

Abstract

Background:

Since the beginning of times, knowledge has stayed at the very heart of our individual and collective evolution. In contemporary times characterized by revolutionary advances and progress, comprehending the nature and mechanisms of knowledge can substantially enhance our understanding of powerful forces influencing our decisions and our ability to forecast societal transformations.

The knowmads represent a novel and emerging category of workforce members that have captured the attention of both academics and professionals. However, the mechanisms driving their development and progression remain an area of limited investigation in the scholarly discourse.

Rather than focusing on their inherent characteristics and the source of their development, existing literature has emphasized their transformative impact, the challenges they raise to the status quo of both work and education, and the potential subsequent turmoil they may generate. Furthermore, there has been a lack of focus on the knowledge dynamics involved in individual decision-making processes of becoming a knowmad, which could significantly benefit both theoretical and practical fields.

Purpose:

The present Ph.D. thesis aims to investigate and explore the primary forces contributing to the emergence of knowmads in the knowledge economy by placing knowledge dynamics at the center of our endeavor. The main objective of the research is to contribute to developing a better, more comprehensive understanding of the knowledge dynamics field and the decision-making process regarding individual career choices. The second objective of the research is to contribute to the practical field by bringing more insight and understanding for knowledge workers in their professional metamorphosis into knowmads. Additionally, this research aims to develop

recommendations for organizations that aim to succeed in their quest for talent by collaborating with autonomous and independent talent with a powerful personal brand who seek flexibility and mobility, as well as lifelong learning experiences.

Method:

To achieve our goals and reach our final results, we designed and implemented a mixed methodology approach comprising several, both qualitative and quantitative research instruments. We started by developing the qualitative research on the premises of the grounded theory, conducting an extensive focus group with knowmads followed by semi-structured in-depth interviews with knowmads. Eleven knowmads provided detailed evidence on their decision-making processes and motivators in an extensive and detailed qualitative review. The grounded theory method enabled us to develop a model regarding the emergence of knowmads in the knowledge economy, which has been tested through quantitative research involving 102 knowmads. As a result, all five established hypotheses have been confirmed.

Conclusion:

Based on the study's findings, knowledge dynamics, defined by rational, emotional, and spiritual knowledge, and the social context represent significant factors positively influencing the knowmads' mindset. Hence, our research advances the understanding of knowledge dynamics in individual decision-making processes. Throughout our study, we empirically analyze the effect of social environment phenomena and the knowledge entropy transformations in specific decision-making processes. As complementary results of the research, we propose three categories of motivators and three typologies of knowmads from a knowledge dynamics perspective for the first time in the literature.