up the model" (do Valle & Assaker, 2016, p. 701).

4.1 Outer model (measurement model) assessment

In line with the literature review, our model establishment is regarded as reflective. To proceed, we are adhering to the guidelines outlined by Hair et al. (2019), wherein we assess the indicator loadings as well as evaluate internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

4.1.1 Factor loadings, reliability, and convergent validity

Initially, all 21 indicator items were included in our model. Notwithstanding, while CR values within the range of 0.70 to 0.95 are conventionally regarded as acceptable (Aburumman et al., 2023; Hair et al., 2019), both DI and II exhibit CR values surpassing 0.95. This issue suggests that the indicators may be redundant and can lead to inflated correlations among the error terms of the indicators (Diamantopoulos et al., 2012; Drolet & Morrison, 2001). Unlike CB-SEM, PLS-SEM is known to perform well even with single-item constructs (Hair et al., 2019). Hence, we removed items DI2 and II2 from the model to address our concern, as their VIF exceeded the suggested upper-bound threshold of 5 (Becker et al., 2015; Mason & Perreault, 1991).

As depicted in Table 4-1, following the model modification, all factor loadings surpass the recommended threshold of 0.708, indicating that more than half of the variance in the indicators can be accounted for and thus affirming item reliability (Hair et al., 2019). To assess the reliability of the measurement model, we utilize CA and CR. The values presented in Table 4-1, columns 4 and 5, satisfy the requirement that they should fall between 0.70 and 0.95, thus confirming the establishment of internal consistency reliability. Convergent validity, which elucidates the extent to which a construct can explain the variance of its indicator

items, is typically demonstrated by the statistic known as AVE. Similar to the requirement for loadings, a threshold of 0.50 is typically expected for AVE. All constructs in our model exceed this threshold, providing evidence for the confirmation of convergent validity.

Item	Mean	<i>S.D</i> .	Loading	CA	CR (rho_a)	AVE
IA1	5.715	1.282	0.898			
IA2	5.517	1.211	0.890	0.868	0.878	0.791
IA3	5.565	1.257	0.880			
SN1	4.469	1.653	0.710			
SN2	5.478	1.431	0.898	0.767	0.835	0.679
SN3	4.923	1.436	0.851			
BC1	4.981	1.609	0.846			
BC2	4.512	1.691	0.871	0.743	0.752	0.664
BC3	4.778	1.769	0.718			
LS1	4.517	1.447	0.866			
LS2	4.889	1.380	0.886	0.869	0.928	0.787
LS3	4.309	1.573	0.909			
PE1	5.531	1.451	0.872			
PE2	5.981	1.179	0.901	0.869	0.875	0.793
PE3	5.604	1.396	0.898			
DI1	4.681	1.884	0.939	0.804	0.024	0.003
DI3	4.082	1.849	0.961	0.094	0.924	0.905
II1	4.995	1.729	0.955	0.001	0.001	0.010
II3	4.469	1.815	0.953	0.901	0.901	0.910

Table 4-1 Factor loadings, reliability, and convergent validity

4.1.2 Discriminant validity

The final step in assessing the measurement model involves substantiating the discriminant validity. The commonly employed method for this purpose is Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criterion, which suggests that "the AVE of each latent construct should be higher than the construct's highest squared correlation with any other latent construct" (Hair et al., 2011, p. 145). In our model, this criterion is met. However, this method has been shown to be ineffective when the loadings of a construct do not exhibit significant differences (Henseler et al., 2015), which may be the case for a few of our constructs. As an alternative approach, Henseler et al. (2015, p. 121) introduced the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations

(HTMT), which calculates "the average of the heterotrait-heteromethod correlations... relative to the average of the monotrait-heteromethod correlations".High HTMT values indicate potential issues with discriminant validity.

In Table 4-2, all values are considerably below the recommended threshold of 0.9 and even below the more conservative value of 0.85 (Franke & Sarstedt, 2019; Henseler et al., 2015). Therefore, we can confidently conclude that the discriminant validity is established within our model.

Construct	IA	SN	BC	LS	PE	DI	П
IA							
SN	0.394						
BC	0.090	0.524					
LS	0.060	0.382	0.467				
PE	0.626	0.360	0.290	0.078			
DI	0.358	0.318	0.449	0.081	0.386		
Π	0.521	0.442	0.409	0.083	0.665	0.477	

Table 4-2 Discriminant validity HTMT matrix

4.2 Inner model (structural model) assessment

Once the measurement model statistics have been assessed, we proceed to the next stage of analysis. In addition to the commonly reported information such as R^2 , path coefficients, and significance levels, we will include effect size f^2 to determine the necessity of the moderating effect, as well as the cross-validated redundancy measure Q^2 based on the blindfolding procedure to assess predictive accuracy (Geisser, 1974).

Since PLS-SEM involves multiple regression equations, it is crucial to examine collinearity to prevent bias in the regressions (Hair et al., 2019). Although we have already checked the VIF when evaluating the measurement model, we further test for common method bias (CMB) in PLS-SEM by examining both the VIF of the structural model and conducting Harman's one-factor test. The inner model VIF matrix provided by SmartPLS 4 indicates that all VIF values are below the recommended threshold of 3 (Becker et al., 2015; Mason & Perreault, 1991). Additionally, using SPSS 28.0 (IBM Corp., 2021), we computed the percentage of variance extracted by the first factor. The result of 31.15% is significantly below

the general limit of 50.00% suggested by Harman (1976), thereby excluding the possibility of CMB.

4.2.1 Path evaluation

Having confirmed the absence of collinearity issues, we proceeded to calculate relevant statistics using bootstrapping in SmartPLS 4, employing the following parameter settings: subsamples (5000), confidence interval method (percentile), test type (one-tailed), and significance level (0.05). Subsequently, we conducted an analysis of the path coefficients and their significance.

As presented in Table 4-3, our findings indicate that 14 out of 16 of our primary hypotheses are supported, with particular emphasis on the critical importance of PE, BC, and SN. Notably, the most substantial effect was observed between PE and IA, with a coefficient as high as 0.495. Concerning individuals' intention to become DNs, BC and PE exhibited the most substantial positive effects on DI and II, respectively, with coefficients exceeding 0.300. It is noteworthy that BC has consistently been identified as a primary driver in the domains of tourism and expatriation. Therefore, it is intriguing to observe that, in the context of digital nomadism decision-making, PE plays an even more influential role. This heightened influence is likely attributed to the multifaceted nature of the phenomenon, encompassing aspects of travel, work, and lifestyle. Thus, we emphasize the significance of implementing enabling policies in this global phenomenon.

Out of the 16 hypotheses tested in our study, we found that Hypotheses 2.a and 5.a, both leading to DI, were not supported. This outcome deviates from previous findings in tourism and relocation research (Andresen & Margenfeld, 2015; Engle et al., 2015; Song et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2022), where SN has consistently demonstrated significance. Such a finding reveals a higher level of personal agency when individuals decide to practice digital nomadism in their home countries, suggesting the efforts of applicable registries and stakeholders to be spent on other constructs. The absence of a relationship between LS and DI can be explained by the tendency of individuals with lower LS to pursue more substantial changes in their environments and circumstances, thereby reducing their consideration of domestic travel or relocations (Mignonac, 2008).

Hypothesis	Path	ß	<i>S.D</i> .	t	р	Result
1.a	IA -> DI	0.206	0.077	2.672	0.004	0
1.b	IA -> II	0.149	0.069	2.146	0.016	Ο
2.a	SN -> DI	0.033	0.075	0.439	0.331	Х
2.b	SN -> II	0.164	0.074	2.220	0.013	0
3.a	BC -> DI	0.333	0.077	4.343	0.000	0
3.b	BC -> II	0.186	0.074	2.503	0.006	Ο
4.a	LS -> DI	-0.051	0.082	0.616	0.269	Х
4.b	LS -> II	-0.181	0.069	2.626	0.004	Ο
5.a	PE -> DI	0.139	0.077	1.802	0.036	Ο
5.b	PE -> II	0.342	0.069	4.941	0.000	Ο
6	DI -> II	0.176	0.066	2.683	0.004	0
7	SN -> IA	0.199	0.056	3.557	0.000	0
8	PE -> IA	0.495	0.084	5.873	0.000	0
9	SN -> PE	0.299	0.085	3.532	0.000	0
10	BC -> PE	0.217	0.102	2.130	0.017	Ο
11	LS -> PE	-0.251	0.100	2.514	0.006	0

Table 4-3 Hypothesis test results

Notes: O: Supported; X: Not supported



Figure 4-1 Structural model results

Our findings are consistent with previous studies on people's travel/expatriation intentions. Table 4-4 provides a depiction of the temporal fluctuations observed in our study compared to previous research. Notably, the primary disparities among the studies are observed in the case of IA, where the range of effects varies from 0.000 to 0.223, and opposite results are found between intention to travel and intentions to expatriate or to become DNs for DI and II. Such a disparity between tourism and digital nomadism/expatriate casts light on the next step for respective stakeholders to react and attract their target groups.

Although the results regarding the influence of SN on DI are not significant, it corresponds to a recent study within hospitality by Yeh et al. (2021). The results concerning II align with the studies conducted by Han et al. (2011) and Song et al. (2017), but our findings show a smaller effect size compared to a study conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic (Wang et al., 2022). This discrepancy can be attributed to individuals adhering to isolation measures and precautions during the pandemic, particularly in conservative and group-oriented regions such as Taiwan and East Asia (Zhang et al., 2005).

Regarding BC and PE/ETVE (expectation of tourist visa exemption in the other two studies), no significant differences are observed. The positive effects of SN and PE/ETVE on IA are also evident, with our results aligning with earlier studies, although the effect of SN is found to be stronger during the pandemic. Given these findings, we can proceed to test for indirect and mediation effects within the model.

4.2.2 Mediating effect evaluation

Svensson et al. (2018) have advocated for the inclusion of interaction terms in research to capture nonlinear effects and examine their significance. This approach has been supported by previous studies in tourism and relocation (Andresen & Margenfeld, 2015; Han et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2022) and further reinforced by our own findings (Hypotheses 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11). As such, we proceeded to investigate the mediation effects of IA and PE on intention.

Table 4-5 presents the results of our analysis, revealing that the indirect effects of SN, BC, and LS on DI through PE are not statistically significant. This outcome

Path	Han et al. (2011)	Song et al. (2017)	Wang et al. (2022)	Ho et al. (2016)	Yeh et al. (2021)	This	s study
	I.TI	I.TI	D.TI	I.EI	D.HCI	D.DNI	I.DNI
IA -> BI	0.22^{**}	0.00	0.12^{*}	0.16**	0.28^{***}	0.21**	0.15^{*}
SN -> BI	0.16**	0.13*	0.22^{***}	0.22^{**}	0.08	0.03	0.16^{*}
BC -> BI	0.14**	0.18***	0.41^{***}	-	0.29^{**}	0.33***	0.19^{**}
LS -> BI	-	-	-	-0.20 ^{**†}	-	-0.05	-0.18**
PE/ETVE -> BI	0.45**	0.16**	-	-	-	0.14^{*}	0.34***
SN -> IA	0.11^{*}	-	0.38***	0.19^{**}	0.32***	0.2	20***
PE/ETVE -> IA	0.44**	-	-	-	-	0.5	50***

Table 4-4 Comparison of the coefficients in related studies

Notes: *** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05; [†] the sign is converted from dissatisfaction to satisfaction

BI: Behavioral Intention; D/I.TI: Domestic/International Travel Intention; D/I.EI: Domestic/International Expatriation Intention; D.HCI: Domestic Hotel Consumption Intention; D/I.DNI: Domestic/International Digital Nomadism Intention can be primarily attributed to the potential psychological disconnect between policies and domestic digital nomadism, thus suggesting that digital nomadism is primarily an *international* phenomenon (Bozzi, 2020; Hannonen, 2020; Müller, 2016). As a result, we reject Hypotheses 14.a, 15.a, and 16.a, which pertain to the mediating effect of PE in this context. Notably, when considering the indirect effects of two pairs of hypotheses, namely 12.a & 14.a and 12.b & 14.b, we can conclude that the mediation effect of PE is more robust than that of IA.

Hypothesis	Path	Direct ß	р	Indirect ß	р	Result
12.a	SN -> IA -> DI	0.113	0.002	0.041	0.021	0
12.b	SN -> IA -> II	0.180	0.000	0.030	0.048	0
13.a	PE -> IA -> DI	0.102	0.008	0.102	0.008	0
13.b	PE -> IA -> II	0.116	0.001	0.074	0.016	0
14.a	SN -> PE -> DI	0.113	0.002	0.042	0.055	Х
14.b	SN -> PE -> II	0.180	0.000	0.102	0.003	0
15.a	BC -> PE -> DI	0.052	0.023	0.030	0.078	Х
15.b	BC -> PE -> II	0.158	0.001	0.074	0.029	0
16.a	LS -> PE -> DI	-0.061	0.018	0.035	0.066	Х
16.b	LS -> PE -> II	-0.124	0.008	-0.086	0.015	0

Table 4-5 Mediation effect results

Notes: *** p<0.001; ** p<0.01; * p<0.05

4.2.3 Moderating effect evaluation

Following the approach proposed by Chin et al. (2003), we adopted a two-stage approach to evaluate the moderation effect, which has been shown to yield superior parameter recovery and statistical power (Becker et al., 2018). Stage 1 involved examining the main effect model without the inclusion of interaction term(s), which corresponds to the structural model evaluated earlier. Stage 2 entailed introducing the interaction term(s) into the original model to create a new model. Hair et al. (2021, p. 161) state, "There is no requirement to assess the measurement model of the interaction term since it represents an auxiliary measurement that does not represent a distinct theoretical entity." Consequently, we present the results directly from the structural model (Table 4-6 and Figure 4-2).

The findings pertaining to the 16 primary paths remain largely unchanged, with only marginal differences observed in the coefficients. With the exception of

Hypotheses 2.a and 4.a, all other hypotheses continue to be supported. Hypotheses 17.a and 17.b investigate the moderating effect of BC. While the relationship between PE and DI is further amplified with the moderation of BC, we do not observe the same effect between PE and II. Given that PE already exerts a strong influence on II independently, it is understandable that BC does not contribute significantly to international decision-making. The comparison between hypotheses 17.a and 17.b suggests potential avenues for future work, particularly for stakeholders involved in drafting policies or regulations aimed at attracting domestic talents.

Moreover, as we have witnessed the R^2 of DI increased from 24.1% to 25.7%, we computed the effect size as:

$$f^2 = rac{R_{included}^2 - R_{excluded}^2}{1 - R_{included}^2} \;,$$

from which we got an f^2 of 0.022. Againis et al. (2005) conducted a study that revealed potential overestimation of effect size standards traditionally used for f^2 . Subsequent research has proposed more realistic thresholds of 0.005, 0.01, and 0.025 to represent small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively (Kenny, 2018). Considering these revised thresholds, we recognize the significance of incorporating interaction terms and acknowledge the moderating role of PE in our analysis.

Hypothesis	Path	ß	<i>S.D</i> .	t	р	Result
1.a	IA -> DI	0.184	0.077	2.397	0.008	0
1.b	IA -> II	0.149	0.071	2.095	0.018	Ο
2.a	SN -> DI	0.044	0.072	0.614	0.270	Х
2.b	SN -> II	0.164	0.074	2.220	0.013	Ο
3.a	BC -> DI	0.336	0.073	4.585	0.000	Ο
3.b	BC -> II	0.186	0.076	2.462	0.007	Ο
4.a	LS -> DI	-0.080	0.082	0.971	0.166	Х
4.b	LS -> II	-0.181	0.071	2.539	0.006	Ο
5.a	PE -> DI	0.163	0.074	2.200	0.014	Ο
5.b	РЕ -> II	0.343	0.069	4.990	0.000	Ο
6	DI -> II	0.176	0.065	2.716	0.003	Ο

Table 4-6 Hypothesis results with moderation

7	SN -> IA	0.199	0.056	3.557	0.000	Ο
8	PE -> IA	0.495	0.084	5.873	0.000	Ο
9	SN -> PE	0.299	0.085	3.532	0.000	Ο
10	BC -> PE	0.217	0.102	2.130	0.017	Ο
11	LS -> PE	-0.251	0.100	2.514	0.006	Ο
17.a	BC x PE -> DI	0.111	0.050	2.208	0.014	Ο
17.b	BC x PE -> II	0.001	0.047	0.016	0.494	Х

Figure 4-3 provides a visual representation of the moderating effect of BC on the relationship between PE and DI. When BC is at a lower level (-1 S.D.), the slope of the relationship becomes shallower, indicating a decrease in the strength of the association between PE and DI by the magnitude of the interaction term (i.e., 0.163 - 0.111 = 0.052). Conversely, when BC is at a higher level (+1 S.D.), the relationship between PE and DI becomes stronger by the size of the interaction term (i.e., 0.163 + 0.111 = 0.274). The disparity in the relationship between PE and DI increases as the magnitude of PE increases, resulting in an asymmetric opening towards the right in the graph.

4.2.4 Model predictive power evaluation

Finally, we assessed the explanatory power of the model by examining the R^2 values of the endogenous constructs, namely IA (34.5%), PE (16.2%), DI (25.7%), and II (48.8%). It is worth noting that R^2 values of 75%, 50%, and 25% are typically considered substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively (Henseler et al., 2009). However, the interpretation of R^2 should take into account the specific context, and even lower values, such as 10%, can be deemed acceptable in certain studies (Raithel et al., 2012). In comparison to previous SEM studies in the field of tourism/hospitality/expatriation, where R^2 values range from 0.35 to 0.763 (Han et al., 2011; Ho et al., 2016; Song et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2022; Yeh et al., 2021), our results can be considered satisfactory.

Additionally, we utilized PLSpredict to obtain Q^2 values, which serve as an assessment of predictive accuracy (Geisser, 1974). A positive Q^2 value for a specific endogenous construct indicates that it is accurately predicted by the model (Hair et al., 2019). In our study, all four endogenous constructs demonstrated Q^2 values greater than zero: IA (0.093), PE (0.104), DI (0.126), and II (0.227). Based on the assessments, we are confident in its predictive power.



Figure 4-2 Structural model results with moderation



Figure 4-3 Simple slope analysis

5 Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Summary

Undoubtedly, digital nomadism has emerged as a prevalent lifestyle for individuals, whether embraced voluntarily or due to unforeseen circumstances (Thompson, 2019). In recent years, its popularity has skyrocketed, giving rise to a diverse network of online communities and serving as a target market for various online and offline services, such as travel agencies, marketing courses, temporary accommodations, and flexible workspace solutions (Bozzi, 2020).

To comprehensively grasp this global phenomenon, an increasing number of researchers have directed their attention toward the subject, primarily exploring its work-related dimensions (Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021). This includes investigations into areas such as personal knowledge management (Jarrahi et al., 2019), employment dynamics (Thompson, 2018), and the benefits of remote work (Mouratidis, 2018). To the best of our current knowledge, our research represents a pioneering effort to quantitatively investigate the factors influencing individuals' intention to pursue a digital nomadic lifestyle, either within their home country or abroad. By addressing this research gap, we contribute to the understanding of this emerging global phenomenon.

Our theoretical framework is built upon the TPB, a well-established and widely accepted model utilized in various research domains, including those highly related to digital nomadism, e.g., tourism, hospitality, expatriation, and relocation (Andresen & Margenfeld, 2015; Engle et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2022; Yeh et al., 2021). In our study, we extend the original TPB by examining new causal relationships between volitional and non-volitional variables, as explored by Han et al. (2011) and Wang et al. (2022). Additionally, we introduce two novel independent variables, namely LS and PE, and thoroughly examine the mediating and moderating effects within the extended model to enhance its predictive capabilities.

Among the TPB constructs, BC exerts a more decisive influence on both DI and II compared to IA and SN, which aligns with previous research (Song et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2022; Yeh et al., 2021). Moreover, when LS and PE are taken into account, BC remains the most influential predictor for DI, while PE emerges as

the primary driver for II, underscoring the pivotal role of PE in the establishment and integration of digital nomadism within specific countries or regions. However, our study does not provide support for the hypothesized relationships between LS and SN with DI. This suggests that when dissatisfied with their current lives, individuals are more inclined to seek significant change and start anew (Fujita & Diener, 2005). However, pursuing digital nomadism within their home country may be perceived as a temporary escape with some psychological benefits rather than leading to long-term relocation accompanied by new expectations and serendipitous experiences (Mignonac, 2008). Likewise, shortterm relocation and remote work may have become normalized in the contemporary era (Franken et al., 2021), thereby reducing individuals' reservations or judgments regarding others' choices. Consequently, SN does not demonstrate a significant role in this context.

Furthermore, we examine the mediating effects of IA and PE, revealing that IA and PE contribute to the formation of individuals' attitudes, while SN, BC, and LS contribute to shaping their PE. This finding not only reaffirms previous research on the mediating role of IA in the field of tourism and expatriation (Han et al., 2011; Ho et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2022) but also presents an exploratory framework for integrating PE into studies related to digital nomadism.

Building upon the insights provided by recent research on the moderating effect of BC on the other two TPB volitional constructs, namely IA and SN, we posit a similar effect of BC on the relationship between PE and BI (Akter & Hasan, 2023; Hagger et al., 2022; La Barbera & Ajzen, 2021). Our empirical findings indicate that when BC is taken into account as a moderator, the association between the interaction term BC*PE and DI becomes statistically significant. Moreover, higher levels of BC amplify the impact of PE on DI. Conversely, we do not observe a similar moderating effect of BC on the relationship between PE and II.

Based on robust empirical evidence from prior research, we assert that the integration of these additional constructs is consistent with Ajzen's (1991) criteria. It demonstrates the incorporation of essential elements and highlights the extended model's capability to explain a significant portion of the variance in intention. Moreover, through a comparative analysis of our findings with existing

studies, we recognize the unique and essential contributions of these novel constructs and paths. As a result, we present a comprehensive synthesis of the theoretical and practical implications derived from our results.

5.2 Implications

In summary, our study not only advances relevant theoretical foundations but also provides practical implications for stakeholders and industries associated with digital nomadism. By addressing our research question comprehensively, we believe our research contributes to the existing body of knowledge in this field.

5.2.1 Theoretical implications

We highly acknowledge the valuable contributions made by previous research that has explored the intersection of digital nomadism with various related disciplines (Chevtaeva & Denizci-Guillet, 2021; Putra & Agirachman, 2016; Schlagwein, 2018). Building upon their insights, we have incorporated digital nomadism features into our research model as a foundation. By extending the original TPB model, we comprehensively capture the causal relationships that drive individuals' intention to become digital nomads. The significant and positive impact of LS on II validates the notion that people seek to address life distress, dissatisfaction, and banality by adopting the digital nomad lifestyle (Stumpf et al., 2022). Additionally, the significance of PE highlights the influence of relevant policies on individuals' intentions, particularly in the context of II, where multiple aspects of policies come into play. We will elaborate more on this in the practical implication part.

A notable distinction arises in our study as we treat DI and II as separate constructs, in contrast to prior research in the fields of tourism and relocation, where they are often considered interchangeable (Andresen & Margenfeld, 2015; Wang et al., 2022). Our investigation into DI and II individually provides empirical evidence supporting the notion that digital nomadism possesses an international perception among the general public (Ehn et al., 2022). For instance, while Chinese DNs and lifestyle entrepreneurs are drawn to two hubs in China, such as Dali and Lijiang, to embark on a new way of life (Sun & Xu, 2017), our findings demonstrate that LS and SN do not exert a significant influence on DI. This highlights the need for future studies on digital nomadism to place greater emphasis on its globalized image and distinctive characteristics.

Finally, it is worth noting that our study not only confirms the previously established mediating effect of IA and the moderating effect of PE but also extends beyond by examining the mediating effect of the newly introduced construct PE and the moderating effect of BC on PE. By incorporating these additional paths, our model achieves excellent stability and explains a more significant proportion of the variance in the dependent variables.

5.2.2 Practical implications

Regarding the intention to practice digital nomadism abroad, PE plays an indispensable role, surpassing all other predictors, especially when moderated by BC. Furthermore, it becomes apparent that countries aiming to attract international digital nomads should meticulously devise guidelines and regulations that address the unique characteristics of this specific group of individuals, which combines aspects of remote workers and tourists.

Based on our study findings, we consider remote work opportunities, visa exemptions, and tax reductions significant factors of interest, as evidenced by the relatively high mean scores assigned to these three PE items in our survey. In addition to companies implementing supportive policies, the collaboration between immigration and tax departments is crucial to establish favorable and practical regulations that not only attract digital nomads but also address potential tax evasion concerns (de Almeida et al., 2021).

According to Choudhury et al. (2019), employees who have flexible work arrangements (WFA) like those found at Akamai, NASA, and Github, among others, exhibit 4.4 percent higher productivity compared to those following a more traditional WFH policy that requires proximity to the office. This finding suggests that companies and organizations have the potential to enhance employee productivity, reduce turnover, and lower operational expenses (Senz, 2019). Consequently, implementing such enabling policies by companies not only opens up opportunities for self-employed individuals and those in the gig economy to participate in digital nomadism but also enables the general public to engage in this lifestyle (Reichenberger, 2018; Thompson, 2018). Empirical evidence supports the notion that visa exemptions for tourists can significantly impact the influx of visitors to a particular country, thereby stimulating economic growth and advancing tourism development (Chi et al., 2022; Han et al., 2011; Song et al., 2017). For instance, the relaxation of visa procedures between South Korea and Hong Kong resulted in a notable 39% increase in the demand for travel from South Korean tourists to Hong Kong (Goh & Law, 2002). Similarly, the implementation of the Visa Waiver Program in the United States led to a doubling in the number of South Korean tourists traveling to Hawaii (Lee et al., 2012).

Similar to visa exemptions for tourists, countries that offer relaxed entry requirements for digital nomads can anticipate a surge in their numbers, leading to economic growth and facilitating the exchange of knowledge and resources across regions (Choudhury, 2022). As of June 2023, there are 58 countries that have introduced a specialized visa category exclusively for digital nomads (Johnson, 2023). For instance, Croatia reported a total of 595 valid visas for digital nomads by the end of January 2023, as stated by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia. However, it is essential to note that this figure may be lower than the actual number of digital nomads in Croatia, as the Ministry does not keep a record of European Union citizens and citizens from third countries who stay in Croatia for less than a month (croatiaweek, 2023).

Additionally, tax exemptions play a significant role in the digital nomadism phenomenon (de Almeida et al., 2021). Many non-OECD countries, such as Croatia, Barbados, Dubai, Mauritius, and Cape Verde, have implemented income tax exemptions for a duration of one or two years, making them more appealing to digital nomads (OECD, 2022). In a review conducted by Choudhury (2022), it was found that only 11 out of 46 countries worldwide impose income tax liability on digital nomads. However, according to the OECD (2022), there is a concern regarding tax competition arising from such schemes, as they may primarily attract self-employed or freelance workers rather than employees, potentially leading to a shift towards self-employment.

Our findings suggest that BC significantly influences individuals' intention to become DNs. This encompasses various factors, such as the availability of

suitable working facilities in the host countries. Individuals are more likely to consider becoming domestic DNs when they have a positive perception and a higher level of control over their behavior. To promote this contemporary lifestyle among potential domestic DNs, stakeholders such as co-living and co-working spaces should implement marketing strategies that convey affordability and accessibility, possibly through the introduction of discounted packages or deals that lower entry barriers.

Additionally, Table 4-1 highlights that BC2, which represents individuals' access to resources and opportunities, receives the lowest average score, suggesting the need for improved remote work infrastructure, including facilities and services, to ensure that individuals can confidently carry out their work. Reliable internet connectivity is crucial for digital nomads who navigate the online realm (Schlagwein, 2018), and it has emerged as a key selling point in the industry, exemplified by co-living co-working spaces. Prominently displayed on the homepage of Nomadstay.com are the features of "100% Wi-Fi; 100% Work Ready; 100% Live Availability; 100% Transparent Pricing" in bold font. Additionally, since many DNs experience feelings of loneliness and a fear of missing out (Hermann & Paris, 2020; Thompson, 2018), service providers should consider addressing these specific needs by organizing group activities and meet-ups to foster a sense of connection among nomads.

5.3 Limitations and future work

While every effort has been made to ensure the comprehensiveness of our research, we acknowledge that certain areas can be further refined and enhanced. Primarily, despite our description and interpretation of the questionnaires collected in the preceding section, we recommend that future research, particularly in the field of tourism and hospitality, should aim to gather a greater number of responses. To achieve this, it is suggested to employ Kock's (2018) inverse square root method for calculating the minimum sample size. The current pool of respondents may not fully represent the entire population, as there is an overrepresentation of females, unmarried individuals, and young people aged 25-34. Additionally, it is important to note that 128 respondents (61.8%) originated

from China. Although no significant differences were found in the results across different nationalities, future studies should account for such factors and investigate the influence of passport power and varying socio-cultural contexts.

Secondly, while the original TPB model and its various extensions have been commonly employed, theoretical foundations supporting the drivers of individuals' intentions to become DNs remain limited and in their early stages of development. Consequently, it is crucial to emphasize that our study provides indicative findings rather than exhaustive conclusions. Subsequent investigations should examine the model's validity and progress by introducing more comprehensive models that adhere to the guidelines set forth by the original TPB.

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