

Master's Thesis Media Studies

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Eat sleep create repeat, but at your own pace and place

How working at extended workplaces makes freelancers feel creative

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Abstract

In recent years, freelancers have increasingly swapped their homes and the traditional offices of their clients for extended workplaces. Creative workers opt for cafés, coworking spaces and hotel lobby's as their workplace for multiple reasons. Feeling creative is one of them. This study responds to this trend and shows how expanding the workplace thrives freelancers' self-perceived creativity. Ten freelancers who work in the creative industries have reported in interviews and noted in online diary-surveys where and when they go to feel creative. Therefore, this study builds upon research on workplace creativity. The findings of this thesis reveal what elements of the workplace encourage self-perceived creativity amongst freelancers: elements that make creative workers feel comfortable, socially involved and inspired. Moreover, variety in time and space plays an important role for freelancers in feeling creative.

Keywords: workplace, freelance work, self-perceived creativity, quality of place, rhythm of work

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Introduction

When working as a freelancer means doing what you like the most, but at the same table you eat dinner every day, being self-employed turns out not to be that inspirational as you might think in the first place. At least, that is what I found out after working as a freelance journalist for over three years.

For this reason, I decided in January 2020 to write this thesis on the workplaces of freelance creatives and their preferences to work outside their homes. Quite ironically, since no more than two months later working at extended workplaces like a café or a coworking space was not one of the possibilities anymore. From mid-March 2020, freelancers have seen their workplaces shrinking to the sizes of their homes due to the measures taken by the Dutch government to halt the spread of the coronavirus pandemic. In order to contain the virus, the government has opted for the closure of public places, bars, offices, schools, day care facilities and universities. Long (horror) story short: working outside your home is impossible while writing this thesis, and potentially a health hazard.

Although the coronacrisis only broke out when my thesis proposal had already been turned in and approved, the pandemic once more confirmed the relevance of this research topic. Yes, working at extended workplaces has been a trend for quite some years – an interesting movement which will be discussed later in this paper – but we only realize what we really like, when we cannot enjoy it anymore. And that is the case: the worldwide crisis has forced people all over the world to work from their homes on a larger scale than ever in history. Not being able to separate their work and private life anymore, or to work alongside others, has been quite a burden to people. This collective sense of deprivation emphasizes the relevance of alternative environments as preferable workplaces for freelancers as a research topic.

Since the crisis has a significant impact on the whole world, and an even bigger impact on freelancers in general, it is simply not arguable to *not* incorporate it in this research. Moreover, due to the sheer unavailability of extended workplaces nowadays, it is impossible to collect data about the workplaces of freelancers without addressing the coronacrisis and its consequences. Nevertheless, the purpose of this research that was established in the first place – which is: finding out how extended workplaces make freelancers feel creative – has remained unaltered despite of the outbreak of the coronavirus. The findings of this paper may not be pragmatic in these times of crisis, they will be more useful and relevant than ever when the world has been restored from this difficult period.

Having said that, I want to return to the main reasons why alternative working environments are being analysed in this paper. Why do freelancers feel so inclined to work outside their homes? The workplace – or rather: the idea of not having one – has been an ongoing issue to me personally in terms of loneliness but also in terms of productivity. Blagoev, Costas and Kärreman (2019) conceptualise this form of loneliness as the sense of social isolation, which is in particular relevant for workers operating as a freelancer outside the traditional workplace. The sense of social isolation thus more or less conceptualises a problem that many freelancers experience; that of feeling isolated, due to the lack of a workplace. According to the authors, this problem can be translated into the need to be amongst other people (Blagoev, Costas and Kärreman, 2019; Spinuzzi, 2012). Blagoev, Costas and Kärreman (2019) address this need as the sense of social belongingness.

Moreover, Blagoev, Costas and Kärreman (2019) discuss the conflict of distraction that freelancers experience when they are constantly working from home. Spinuzzi (2012) explains this feeling by arguing that working from home leads to a disruption between one's working life and private life. When the boundaries between the two erode, and one cannot explicitly separate them anymore, the two will inevitably merge, meaning that freelancers working from home will end up doing the dishes or walking the dog in between their deadlines. Blagoev, Costas and Kärreman (2019) conceptualise the desire for a workplace that encourages to stay focused on work, instead of being distracted by the environment because you associate it with free time and house holding as well, as the sense of order and discipline.

Thus, working from home can have detrimental disadvantages for freelancers. Obviously, issues such as loneliness or lack of focus do not encourage the creative process required for work – especially for work in the cultural and creative industries. This fits in a wider field of research on workplace creativity (Spinuzzi, 2012; Dul & Ceylan, 2011). The finding that the workplace can affect workers' creativity, is not one of recent years; there has already been done quite some research to the relation between the workplace and creativity (Amabile & Gryskiewicz, 1989; James, Brodersen & Eisenberg, 2004; Egan, 2005; Montag, Maertz Jr & Baer, 2012). Over three decades ago, Amabile and Gryskiewicz (1989) already presented an instrument that was designed to assess what encourages and what discourages creativity at the workplace. In more recent work, factors that influence creativity are understood in new ways, through reviewing existing research and focussing on individual creativity in particular (James, Brodersen & Eisenberg, 2004; Egan, 2005; Montag, Maertz Jr & Baer, 2012).

Spinuzzi (2012) explains how an isolated workplace can take a toll on people, and therefore can affect their wellbeing. This inescapably hinders their creative potential, since feeling creative goes hand in hand with feeling good and happy (Dul & Ceylan, 2011). Peng,

Chen, Via and Ran (2017) confirm this by explaining that negative emotions lead to negative thoughts, such as the feeling of incapability. As a result, workers will feel that any activity part of the creative process is a risk and will probably lead to failure. Therefore, the authors argue that issues concerning the workplace not only have a direct, negative effect on workers' state of mind, but also an indirect, negative effect on workers' creativity (Peng, Chen, Via & Ran, 2017).

Furthermore, it is not only place that affects workers' creativity. Creativity too fluctuates over time. However, though the former is well-established, the latter has only recently received academic attention. According to Binnewies and Wörnlein (2011), the scarcity of studies that connect creativity to time is surprising, since creativity is besides a trait generally also experienced as a state, meaning that at some moments we feel more creative than at other moments. Therefore, Binnewies and Wörnlein (2011) argue that being creative is time-dependent. But why do freelancers feel more creative at one moment than another? Creativity is time-dependent because it fluctuates when workers experience so called job stressors or job control, which are obstacles for creativity that are embedded in time (Binnewies & Wörnlein, 2011). With the concepts of job stressors, Binnewies and Wörnlein (2011) refer to stress factors workers have to deal with. According to the authors, these so-called job stressors can decrease – if not completely hinder – one's creative potential. The main job stressor that the authors mention, is daily time pressure. With daily time pressure, Binnewies and Wörnlein (2011) refer to inadequate time in which creatives need to perform, which causes creatives to experience stress. However, creativity is not only time-dependent because of these stressors; job control also explains why workers can feel themselves less or more creative (Binnewies & Wörnlein, 2011). With job control, Binnewies and Wörnlein (2011) refer to the degree of freedom in terms of time workers possess when doing their work. Freedom, and thus having control of their own job time-wise, is important for creativity since it allows workers to be creative when they also feel creative.

In sum, creativity is both time-dependent and space-dependent. However, previous empirical research has often been done to both factors of creativity independently (Amabile & Gryskiewicz, 1989; James, Brodersen & Eisenberg, 2004; Egan, 2005; Montag, Maertz Jr & Baer, 2012; Spinuzzi, 2012; Binnewies & Wörnlein, 2011; Blagoev, Costas and Kärreman, 2019; Weinberger, Wach, Stephan & Wegge, 2018), meaning that a study that combines the two is still missing. This study aims to fill this research gap. When and where do freelance workers feel themselves creative? And how do these factors for creativity relate to each other? These are some of the questions that are answered in this paper. Since this research only focuses on freelancers' perceptions of *feeling* creative, creativity is not measured. Instead, this study aims to examine how working at extended workplaces makes freelance workers *feel* creative, and thus how self-perceived creativity is time- and place-dependent.

The definition of the concept of *self-perceived creativity* is adopted from the theory of DiLiello, Houghton and Dawley (2011), who argue that being creative starts with the awareness of being creative at that specific moment. They define self-perceived creativity “as the extent to which employees perceive that they are producing new and useful ideas” (p. 153). Therefore, this research focuses on the first step of *being* creative: individually noticing that you *feel* creative, and how this feeling encourages the creative process. DiLiello, Houghton and Dawley (2011) argue that this first step is crucial for the final creative performance, since creativity is an individual process, which is not observable by others – at least, not directly.

The academic value of this thesis thus lies in the connection of creativity and time and place. However, this study is also of societal importance. Recently – referring to the years before the coronacrisis – working from home or traditional offices has decreased in popularity. In ten years, the number of coworking spaces worldwide – referring to shared spaces that are used for office facilities only – has increased significantly; from 75 in 2007 to 18.700 in 2018 to estimated 26.300 in 2020 (DESKMAG, 2020; Blagoev, Costas and Kärreman, 2019). This growth indicates the preference of freelancers to "work alone together" (Spinuzzi, 2012, p. 299). In this research, the reasons for this growth are examined. Therefore, this study responds to a great social need, which explains why this research is of societal importance. Moreover, this study provides more in-depth information about the work situation of freelance creatives. Where do they work? Where do they want to work? Why do they prefer to work at these places? The answers to these questions outline the uncertainty of finding a stable, inspiring and comfortable workplace that freelancers have to deal with. Therefore, this thesis portrays an area of concern of a certain community, and provides an overview of the workplaces of freelancers. This overview can be valuable for both freelancers and proprietors who provide extended workplaces for freelancers; freelancers may recognize themselves in other people's situations and feel heard and/or inspired by that, while proprietors may want to respond to the results of this thesis and adjust their property to the preferences of freelancers, who are their clients.

However, choosing to work at designated coworking spaces is not the only way freelancers can respond to issues of loneliness and lack of focus. Or in other words: coworking spaces are not necessarily the boon to all freelancers' ills. Martins (2015) acknowledges that freelance creatives can seek a work spot at any place, introducing the concept of “the extended workplace” (p. 125). Martins (2015) argues that the workplace has been extended from the homes of freelancers or the traditional office of their clients to a variety of settings. Therefore, the extended workplace can be any form of place that offers an alternative workplace to the office or the home. Designated coworking spaces are an example of such extended workplaces, but according to Martins (2015), all public and semi-

public spaces, such as the library, a café or a hotel lobby, can be used by freelancers as their workplace.

It is the search of freelancers to such a creativity encouraging (extended) workplace what this research is about. A research that is done in a confusing yet so insightful period of time, since this extraordinary situation makes people realize – in a way they maybe will never experience again – how working at extended workplaces makes them feel creative. Or how Brown (2014) accurately describes in his paper about losing the art therapy studio at which he had worked for seventeen years: “This experience made me think about the elements I missed and why they were important to me” (p.1).

Outline

This research aims to answer the following research question: How does working at extended workplaces make freelancers feel creative? In the next section, insights and concepts from earlier research that are relevant for this thesis are outlined. Here, I explain how this research makes use of these concepts and builds upon these authors’ insights. Next, the qualitative method approaches that are used in this research are presented. In this third section, I clarify into detail how I collected relevant data in order to provide an answer to the research question. After the data collection, thematic analysis led to three themes – freedom, variety of time and place, and inspiration and motivation – which maintain structure and clarity in the results section. Each theme, presented as three different chapters, discusses how working at extended workplaces makes freelancers feel creative in a certain way. The research ends with a conclusion and discussion. In this last section, I reflect on the findings of this research and present an answer to the research question.

Theoretical framework

Creativity

In order to find out how extended workplaces make freelancers feel creative, it is necessary to first understand what creativity is, how it is reached and how it will be used in this study.

Creativity can be understood as the generation of ideas that are (1) novel, (2) original and (3) useful (Shalley et al., 2004; Runco & Jaeger, 2012; Zhou, Hirst & Shipton, 2012). Ideas are considered novel when they are different to already existing ideas (Shalley, Zhou & Oldham, 2004). Although novel and original are often seen as the same things, Runco and Jaeger (2012) explain how they are definitely different: ideas are original when they are not only new, and therefore different from other ideas, but also unusual and unique (Runco & Jaeger, 2012). Lastly, it is crucial to come up with useful ideas in order to be creative; ideas can be new as well as original, but when they do not create value, they could just as well not have been generated in the first place (Shalley, Zhou & Oldham, 2004). Moreover, creativity can be explained through the concepts of 'trait' and 'state' (Harnad, 2006). In the first place, creativity is a trait, meaning that some individuals are more creative than others (Harnad, 2006). Besides that, creativity is also a state: even when you possess creativity as a trait, you simply cannot be creative all the time. Creativity can thus be seen as a circumstance, that comes and goes. This last approach to creativity is what is most interesting in the light of this research; it emphasizes that creativity is a dynamic concept, that is characterized by constant change. How are these changes dependent on one's direct environment? That is what this research aims to find out.

Although this definition of creativity and understanding of how it can be aspired for is adopted by many creativity theorists (Amabile, 1983; Shalley et al., 2004; Harnad, 2006; Runco & Jaeger, 2012; Zhou, Hirst & Shipton, 2012), DiLiello, Houghton and Dawley (2011) argue that if you want to find out what thrives creativity, workers' self-perceived creativity must be examined. According to the authors, creativity starts with the awareness to engage in creative activities. This means that workers know when activities require creativity and when they need to put effort in making themselves feel creative. Therefore, the creative process starts individually, a phase of the creative process that is not directly observable; only workers themselves can define what makes them feel creative and thus when they perceive themselves as having creative potential. In this paper, this first phase of the creative process is researched. That is, the circumstances that encourage people to perceive themselves as having creative potential – or in other words: what makes them feel creative – are examined. Finding out when and where freelancers feel creative is more or less what Harnad (2006) describes as "maximizing the likelihood of creativity" (p. 176). Harnad (2006) argues that you cannot make sure that you are creative at a certain moment, and creativity

can never be guaranteed, but that you can make sure that you create a setting in which you perceive yourself as having creative potential, and thus the chance for creativity is favourable. In this thesis, it is the goal to find out what aspects of the workplace maximize the likelihood of freelancers' creativity.

In this theoretical framework, significant theories and concepts from earlier studies concerning the embeddedness of creativity in time and space are introduced. Those theories and concepts outline the theoretical body of this paper by defining what is already known about the role of time and space in self-perceived creativity. Moreover, it is explained how these already existing concepts are used in this research to analyse what aspects of the extended workplace help freelancers pursue creative efforts.

Quality of place

The first concept which can be used to decide how the extended workplace maximizes the likelihood of creativity, is the concept 'quality of place' by Richard Florida (2012). Florida uses this concept to conceptualise the dimensions that draw creatives to certain places. Those dimensions are the amenities, the crowd and the ambience, or respectively: what is there, who is there and what is going on. According to Florida (2012), the quality of place can be defined based on how those dimensions appear.

Although Florida (2012) focuses on location in general and not necessarily the direct workplace, the concept of quality of place is still relevant and useful for this study. Drake (2003) accurately explains why. In his research, Drake (2003) emphasizes that the relationship between the workplace in general and individualized creativity is what is interesting. Although his research zooms in on location as an inspiration for creativity too – just like Florida (2012) – Drake (2003) argues that the wider goal of his study is to "increase our understanding of how individuals respond or relate to place" (p. 512). The author thus states that the scale of place – whether we are discussing place in terms of location, or place in terms of the direct workplace – does not matter. Place, on any possible scale, is according to the author somehow – meaning negatively or positively – related to creativity. And therefore, Florida's (2012) concept of quality of place is clearly relevant and useful for this thesis.

The concept of quality of place is coined by Florida (2012) "to cover the unique set of characteristics that define a place and make it attractive" (n.p.). This theoretical framework continues with an outline of how researchers in earlier studies have argued that each specific dimension – the amenities, the crowd and the ambience – need to appear at the direct workplace to encourage self-perceived creativity amongst freelancers.

The amenities – what is there?

The first of three dimensions that addresses how place can make freelancers feel creative, are the amenities. Existing literature has focused on the aesthetic aspect – or in other words, the look and feel of place (Heebels & Van Aalst, 2010) – of the work environment as being appealing to freelancers (Dul & Ceylan, 2011; Haner 2005; Reckwitz 2012). To be able to analyse to what extent aesthetics make freelancers feel creative, Dul and Ceylan (2011), who developed an instrument to analyse how physical factors of the workplace can stimulate creativity, created a checklist that was filled in by more than 1500 workers from 6 nations. The checklist – which is developed by Dul and Ceylan (2011) through reviewing "empirical studies in ergonomics, environmental psychology architecture/indoor design and other fields on the relationship between elements of the physical work environment" (p.15) – consists of 21 work environment elements, of which 12 can be put in the category 'aesthetics': (1) furniture, (2) indoor plants and flowers, (3) calming colours, (4) inspiring colours, (5) privacy, (6) window view to nature, (7) any window view, (8) quantity of light, (9) daylight, (10) indoor climate, (11) positive sounds and (12) positive smell (Kwallek & Lewis, 1990; Furnham & Strbac 2002; Küller et al., 2006). Each employee had to rate each element two times on a 7-point scale: the first time reviewing the presence of the elements in the workplace, and the second time reviewing the importance of the elements in their encouragement for creativity. The first time, the workers could rate each element in terms of its presence from 'very little' to 'very much'. The second time, the workers could rate each element in terms of its importance for the support of creativity from 'not important at all' to 'very important'. Although this paper does not aim to find out how extended workplaces need to improve aesthetically in order to make freelancers feel creative, the method that Dul and Ceylan (2011) use is partly still relevant for this thesis. The checklist with aesthetic elements of the workplace that can make freelancers feel creative is very useful in this research, since it already shows what kind of amenities workers think are important in the direct workplace when it comes to the support of creativity. To what extent do freelancers in this study label these elements as creativity encouraging as well?

In addition, Haner (2005) argues that not only the presence of those physical elements is helpful in the development of this perception, but that also the way in which they are present is defining for the support of self-perceived creativity. Therefore, the author addresses the significance of the 'attractiveness' or 'style' of the working environment. Or in other words: the effort that has been put into the appearance of the workplace. An assumption that is examined in this research as well: do freelancers also value how beautifully physical elements appear in the workplace?

The crowd – who is there?

The second dimension that addresses how the workplace can make freelancers feel creative, is the crowd. This dimension emphasizes the value of having other people around you. When there are a lot of creatives living or working in a certain city, other creatives feel attracted (Florida 2012; Drake, 2003). As Liegl (2014) states, it can be assumed that workers who seek shared workplaces, prefer – or at least: do not mind – working alongside others too. The question that has to be answered in this research paper, however, is: how is a crowd able to support self-perceived creativity? Liegl (2014) aimed to find an answer to that question by doing interviews, and came up with several reasons why freelancers are driven to work alongside others.

“Others” can offer entertainment, provide and protect from distractions, and serve as an audience, and as such, as a powerful and energizing aide for the performance of being a professional or being a creative (Liegl, 2014).

In order to do this, the author spoke to so-called mobile workers, referring to workers who try out several working environments which enable them to be creative. Based on these interviews, the author argues that the presence of others (1) makes a workplace "a happening place", meaning that it creates a lively scene, in which freelancers feel energetic and creative (p. 173), (2) protects them from distractions, and thus motivates them to keep on working and (3) functions as an audience to freelancers, or rather: an energizing aid that encourages them to act professionally and creative. These examples prove to be helpful in this thesis since they already provide possible reasons why the crowd at extended workplaces can make freelancers feel creative. In my own interviews, these reasons are presented to the interviewees. Do the participants experience it the same way?

In addition to Liegl's (2014) work, this research also aims to find out what kind of crowd makes freelancers feel more creative. While Liegl (2014) assumes that working alongside others, basically having no idea who those others are, is often enough for workers to feel themselves creative, Spinuzzi (2012) argues that the extent to which workers perceive themselves as having creative potential is dependent on the kind of people that they surround themselves with. According to Spinuzzi (2012), who's study is about designated coworking spaces, freelancers like to surround themselves with like-minded individuals, because they are more or less in the same boat as them. Moreover, the author states that freelancers also prefer to work amongst freelancers with the same background. Spinuzzi (2012) for example mentions freelancers with children, who prefer working alongside other entrepreneurial parents.

Although Spinuzzi's (2012) study focuses on designated coworking spaces in particular, his arguments are still interesting to take into account in this research. Do freelancers who work at other extended workplaces besides designated coworking spaces have the same preferences? To what extent is their choice for an extended workplace dependent on these preferences? Do they actually feel more creative when they seek and find an extended workplace that meets these preferences? And what does their current reduced access to such social settings mean for their self-perceived creativity?

The ambience – what is going on?

The third and last dimension that addresses how extended workplaces can make freelancers feel creative, is the ambience. This dimension differs from the first two since those dimensions are focussing on visible elements of the workplace, while the ambience measures the quality of place focussing on what you cannot see, which can also be understood as the vibrance of a place or the workspace atmosphere (Florida, 2012; Orel & Almeida, 2019).

Orel and Almeida (2019) argue that both spatial elements and implemented mechanisms define the ambience of a workplace, since these aspects can enhance interactivity, which is crucial for a favourable ambience. The spatial elements Orel and Almeida (2019) mention in their research overlap to some extent with the physical elements presented in the first dimension, but are analysed in a different light: the authors focus on how these elements enhance interactivity, which at its turn enhances self-perceived creativity. Or in other words: instead of making freelancers feel creative directly, the spatial elements that Orel and Almeida (2019) mention make freelancers feel creative indirectly – through creating a favourable ambience by enhancing interactivity. But also implemented mechanisms define the ambience of a workplace (Orel and Almeida, 2019).

But Orel and Almeida (2019) first explain how spatial elements can lead to an ambience that is favourable for freelance creatives. According to the authors, spatial elements can promote interactivity amongst workers by supporting spontaneous communication and user interplay. Such an ambience results into a likable workplace and therefore in a more creative workflow. The spatial elements that according to the authors enhance this process, are: (1) open-plan space(s), (2) flexible and playful positioning of furniture, (3) large worktables, (4) a colourful workspace, (5) comfortable temperature, (6) high concentration of plants and (7) controlled noise. Moreover, the one mechanism the authors mention that is relevant for this research, is (8) trust. This mechanism is relevant since the feeling of trust is not only necessary to ensure optimal working – meaning that someone for example needs to be able to go to the toilet without wondering if his or her stuff is safe – but also to create a pleasant workspace atmosphere. In addition to trust, Orel and

Almeida (2019) mention other implemented mechanisms that define the ambience of a designated coworking space, most of them referring to the idea of being part of a community. However, since this study focuses on the way in which all sorts of extended workplaces make freelancers feel creative – assuming that freelancers do not work at one specific workplace all the time – the formation of a community, and thus implemented mechanisms that support this, are not relevant for this research.

In addition to Orel and Almeida (2019), Alacovska (2018) mentions that workplaces with an informal ambience in particular make freelancers feel creative, since such an ambience dismantles the formal, bureaucratic workplace where hierarchies are active and regulations leave no place for creative freedom. This theory of Alacovska (2018) is interesting in the light of this research, since extended workplaces in general differ from traditional workplaces and often do not adopt a professional only, business-like environment.

In order to find out how the ambience at extended workplaces make freelancers feel creative, it is analysed how the spatial elements as well as the one implemented mechanism (trust) that create a favourable ambience according to Orel and Almeida (2019) occur in extended workplaces. Moreover, attention is paid to the extent in which freelancers refer to the informal ambience as an aspect that makes them feel creative (Alacovska, 2018).

Rhythm of work

In addition to the quality of place, underlying patterns of time must be analysed in order to obtain a better understanding of what makes a setting favourable. More than twenty years ago, Lubart and Sternberg (1998) already acknowledged that creativity fluctuates over time. In addition, newer studies (Mainemelis, 2002; Reed, 2005; Zampetakis, Bouranta & Moustakis, 2010; Pitts, 2016) have shown the relationship between time and creativity, amongst whom Pitts (2016), who argues that a workplace is always embedded in certain patterns of time, and explains how these patterns can dis- or encourage creativity amongst freelancers. With his concept of 'rhythms of work', he argues that workers who are able to set up their own work pace are more likely to be creative. Pitts (2016) argues that the controlling behaviour of clients, which is mostly exerted by limiting the freedom of freelancers in terms of time, is problematic for the creative process of freelancers. Controlling when freelancers are present in the workplace – and thus when they must be creative – gives clients a sense of power, but at the same time reduces freelancers' creative performances.

Although Pitts (2016) argues that traditional workplaces reject freelancers' own rhythms of work, the author does not examine how other types of workplaces are embedded in patterns of time. However, the author mentions that, since workers in coworking spaces work alone together and are able to set up their own creative requirements, those workplaces provide an environment in which freelancers should be able to adopt their own

rhythm of work. In this research, it is examined how extended workplaces allow freelance creatives to do so, and thus how working at extended workplaces makes freelancers feel creative in terms of time.

Additionally, Wang and Chern (2008) argue that creativity has certain daily timing rhythms. By that, the authors mean that being creative differs in time, and that it is key for creative workers to find out what patterns suits them, and thus when to schedule creativity-related tasks. In their research, the authors aimed to find out during what time of the day creatives – in their case: art students – feel creative. Although Wang and Chern (2008) concentrate on art students and not on freelancers, their findings are still relevant for this research, since the study focusses on the timing of creative individuals, and not so much on who those individuals are. Moreover, those art students are future creatives, and presumably even future freelance creatives.

In order to find out when these art students perceive themselves as having the most creative potential, the authors designed a questionnaire, in which the students were asked to report at what time they most likely feel creative. Remarkably, more than two third of the participants (70,1 per cent) reported to perceive themselves as having the most creative potential in the evening, starting from 8 p.m. Although these surprising results do not inevitably mean that all creatives tend to feel most creative in the evening, they do emphasize the assumption that creatives do not necessarily feel creative during the standard working hours (that is: from approximately 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.). However, the goal of this study is not only to find out when freelance creatives perceive themselves as having creative potential, but also how extended workplaces allow them to adopt their own rhythms of work. In order to answer this last question, the participants in this study reported when they feel most creative first. For this purpose, the time interval scheme of Wang and Chern (2008) is used. Furthermore, they were asked to what extent they feel able to adopt those rhythms work, in particular when they are working at extended workplaces. Or in other words: how do extended workplaces allow them to adopt those patterns, especially when they compare extended workplaces with traditional workplaces?

The experience of losing

Based on interviews with freelance creatives, it is explored how working at extended workplaces makes them feel creative. However, having freelancers reflect on recent working activities outside of the traditional office or the home, is not the only way to indicate which elements of the workplace are valuable for freelancers. In these times of crisis, freelancers are forced to work from home, and I was forced to approach my research topic differently. For this thesis, Brown's (2014) theory of the 'experience of losing' turned out to be effective in defining what elements of a place are really important to people. The author of 'The Lost

Studio: “You don’t know what you've got till it’s gone” experienced himself how losing a certain place can make you realize what elements of that place are really valuable to yourself, and why.

Although analysing people's experience of losing is thus a quite interesting and useful research method, it is definitely not a common one, simply because the experience of losing is often an experience that takes place coincidentally. Losing something – in this case: the access to a certain workplace – is not something that is favourable and thus that is pursued by its victims. In earlier research, telework environments – often people's own homes – have been compared to traditional workplaces, examining how different these places affect job satisfaction (Morganson, Major, Oborn, Verive & Heelan, 2010; Bailey & Kurland, 2003; Golden & Veiga, 2005; Sparrow, 2000). However, in these studies, telework is often approached as a privilege or a kind gesture by employers, to allow and trust employees to work from home. In other words: telework is in already existing literature often defined as a choice that is by most workers preferred – or at least, now and then.

Although several studies highlight the disadvantages of telework as well (Cooper & Kurland, 2002; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Golden, Veiga & Dino, 2008; Kurland & Cooper, 2002), none of these studies analyses telework as a forced working environment, causing a potential feeling of deprivation and the experience of losing. Due to the unique situation caused by the coronavirus, it is possible in this research to analyse teleworking in a different light: as a compulsory activity that exposes values which otherwise would possibly have been kept hidden.

Methods and data collection

To find out how the in the theoretical framework outlined stimuli for creativity make freelancers feel creative at extended workplaces, qualitative research methods have been used. In this section of the thesis, the research approaches used to collect relevant data for this research are discussed. Moreover, I explain how I coped with the coronavirus restrictions by, among other things, introducing a different additional research method than initially imagined.

A qualitative research method suits this research best, since the data collection for qualitative research consists of rich descriptions by carefully recruited participants, which are structurally interpreted and analysed by investigators (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Moreover, a qualitative research method makes sure that the information provided by the participants is based on the real-life experiences from the participants (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Therefore, a series of in-depth interviews with freelance creatives who regularly made use of the extended workplace before the coronacrisis took its toll were conducted. In addition, the participants were asked to keep a diary about compulsory working from home and how that makes them miss working at extended workplaces, coming in the form of a survey. Both the interviews and the diary-surveys draw upon findings from earlier research about the workplace in creative labour. The interviews made it possible to reflect on earlier findings and further explore the extended workplace as a suitable working environment for freelance creatives, while the diary-surveys made it possible to expose which elements of extended workplaces are missed and thus are truly important to freelancers (Reichenberger, 2018).

Sampling

The respondents in this research both participated in the interviews and the diary-keeping. In the selection of the participants, the following criteria have been used: the participants had to work as a freelancer in the creative industries and work at extended workplaces from now and then – before the outbreak of the coronavirus, obviously. For the recruitment of the respondents, a combination of convenience and snowball sampling techniques were used (Noy, 2008). First, I started with convenience sampling. This means that I contacted freelance creatives in my own network. After almost four years of freelancing, I have built a relevant network of other freelance creatives – mostly freelance journalists, but also freelance graphic designers, freelance social media professionals and freelance photographers – who I approached to participate in this research. However, it turned out that I was not able to requite enough freelancers that I know personally. Therefore, I made an appeal to the networks of my acquaintances too. When participants inform a researcher

about other possible participants, and those participants again inform the researcher about other possible participants, the sampling is called 'snowball sampling' (Noy, 2008).

In order to respect the respondents' privacy, the data in this thesis is anonymised as much as possible. According to Thomson et al. (2005), the researcher must strive for a balance between respecting the participants' privacy and maintaining context. For this research, this means that the surnames of the participants are left out, as well as the names of the clients they mentioned to work for. These pieces of information could easily lead to the identification of the participants. The participants' age, sex, specialism and years of experience are retained, since this identifying information is crucial for the context of the thesis; the reader must be able to picture who is talking (Thomson et al., 2005). Moreover, the participants are promised that the data will be used for this thesis only.

Name	Age	Sex	Specialism	Years of experience
Verena	27	Female	Journalist	3 years
Marlie	29	Female	Journalist & copywriter	3 years
Anneloes	26	Female	Journalist & social media professional	1 year
Kirsten	26	Female	Journalist & copywriter	5 years
Pim	24	Male	Journalist	2 years
Britt	23	Female	Social media & marketing and communication professional	3,5 years
Stijn	21	Male	Journalist & photographer	1,5 year
Martin	31	Male	Digital graphic designer	10 years
Lieve	23	Female	Marketing and communication professional	2 years
Vivian	27	Female	Copywriter, marketing and communication professional & photographer	5 years

Figure 1: Anonymized overview of the respondents

Interviews

The data collection started with conducting interviews. The interviews are designed to collect data about freelancers' experiences of working at extended workplaces, and how their choice to work in such working environments is related to the quality of place and the possibility to adopt their own rhythms of work (Florida, 2012; Drake, 2003, Pitts, 2016). Through semi-

structured in-depth interviews – meaning that the interviewees are questioned based on a preconceived question list, but are at the same time encouraged to freely talk about their experiences, instead of only answering question after question – participants' underlying motivations for working at extended workplaces were explored (Reichenberger, 2018; Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson, & Kangasniemi, 2016).

The decision of how many interviews should be conducted to draw significant conclusions, is based on the sample size used for earlier research on creative labour. Reichtenberger (2016) conducted 22 semi-structured interviews, Spinuzzi (2012) did 17 interviews, Merkel (2019) conducted 25 interviews and Drake (2003) did 31. Considering these papers as relevant examples and therefore as suitable guidelines, but also taking the smaller scale of this research and the additional research method of diary-keeping into account, ten interviews have been conducted for this research. Moreover, after ten interviews, a point of saturation was reached; although individuals always shine a unique light on a certain argumentation, or come up with their own anecdotes, new interviews would not have led to new knowledge about this research topic (Kvale, 2008).

All interviews lasted around 55 minutes and were recorded and transcribed. All ten of them were conducted online, since face-to-face interviews were simply not possible due to the coronavirus measurements from the government.

Diary-keeping

In addition to the interviews, this research contains data which is collected through diary-keeping by the participants. This method is added to the thesis, because this thesis is written in a unique period of time. Writing a paper about working at alternative workplaces to the traditional office or the home first seemed to be quite problematic when the Dutch government forced its citizens mid-March 2020 to work from home for indefinite duration. However, the theory of the experience of losing from Brown (2014) combined with the research method of diary-keeping made it possible to gain real-time data about the experiences of freelancers when it comes to their workplace and rhythm of work. Where the participants in the interviews only talked about their general experiences concerning their self-perceived creativity while working at extended workplaces, the diary-keeping research method made it possible to have participants reflect at that specific moment on their experience of losing the possibility to work elsewhere.

Diary-keeping has not been used quite often as a research method. Nevertheless, Gold and Mustafa (2013) have shown that using diary-keeping as a research method is quite useful when doing research to workers' conditions. For the diary-keeping, freelancers were asked to fill in a diary-survey after a day of compulsory working from home. This diary came to them in the form of an online survey, since keeping a diary can be quite time-consuming,

and filling in a survey makes it easier and faster for the participants. Furthermore, a survey makes it easier to compare freelancers' experiences.

Each interviewee was asked to fill in a diary-survey up to five times. However, the process of motivating the respondents to repeatedly fill in the survey after already participating in a one-hour video interview turned out to be quite difficult – a challenge that is recognized in earlier literature about survey research (Kitchenham & Pfleeger, 2002). Therefore, Kitchenham and Pfleeger (2002) provide several 'key pieces of information' which can be shared with the respondents to motivate them to fill in the survey anyway. For that reason, I repeatedly clarified the purpose of the study to the respondents, explained the importance of their responses, mentioned the relevance for them to fill in the survey too and confirmed the confidentiality of their participation in order to collect as many diaries as possible (Kitchenham & Pfleeger, 2002). Although this technique helped me to motivate the respondents to some extent, the goal of receiving fifty diaries in total turned out to be too ambitious.

I succeeded in collecting 35 diaries. All participants filled in at least two diary-surveys. Some stopped after two, while others did fill in the survey up to three, four or five times. The diaries represent the workday of a freelancer during the coronacrisis in general, and not the workday of one specific individual in particular. Therefore, this imbalance – referring to the number of diaries that each participant filled in – is not problematic for the data-collection and outcome of this research.

Operationalization

The two research methods are thus used as follows. During the interviews, the participants were asked about their preferences regarding the workplace in terms of time and space, and how extended workplaces fulfil these preferences when they have to do creative work. While diary-keeping, the participants were asked about their experience of losing the ability to work at extended workplaces in these times of the coronacrisis.

The semi-structured in-depth interviews took place first. In the first part of the interviews, the participants were encouraged to independently – and based on their own experiences – highlight their motives to work at extended workplaces. In the second part, those motives were linked to the process of creativity, and how the extended workplace allows them to make progress in this process. According to Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson & Kangasniemi (2016), the follow-up questions in this second part help the interviewees understand the study subject and its main themes.

The concepts outlined in the theoretical framework are used to design the interview questions (see table 1 in the appendix). After some introductory questions and questions about their freelance work, the participants were asked about their definition of creativity, and

at which moments they particularly do and do not feel creative. Then, the interviewees answered some questions about their preferences regarding the workplace in terms of space. In this part, the participants were asked to what extent they attach value to the dimensions of place that Florida (2012) mentions; the significance of the amenities, the crowd and the ambience at extended workplaces were discussed. Next, the interviewees were asked about their preferences regarding the workplace in terms of time. In this part, the concept rhythms of work from Pitts (2016) was leading. Furthermore, the participants outlined how their choice for a workplace is space- as well as time-dependent. The goal of this part was to merge the two previous parts together, questioning what kind of workplaces they prefer at what moments of the day.

Essentially, these interview questions provided the required data to answer the research question of this paper. However, since the current coronacrisis has a significant impact on almost everyone's way of working, it was unimaginable to *not* ask the participants about the consequences for them. Moreover, the unique situation emphasizes the participants preferences to work at an extended workplace better than ever before, since it triggers the experience of losing (Brown, 2014). This concept of Brown (2014) was leading in three additional questions about their realization of what working at extended workplaces means to them. In this part, the participants were asked to what extent they value being able to work at an extended workplace more than they did before the coronacrisis, and what they miss the most of working at an extended workplace now they are forced to work from home. Next, the interviewees were asked to participate in additional research: the diary-keeping – to which they all agreed. The interviews end with some closing questions, asking the participants if they think this research is socially relevant, and why.

After the interviews, the participants were sent – up to five times – dairy-surveys which they had to fill in after a day of compulsory working from home. The diary-surveys collected additional data about the participants' experience of losing the ability to work at extended workplaces and how they coped with this situation (Brown, 2014). In this short survey, which took the participants not more than ten minutes, the participants reported when and where they worked, and to what extent they missed working at extended workplaces. Therefore, the dairy-survey examines the experience of losing, which had already been questioned during the interviews, further (Brown, 2014). The survey questions presented to the participants were also derived from guiding concepts outlined in the theoretical framework of this paper (see table 2 in the appendix). The diary-survey consisted of five questions, in which the participants were asked to report their self-perceived creativity that day (DiLiello, Houghton and Dawley, 2011), to what extent they missed the amenities, the crowd and the ambience of extended workplaces (Florida, 2012), and to what extent they missed the ability to go working at extended workplaces because of the time restrictions they

experience while working from home (Pitts, 2016). The answers and/or scale the participants could choose from/could use to report their experiences, were derived from additional theory outlined in the theoretical framework as well (Dul and Ceylan, 2011; Liegl 2014; Spinuzzi, 2012; Orel and Almeida, 2019; Alacovska, 2018; Wang and Chern, 2008). Lastly, the participants were also able to report other experiences which were not mentioned in the survey.

Data analysis

After the interviews were conducted, and while the participants were still filling in the diary-surveys, the interviews were transcribed. Next, the transcripts were analysed and the themes were obtained via thematic analysis (see table 3 in the appendix). In order to discover the significant patterns of meaning, the six steps of Braun and Clarke (2006) were followed.

First, the transcripts were actively read and interesting data observations were noted (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This was quite a smooth process, since all the interviews were already conducted and transcribed, and therefore the data had already been heard and/or read twice. These first observations mainly exposed arguments which kept coming back in the interviews, like the precarious character of freelance work and the preference of the participants to be able to change workplaces. Subsequently, initial codes were generated (Braun & Clarke, 2006). One by one and very systematically, the transcripts were analysed into detail and interesting data was labelled. Taking the advice of Braun and Clarke (2006) into account, quotations were selected quite broadly, meaning that some context was added to the actual piece of information that had to be labelled. This technique turned out to be beneficial during the process of producing the report. Moreover, in the process of generating the initial codes, one-word codes were avoided. This means that a quotation about flexibility was not labelled as 'Flexibility', but as 'I like the flexibility of working as a freelancer', or 'As a freelancer, you must be flexible'. This way, the initial codes provided specific information. Again, this technique prevented that the context in the end was lost.

After the initial codes were generated, the search for themes started off. However, before the actual themes were chosen, corresponding codes were placed together to maintain structure and facilitate the process of cluttering them together into themes. Therefore, the initial codes were first put together into groups, which can be recognized as the bold titles under which the codes are grouped in table 3 in the appendix. Composing those groups was a puzzle, since some initial codes fitted into multiple groups. For example, the initial code 'I like to make my own decisions' could be placed under both 'Independence' and 'Entrepreneurship'. In such cases of doubt, the code was placed in the group that in my opinion was most suitable. After all, thematic analysis demands an *active* role of the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Furthermore, these groups, starting from a few until two dozen codes, were cluttered together into sub-themes – a step that is according to Braun and Clarke (2006) a possible intermediate step when main themes cannot be generated right away. These six sub-themes were eventually cluttered together into the three main themes, which present the data and structure the argumentation in the result section (see table 3 in the appendix). Forming these six sub-themes and eventually the three main themes was easier than placing the initial codes into groups. At this point, the main arguments that the respondents made during the interviews, were already in my head.

However, before the report was being produced, two other steps still awaited: the themes had to be reviewed and the official names – freedom, variety in time and place and inspiration and motivation – had to be defined. This process turned out to be a matter of time, and letting the draft names sink in. When the title of a sub-theme and/or theme did not feel right after some time, the title was specified a bit more. For example, I changed the title of the fourth sub-theme after some time from ‘Creativity’ into ‘Creativity encouragement’. Also, the name of the second main theme was altered from ‘Inspiration’ into ‘Inspiration and motivation’.

This last phase at the same time functioned as a preparing phase to producing the report, since verifying if the themes accurately reflect the data, already gave me some idea of the story I wanted to tell in the result section (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Validity and reliability

To make sure the findings of this thesis are trustworthy and credible, the operationalization and data-analysis have been described into detail. Here, the research process has been made transparent. Moreover, an accurate description of how I interpreted the data increases the trustworthiness and credibility of this research

According to Morrow (2005), interpretation is an active process, which already starts with conducting and transcribing the interviews. Therefore, before I even started with the actual data-analysis, I already immersed myself into the data, which led to a deep understanding of the knowledge provided by the interviewees. Moreover, I checked the correctness of my understanding with the interviewees by summarizing and verifying their statements during the interviews. Subsequently, the interpretation process continued during the data-analysis. Because I systematically analysed the data, the reader can follow and understand my interpretations. Finally, the interpretation of the data in the results section is supported by quotations from the interviewees to make sure that the reader gets where the interpretations come from. However, a balance between interpretations and quotations is preserved in order to prevent the reader from drowning in a sea of illustrations.

Nevertheless, the fact that the interviews were all conducted in Dutch and thereafter translated into English could be a threat to the validity of this research. In particular, the translation of key concepts in this research could lead to concerns about the accuracy of the thesis. According to Twinn (1997), finding the right words can be quite complex since translations rarely mean the exact same thing and meanings therefore can be somehow lost in translation. However, Esposito (2001) argues that translations are especially a threat to validity when researchers are dependent on third-party translators. For this thesis, I translated everything myself. When the researcher is able to understand and translate the participants' statements him- or herself, translation issues and thus validity concerns are minimized (Esposito, 2001).

Results

The results of this research are presented in this section of the paper, and build towards an answer to the research question: How does working at extended workplaces make freelancers feel creative? The themes obtained via thematic analysis – freedom, variety of time and place and inspiration and motivation – form the three chapters of this section.

From the in total 35 work days that the participants filled in a diary-survey, they missed working at extended workplaces on 18 of them; a percentage of 50 percent that confirms the trend amongst freelancers to seek a workplace that is neither the home nor the traditional office, which already had been discussed in the introduction of this paper. From both the interviews and the diary-surveys, it has become clear that freelancers want to work at extended workplaces for several reasons, which are all outlined in this section of the paper. These reasons, indirectly if not directly, all contribute to freelancers' self-perceived creativity.

In the first chapter, I will explain how the sense of freedom – or in other words: the *ability* to go working at an extended workplace – indirectly makes freelancers feel creative. Furthermore, I will discuss how the variety of time and place leads to self-perceived creativity amongst freelancers. Finally, I will describe how freelancers feel inspired and motivated when they are working at extended workplaces, and how this stimulates their self-perceived creativity as well. The arguments made by the participants in the interviews will be strengthened by visualizations from the diaries.

Freedom

Working as a freelance creative does not always come from the need to feel free, but regardless causes a sense of freedom. Remarkably, eight of the ten interviewees state that self-employment was not their own idea and/or choice. Martin, freelance digital graphic designer, is one of them. Although he did not plan to start working for himself, it is the freedom that comes with it that makes him enjoy it nevertheless:

'In my whole career, I worked six months for a boss, I think. The choice to start working as a freelancer, was not really a conscious one. It just happened. But I have to say, now I am working for myself for such a long time, it gets more and more difficult to work for a boss in the future again. I like the freedom; I like to make my own choices' – Martin, 31, freelance digital graphic designer.

However, the sense of freedom which Martin experiences, is – ironically – not 'free'; it goes hand in hand with precariousness, the unavoidable downside of working as a freelancer (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010; Gollmitzer, 2014). Although that downside is, needless to

say, the reason why working as a freelancer can be difficult, it is according to the interviewees also necessary when they want to feel creative. In other words, they argue: feeling creative starts with feeling free.

In the next two subchapters, I will first outline how freelance work comes with precariousness, a side issue of freelance work that was almost unanimously brought up by the participants during the interviews (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010; Gollmitzer, 2014). Next, I will explain how the precarious character of freelance work also enables freelancers to act and feel free, and how this sense of freedom indirectly makes freelancers feel creative too.

Autonomy comes with precariousness

During the interviews, the participants repeatedly mention how the work they are doing is precarious. Especially the unreliable and uncertain character of their work is described as the main disadvantage of working as your own boss. In earlier research about creative labour, freelance work has already been described extensively as precarious work (Merkel, 2019; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010; Gollmitzer, 2014; Sutherland et al., 2020). In this research, it turned out not to be any different. Martin explains that freelance work is precarious work to him because he experiences great competition:

'Sometimes I arrive at 8.30 am and do not leave before midnight (at the workplace of a client, red.). That work ethic is really tough. But that is what is expected from you, so you just do it. At least, in the beginning. Otherwise you risk not being hired again' – Martin, 31, freelance digital graphic designer.

A reality that is recognized by Pim, freelance journalist:

'Even when you promise you did everything you could, and say that you really did your best, they could think: well, we'll just ask someone else the next time. And that is the most dangerous thing of working as a freelancer: you are replaceable' – Pim, 24, freelance journalist.

Martin and Pim describe how the risk of being replaced because they do not work hard enough or perform as expected, makes freelance work precarious to them. Or as Portman-Smith and Harwood (2015) put it: "You are only as good as your last gig" (p.19). According to Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2010), freelance workers often are afraid to ask for a union rate for the same reason too; making their clients feel uncomfortable or even irritated rather causes them harm than good – and a higher income.

But not only losing a job and/or client is what makes freelance work precarious work; the uncertainty of getting the job in the first place increases the unreliability of freelance work as well. Acquisition is brought up multiple times by the participants as a big concern of being a freelancer. Martin explains how it disturbs him:

'I really get frustrated when I do not have a job for next month yet. That really disturbs me, especially because I live in Amsterdam and I have to pay 1000 euros for rent every month. I just want to have enough work. It is just not funny to do nothing for too long, not at all when you really need the money' – Martin, 31, freelance digital graphic designer.

Freelance work thus unavoidably means dealing with insecurities. However, according to the interviewees, precariousness is the price they need to pay for the freedom they receive in return; it is the uncertainty of getting the job and the risk of losing the job that makes freelance creatives able to decide what kind of work they want to do, and when and where they want to do it in the first place. Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2010) describe this sense of freedom as "a very complicated version of freedom" (p. 13), since it thus comes at a cost. However, the fact that this sense of autonomy and freedom outweighs the precarious character of their work, and that freelancers are thus willing to pay the metaphorical price Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2010) are talking about, is what is meaningful in the light of this research. Freelancers apparently find it more important to feel free, make their own decisions and be able to work at extended workplaces when they want to, than having a stable life and regular income. Kirsten, journalist and copywriter, experiences this the same way after almost five years of working as a freelancer. To her, a dynamic work life is more important than having a life without insecurities:

'Yes, those insecurities, they bother me less now. I have noticed that you can sometimes build upon clients. As a freelancer, you are never absolutely certain, but as an employee you are not as well. [...] And the flexibility you receive in return, to be able to combine different jobs, is what makes it so much fun' – Kirsten, 26, freelance journalist and copywriter.

Feeling creative starts with feeling free

Precariousness as the downside of freelance work has been researched extensively over the years (Gollmitzer, 2014; Cohen, 2015; Dobson, 2011; Bonini & Gandini; 2016; Salamon, 2016). However, the way in which precarious work indirectly thrives creativity as well, has not been discussed often. So, how does precarious work play a role in freelancers' self-

perceived creativity? As explained in the previous subchapter, precariousness goes hand in hand with the sense of freedom, which is where working at extended workplaces begins; with the ability to decide where and when one wants to work.

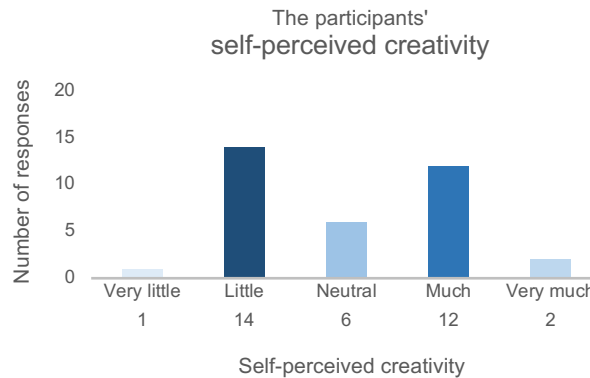


Figure 2: The participants' self-perceived creativity

From the in total 35 received diaries, freelancers noted in 14 of them to feel only a 'little' creative that day, when they were forced to work from home (figure 2). According to Sagiv et al. (2010), creative ideas can only be generated when freedom is ensured, since creative ideas can only emerge when a person is not stuck in a routine. Creative thinking after all requires thinking out of the box (Sagiv et al., 2010). Stijn, freelance journalist and photographer, clarifies how the freedom that comes with working as your own boss thrives his creativity:

'Being able to decide my own rhythm of work is ideal for my creativity. Then I can take my time to see new things, think about them and bring them to life. [...] I decide my rhythm of work based on how I feel. I do not mind to work past midnight, if that is what works' – Stijn, 21, freelance journalist and photographer.

Because Stijn is able to decide when he wants to work, he maximizes the likelihood of his creativity in the sense that he actually works when he is feeling creative, even when that is way past regular work times. For that same reason, Marlie, freelance journalist and copywriter, started appreciating the sense of freedom after years of working as a freelancer. When it comes to deciding her workplace, she does what feels right at that moment:

'I have learned what does and what does not work for me. Now and then I work in a café, or at the workplace of a client, so I can change workplaces once in a while' – Marlie, 29, freelance journalist and copywriter.

Another way in which the interviews have made clear that feeling creative starts with feeling free, is that multiple interviewees have confirmed that their self-perceived creativity is limited when that sense of freedom is taken away from them. To multiple participants, working at the workplace of a client does not change their self-perceived creativity for the better. And that has everything to do with the lack of freedom they experience when they are asked to work there. In this sense, the results confirm what Pitts (2016) already presumed; at extended workplaces, freelancers are able to freely set up their own creative requirements. Something they are not able to when they work at the workplace of their clients. Anneloes even claims that her sense of freedom completely disappears when she is working at the workplace of a client. When she is asked if that influences her self-perceived creativity as well, Anneloes is determined:

'Yes, 100 percent. Because then I am being forced to perform at a specific time, although I for example think I could better finish it in the evening' – Anneloes, 26, freelance journalist and social media professional.

When their autonomy is limited, the self-perceived creativity of freelancers is thus limited too. Yet, the sense of freedom does not directly contribute to an answer to the research question of this thesis, since it does not explain how *working* at extended workplaces makes freelancers feel creative. However, it does clarify how *being able* to work at extended workplaces is the starting point of feeling creative. Or in other words: freedom can be seen as a condition for self-perceived creativity amongst freelancers; to freelance creatives, feeling creative starts with feeling free.

In Kirsten's case, it works the other way around as well; for the same reason that her self-perceived creativity is limited when her sense of freedom is limited, she feels more creative when she makes maximum use of her freedom as a freelancer. In her case, the latter means working for indefinite duration abroad:

'I just really like to live up to spontaneous ideas. And I really like, well, traveling, but also to live in another country for a longer period of time. That is why I recently moved to Valencia for the second time, to work from there. That is one of the main advantages of being a freelancer: that you have the freedom to do that, and you do not need to ask permission to anyone. [...] It excites me and gives me motivation, and that makes me feel more creative' – Kirsten, 26, freelance journalist and copywriter.

Variety in time and space

The ability for Kirsten to live and work in another city for quite some time, shows how self-perceived creativity starts with feeling free. However, according to Kirsten, it is not only the fact that she lives up to her own dreams that thrives her creativity; it is the change of workplaces as well – or maybe, even more:

'I like the variety in time and space. That you do not have to do the same things every day, at the same place. [...] It is the change of workplaces that works for me. That I can say after working some time from home: hey, let's go to a café in Rotterdam, or to Valencia for a month' – Kirsten, 26, freelance journalist and copywriter.

From both the interviews and the diary-surveys it has become clear that other freelance creatives share this opinion with Kirsten. While discussing the quality of place (Florida, 2012) and the ability to adopt one's own rhythm of work (Pitts, 2016) at extended workplaces, the same reason that explains not only how, but also why freelancers feel (more) creative when working at extended workplaces, keeps coming back: the variety of time and space. Although their choice of workplace definitely depends on the quality of place and ability to adopt their own rhythm of work as well, it is mainly the change workplaces what makes them feel creative.

In this chapter, I will describe where and when the participants work. Furthermore, the preferences regarding their workplace and their rhythm of work, and why their actual workplace differs from these preferences, is clarified. Lastly, it is explained how this gap between their actual workplace and rhythm of work and that of their preferences makes freelancers feel creative while working at extended workplaces.

Work pace, place and preferences

The home, a café, an own office or desk in a coworking space, the workplace of a client, other people's homes and even in another country: those are the workplaces the participants say to regularly work at. Most of the time, working as a freelancer means choosing between all six of them, as explained in the first chapter about the freedom that comes with working as your own boss. However, the words 'most of the time' are chosen carefully in this sentence: from the interviews, it has become clear that, in practice, freelancers do not always decide their workplace themselves. Several freelancers confirm that their client often decides when and where they work, in particular when clients force their freelancers to work in shifts:

'Partially, my client decides when and where I work. You know, when your client works with a schedule and shifts. But when my client does not decide, I work when I feel myself creative' – Marlie, 29, freelance journalist and copywriter.

Pim regularly works in shifts too, and states that his rhythm of work and workplace is then defined by his client:

'When I have a dayshift, I work at the office of my client – end of the discussion' – Pim, 26, freelance journalist.

Although working in shifts means that freelancers' rhythm of work has already been defined by the client, the workplace is defined by the client in Pim's situation too. However, when it is only their rhythm of work that has been defined by the client, freelancers argue that their choice of workplace is still not really their own choice, simply because working at your preferred workplace is not suitable in any circumstance. Anneloes, freelance journalist and social media professional, explains how working in shifts basically forces her to work from home:

'When I work in shifts, I do so from home, because I really need that rest since you are expected to work really hard. [...] I need to have full focus then, no people around me, no noises, no hustle and bustle, just keeping up the work pace. And that is simply not possible in a café for example' – Anneloes, 26, freelance journalist and social media professional.

From the diary-surveys it has become clear that it works the other way around as well; when freelancers are working from home, they have a harder time adopting their own rhythm of work than when they are working at extended workplaces (figure 3).

The ability of freelancers to adopt their own rhythm of work at an extended workplace versus home

- I find it easier to adopt my own rhythm of work at an extended workplace
- I find it harder to adopt my own rhythm of work at an extended workplace

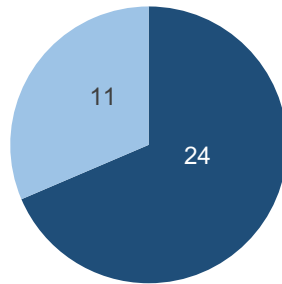


Figure 3: The ability of freelancers to adopt their own rhythm of work at an extended workplace versus the home

The reasons why freelancers can easier adopt their own rhythm of work at an extended workplace

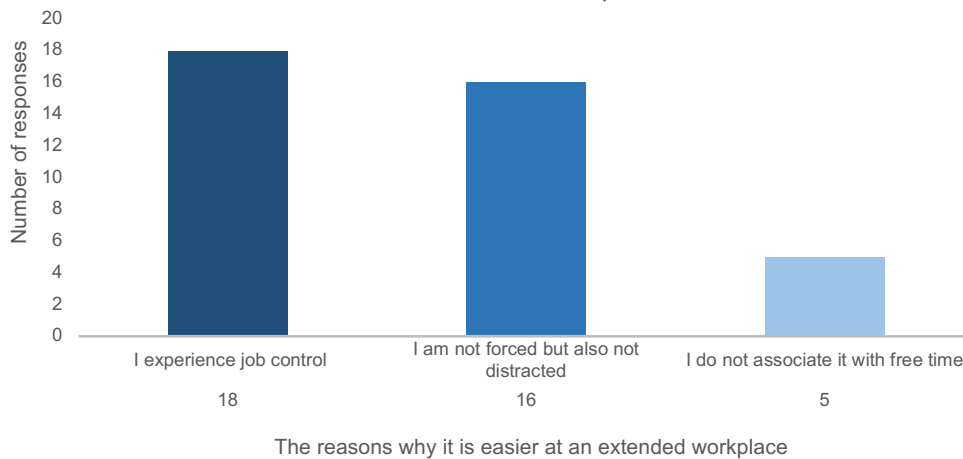


Figure 4: The reasons why freelancers can easier adopt their own rhythm of work at an extended workplace

The reasons why freelancers can easier adopt their own rhythm of work at extended workplaces than at their homes, has mainly to do with the freedom they experience when they work at an extended workplace (figure 4). The participants particularly argue to find it easier to adopt their own rhythm of work at an extended workplace because there they experience job control (Binnewies and Wörnlein, 2011) – which means that they can do their own work when they want to – and they do not feel forced to push up their work pace, but they do not feel distracted as well. Especially the latter is very relatable to Stijn:

'At home, I find it hard to adopt my own rhythm of work. [...] Then, very random, I go vacuuming, even though I never clean. Or I am all of a sudden surfing the internet for interior inspiration for my new house, you know, while I never do that' – Stijn, 21, freelance journalist and photographer.

The actual work pace and place of freelancers thus turns out to sometimes differ from the work pace and place of their preferences: there where they feel most creative and are able to adopt their own rhythm of work. However, the participants confirm they regularly work at the work pace and place of their preferences too. For some freelancers, that is a café, while others prefer to work at the homes of friends. Also, designated coworking spaces, a personal office, a hotel lobby and/or restaurant and the library came up during the interviews as work spots of freelancers' preferences. Time-wise, the majority of freelancers argues to prefer to work in the evenings, just like the students from Wang and Chern (2008) research. However, some freelancers mention they like to work in the mornings too.

The interviewees thus certainly choose to work at extended workplaces when they are able to. How that choice is made, is elaborated upon in the next chapter, but it is remarkable how often it is brought up that an alternative workplace to the home or the traditional office is preferred because it is a very welcome change. Verena, freelance journalist, explains why she makes use of the possibility to work at a café or a friend's house when her work – or rather: client – allows it:

'After I had to work from home two days in a row, I am desperate to go and work someplace else, and be with people. But then, if I do so the next day, I can bear it (working from home or the traditional office because the client decides so, red.) again. So, it actually is the variety that working at an extended workplace brings that defines my choice of workplace' – Verena, 27, freelance journalist.

Lieve and Marlie agree with Verena. They acknowledge that it is the constant change of workplaces that they are seeking. Working at the same work spot day in day out, hinders them in their performances. A different surrounding is then what they desire:

'I do not mind working from home, but doing the same thing over and over again is just boring in every way. I also do not go to the same café every day, or order the same lunch every day. Variety is the whole idea of becoming a freelancer. Variety is what is needed to perform' – Lieve, 23, freelance marketing and communication professional.

'Variety is one of the main reasons I am working as a freelancer. I would go mad... Well, maybe now I am overreacting, but I would not like working five days at an office. Although I do like to go there now and then. [...] To me, it is important that there is some sort of balance. I know that I'll get stuck when I constantly work from home, so that's why I prefer to work at extended workplaces some days of the week' – Marlie, 29, freelance journalist and copywriter.

Although Lieve and Marlie thus clarify that the decision to go working at extended workplaces stems from the desire to constantly change workplaces, Kirsten also argues that it is the constant change of workplaces that thrives her self-perceived creativity. This argument of Kirsten can be traced back to the point of Sagiv et al. (2010), who argue that creative ideas can only be generated when a person is not stuck in a routine. When working at extended workplaces becomes part of this routine, creative ideation will be more challenging (Sagiv et al., 2010):

'It is the variety that guarantees you that working at an extended workplace gives you a boost. [...] It is not that simple, like: when you want to feel creative, you go to an extended workplace. No, it is more complicated than that. You have to make sure that working at an extended workplace remains a special and positive experience, only then it keeps thriving your creativity' – Kirsten, 26, freelance journalist and copywriter.

Kirsten adds that she does not really mind that she is not always able to work at an extended workplace; (compulsory) working from home does, as she explains, not only make sure that working at an extended workplace remains a special and positive experience, which keeps thriving her creativity, it also forces her to be productive – a state that, besides creativity, is often pursued by the interviewees as well.

Productivity versus creativity

In this research, as explained in the theoretical framework, creativity is on the one hand understood as a trait, and on the other hand as a state (Harnad, 2006). During the interviews, all ten participants have confirmed that they can find themselves in this way of defining creativity; they all see themselves as a creative person and acknowledge that their level of creativity is not always the same. However, what has become clear from the interviews too, is that it is not always creativity that they are striving for. Although working as a freelancer in the creative industries means that creative work is one of your core activities, the participants argue that creativity is not always the main state that is pursued. The participants give several reasons for that.

Verena explains that she does not always pursue creativity because, for her, that means working at unusual times, which is inconvenient for her social life:

'I feel most creative in the evening, and with the evening I really mean after dinner. But that is simply not convenient, feeling creative in the evening, because then you want to eat with friends and do fun stuff. So that is why I try to work during the day' – Verena, 27, freelance journalist.

However, working when you feel most creative does not only put one's social life in jeopardy, it also is not the most productive way of working. Both Pim and Stijn mention in the interviews how they can lose themselves in their work and simply forget the time when they are feeling creative:

'I very quickly put too much work into something. [...] Before I know it, hours have passed. You really have to watch out for that, because before you know it, it takes over your life' – Pim, 24, freelance journalist.

'I could work past midnight, and that is just not beneficial' – Stijn, 21, freelance journalist and photographer.

Both participants thus explain that working when they feel most creative can be inconvenient because the work is then often done at unusual times, but also because they are likely to put way more hours in their work than is necessary, than they want to and/or they get paid for. Britt, freelance marketing and communication professional, recognizes this dilemma:

'When I start working in the evening, I can go on all night. That is my biggest risk, that it gets really late' – Britt, 23, freelance marketing and communication professional.

For these reasons, the majority of the freelancers confirm that they are not always working when they feel most creative, or even pursue to do so; regularly working in shifts holds them back in deciding their own rhythm of work, but often they actually do not seem to care that much. Although they acknowledge that working when they feel most creative improves their work, they do not care to regularly work when they feel, or are forced to be, productive:

'I sometimes prefer working between set times. Then you simply must sit down and work, you just have to. My first article is then not that good, but when I get going, I am into it and quite productive' – Stijn, 21, freelance journalist and photographer.

'Working in shifts often feels like a push in the right direction, like: you are going to do this now, and it has to be finished quickly. Then I'll do it' – Verena, 27, freelance journalist.

In that sense, the participants confirm that they, especially when they work in shifts, pursue productivity instead of creativity as a state; productivity is then more important than creativity. Moreover, productivity is in such circumstances the only solution for the task at hand – which is: performing between set times (Forbes & Domm, 2004). Forbes and Domm (2004) argue that creativity – or more specific: exploring new ideas – is hindered under external (time) pressure. Therefore, freelancers often strive towards productivity instead of creativity when clients decide when and/or where they work. Forbes and Domm (2004) refer to the analogy of a maze introduced by Amabile (1988) in further explaining their point. Doing (creative) work can be compared to a maze. When someone wants to escape the maze as quickly as possible, or find a way out within a specific time slot, this person will not explore new paths. But when someone does not feel the need to leave the maze anytime soon, and feels free to wander around, different pathways can be tried. According to Forbes and Domm (2004), productivity therefore conflicts with creativity, which is the reason why freelancers tend to strive for the one or the other.

Freelancers thus seek different circumstances in their workplace when they pursue creativity as a state, than when they pursue productivity as a state. From the interviews it has become clear that when productivity is pursued, freelancers aim to choose a workplace which encourages concentration and structure – or metaphorically: the most convenient and safe route through the maze. For the majority of the participants, that is the home:

'My workplace is dependent on the kind of work I need to do. If I need to focus, for example, I often choose to work from home, while I rather work in a café when the kind of work that I need to do, does not demand a high concentration' – Marlie, 29, freelance journalist and copywriter.

'I always enjoy working at extended workplaces, but it is also dependent on the kind of work I need to do. When I need to work in shifts, or the work I need to do demands a high concentration, I prefer a workplace from which I know: I can work here quietly. In a café you do not know how many people there are, how crowded the place is, and if that will hinder you or not' – Kirsten, 26, freelance journalist and copywriter.

However, when creativity is pursued, the participants confirm they seek variety and inspiration instead of structure and concentration – or metaphorically: the most interesting and appealing route through the maze. They then rather work at extended workplaces:

‘When I need to do creative work, I choose a workplace in the city. [...] A buzzing part of the city, where I can watch people’ – Stijn, 21, freelance journalist and photographer.

‘When I work from home too much, my creativity level goes down. I think that happens because... Well, inspiration comes from other people. For example, that you see other people, with different clothes, in a different environment, where you see different things on the wall. Or you talk to others, who have different ideas than you. That is what thrives your creativity’ – Verena, 27, freelance journalist.

Inspiration and motivation

In this chapter, the elements that freelancers seek at extended workplaces when they pursue creativity as a state, are discussed. During both the interviews and the diary-surveys, the participants have indicated what elements are important to them when they are working at extended workplaces. In this chapter, it is outlined why the participants value these elements and how they contribute to their self-perceived creativity.

The extended workplace as a safe, social and sparkling haven

Florida’s (2012) concept of quality of place has been used to define how the dimensions of the workplace – the amenities, the crowd and the ambience – encourage self-perceived creativity amongst freelancers. From both the interviews and the diaries, it has become clear that freelance creatives seek three different things at extended workplaces: comfort, social contact and a sparkling environment. The amenities (what is there), the crowd (who is there) and the ambience (what is going on) at extended workplaces establish these needs from freelancers. In this subchapter, I will elaborate on how Florida’s (2012) dimensions need to appear at extended workplaces in order to stimulate self-perceived creativity amongst freelancers as a safe, social and sparkling haven.

I will start with the extended workplace as a safe haven. Both the amenities and the ambience define a place as a safe haven (Florida, 2012). According to the participants, they must feel comfortable to consider a place as a suitable workplace. Although the level of comfort of a workplace does not directly thrive creativity, the participants mention almost unanimously that creativity encouraging elements do not matter when a workplace is not a safe haven in the first place.

Next, I will explain how the extended workplace as a social haven encourages self-perceived creativity amongst freelancers. Obviously, the crowd – or: who is there – defines a place as a social haven (Florida, 2012). The participants prefer to work amongst other people for multiple reasons. Feeling creative is one of them.

Lastly, I will clarify how the extended workplace as a sparkling haven encourages self-perceived creativity. All three of Florida's (2012) dimensions define a place as a sparkling haven. Working at a sparkling workplace inspires and motivates freelancers, which at its turn triggers self-perceived creativity.

Safe haven

Although the participants state to pursue creativity as a state when working at extended workplaces (Harnad, 2006), their choice of workplace is not dependent on the elements that thrive their self-perceived creativity only; in order to feel creative, freelancers argue that feeling comfortable is what matters in the first place.

With feeling comfortable, the participants literally mean comfort – having a proper chair and a good work table – but also comfort in the sense that their surroundings simply enable them to work there, like enough electric sockets, a toilet nearby and proper daylight. Also, it has become clear from the interviews that freelancers find good coffee and/or good food important when they are working at extended workplaces; the opportunity to order coffee or lunch, for themselves or for their work relations, is also a primary need to them.

Moreover, the participants define feeling comfortable as feeling welcome; to the most of them, being appreciated is necessary to work relaxed. Especially when they seek a café as their workplace, feeling welcome defines feeling comfortable to a great extent:

'I really want to feel welcome, and I do not always get that feeling when I am working in a café. That feeling of: "Oh, there is another one, working on his laptop and ordering just one cup of coffee." Although I do not do that myself, I know that is what they sometimes think. Then I prefer to pay for a workplace, because then I know: I paid for this, so I can make use of it' – Martin, 31, freelance digital graphic designer.

'I sometimes get uncomfortable when I have the feeling that they do not appreciate it that I am working on my laptop, or if I sit there for too long. Then I rather go to a place where other people are working on their laptop too' – Marlie, 29, freelance journalist and copywriter.

Although it has become clear from the interviews that these primary elements contribute to feeling comfortable at extended workplace, and are thus important to the participants, they are not widely covered as being missed in the diaries. The explanatory reason for that is that freelancers probably have them at home too. These elements are not the reason why they go to extended workplaces; they are only required to consider the workplaces as a suitable spot in the first place. The data from the diaries visualize this assumption. Figures 5, 6, 7 and 8, show that the participants do not really miss the elements that fulfil their primary needs; the amount of daylight, a window seat, a pleasant temperature and specific furniture are not missed by the most of the freelancers when they are forced to work from home. In all four cases, a significant number of freelancers noted that they miss these elements ‘very little’ or ‘little’. Moreover, not one participant noted to miss these elements ‘very much’.

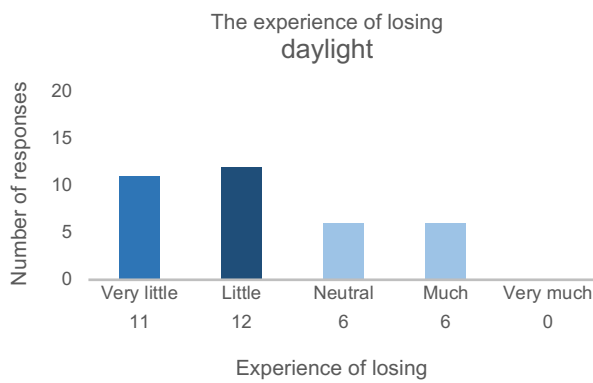


Figure 5: The experience of losing daylight

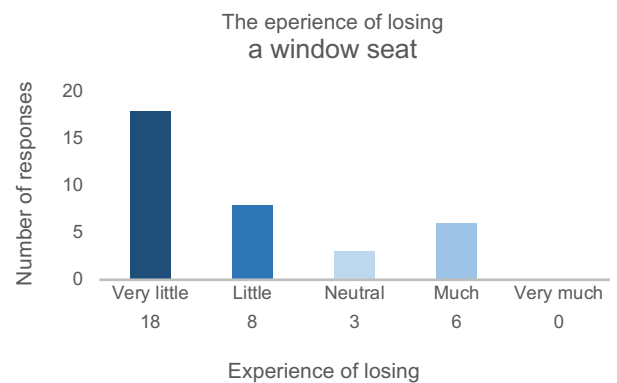


Figure 6: The experience of losing a window seat

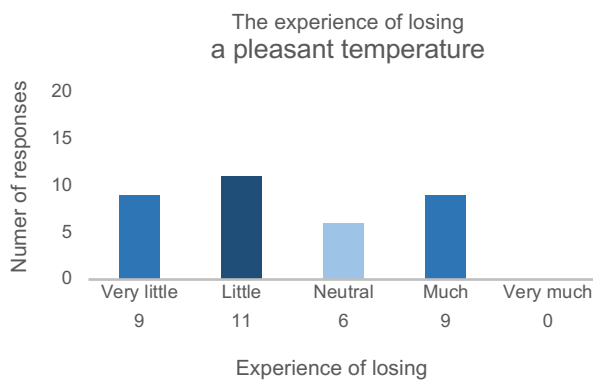


Figure 7: The experience of losing a pleasant temperature

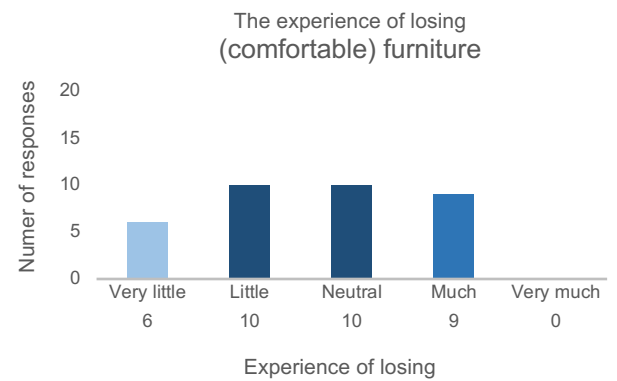


Figure 8: The experience of losing furniture

Social haven

Besides the elements that fulfil the primary needs of freelance creatives – like daylight, a pleasant temperature and proper furniture – the participants argue that they seek a social haven when they go to an extended workplace. From both the interviews and the diary-surveys, it has become clear that the presence of other people is important for freelancers.

From the in total 35 work days that the participants filled in a diary-survey, they missed working amongst others on 24 of them (figure 9). In their diaries as well as during the interviews, the participants describe the four main reasons why they prefer to work with other people around them: it makes them feel less lonely, it gives them inspiration and energy, it motivates them to keep on working and it makes them feel part of a group, professionally and/or personally (Blagoev et al., 2019; Liegl, 2014; Spinuzzi, 2012). In figure 14, the reasons for missing other people around them during this pandemic, are visualized.

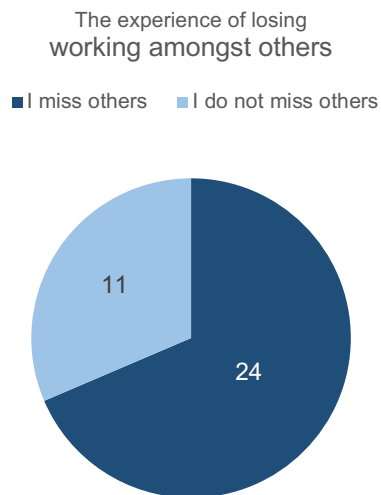


Figure 9: The experience of losing working amongst others

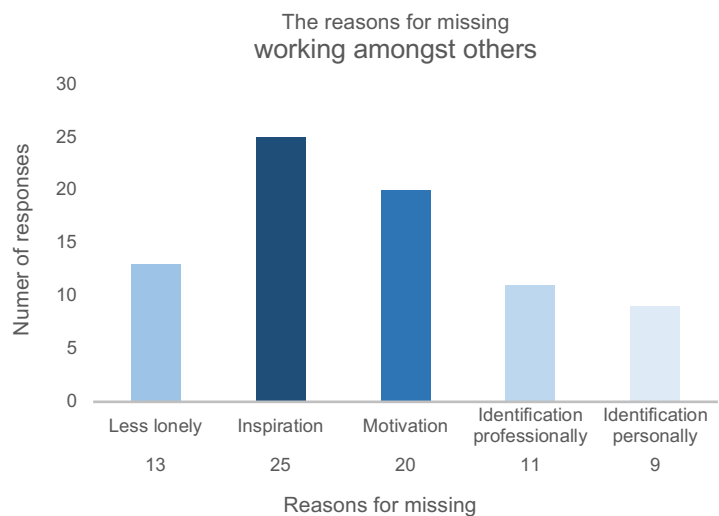


Figure 10: The reasons for missing working amongst others

As can be seen in figure 10, on 13 work days that the participants filled in a diary-survey, they argue to have missed working amongst others at an extended workplace because that makes them feel less lonely (Blagoev et al., 2019; Liegl, 2014). From the interviews, it has become clear that multiple participants prefer to work amongst others because being your own boss can make you feel alone. Martin explains how working from home constantly or too often makes him feel sad and long for social belongingness (Blagoev et al., 2019):

‘Working from home can be pretty lonely. That I go to bed and think: tomorrow, new day, same workplace: my home, yay. That makes you feel less motivated and less happy. No, you rather go to a café with Henk and Ingrid, talk some bullshit, make some jokes, and do some work’ – Martin, 31, freelance digital graphic designer.

However, the participants argue to have missed working amongst others because that gives them energy and inspiration even more; on 25 of the work days that the freelancers filled in a diary-survey, they would have liked to work amongst other people because they get inspired

by them (Liegl, 2014). Stijn explains how other people at extended workplaces have that effect on him too:

'I prefer to have other people around me, because they inspire me. When I for example am thinking about how to arrange a photoshoot, and I see a girl in a pink sweater, I think: oh, well, maybe I can work with something pink. Other people thrive my creativity in that sense' – Stijn, 21, freelance journalist and photographer.

Furthermore, on 20 of the work days that the freelancers filled in a diary-survey, they argue to have missed working amongst others for the motivational effect they have on them. Anneloes and Pim describe how other people present at an extended workplace prevent them from being distracted and even motivate them to work harder (Liegl, 2014):

'When I work from home, I can go to the toilet or grab something to drink or eat every five minutes. Or chat with a roommate, or sit in the sun. I get distracted way faster than when I work in a café. [...] In a café, I do not stand up that much, and I am less likely to do other stuff. I do not feel comfortable watching Netflix in a café because I wonder what other people would think. "What is that girl over there doing?" That increases my focus' – Anneloes, 26, freelance journalist and social media professional.

'When I see other people working, or calling, or whatever, that motivates and inspires me to work hard too, and to push my creativity a little bit further. I do not think that is peer pressure, but well, you can compare it, because it makes me feel, like: well, I cannot shop online when I see other people around me working very hard' – Pim, 24, freelance journalist.

Lastly, the participants wrote 20 times down in their diaries to have missed working amongst other people at extended workplaces because they make them feel part of a group, professionally and/or personally; on 11 of the work days that the freelancers filled in a diary-survey, they argue to have missed working amongst others who are working too, and on 9 of them, they argue to have missed working amongst others whom they can identify with (Spinuzzi, 2012). During the interviews, Vivian and Kirsten explain how working amongst people who are working too makes them feel part of a group:

'I prefer to work in a café where other people are working on their laptops too, because you are then paying less attention to each other' – Vivian, 27, freelance marketing and communication professional.

'Yes, I prefer to work amongst others who are working too. Well, it is not the case that I would not go to a specific place where others are just having coffee, but when others are working too, it creates this kind of ambience, like: we are all working, we are all in the same boat. That creates some sort of work ethic, while it takes away the feeling of: oh, I am working amongst people who are just having lunch and coffee. That creates a whole other ambience' – Kirsten, 26, freelance journalist and copywriter.

Additionally, Britt and Martin explain how working with others whom they can identify with makes them feel part of a group, and is thus preferred by them:

'The office of one of my clients is not really inspiring, and to make it worse, most of the people working there, are old men. [...] Ok, well, maybe that is not completely true, but there is nobody like me working there. We are not really talking to each other, or well, we do have some contact, but we are not really working together. So, what I mean is: they are older, and yes, just from another generation. The work they do is completely different from mine, so... Yes, I prefer to work amongst others whom I can identify with' – Britt, 23, freelance marketing and communication professional.

'I know what kind of person I am myself, and that is what I seek in the people whom I work with. Your friends are your friends for a reason: because you think they are nice and interesting. And yes, I prefer the people whom I work with to have that same vibe too' – Martin, 31, freelance digital graphic designer.

Freelancers thus go to extended workplaces to work amongst others for four reasons. Although the participants do not mention that one reason is more important for them than the other, they note to miss working amongst others the most because they inspire them. When other people present in a specific workplace have a positive effect on individuals, Bhansing et al. (2018) speak of 'localized passion'. Moreover, Bhansing et al. (2018) argue that localized passion has a positive influence on inspiration, which explains why a significant number of freelancers notes to miss working amongst others for inspirational reasons. In other words: freelancers need others to be inspired, and need to be inspired to perform as a creative entrepreneur (Bhansing et al., 2018).

Sparkling haven

Freelancers thus feel inspired at extended workplaces through localised passion (Bhansing et al., 2018). However, not only other people contribute to freelancers' self-perceived creativity; the ambience and the amenities can make them feel creative as well. From both the diary-surveys and the interviews it has become clear that freelancers get inspiration from a sparkling environment – both as a visual interesting environment and an energetic environment (Orel & Almeida, 2019; Alacovska, 2018).

In opposition to the physical elements which fulfil a primary need, it has become clear from the diary-surveys that the participants *do* miss working at extended workplaces because of the physical elements which are aesthetically inspiring (Alacovska, 2018). According to McCoy and Evans (2002), a visually interesting environment thrives people's self-perceived creativity. With visually interesting, the authors refer to workplaces that are complex, both spatially and ornamentally. In this research, such visually detailed workplaces are defined as sparkling workplaces, referring to the visual details of the place that spark new and creative ideas. Figures 11, 12, 13 and 14 show that a significant number of freelancers miss the elements that make a workplace visually interesting; working in a colourful environment, working in playful environment and working with a window view are missed by the freelancers when they are forced to work from home. In all four cases, the majority of the freelancers noted that they miss these elements 'much', and some of them even 'very much'.

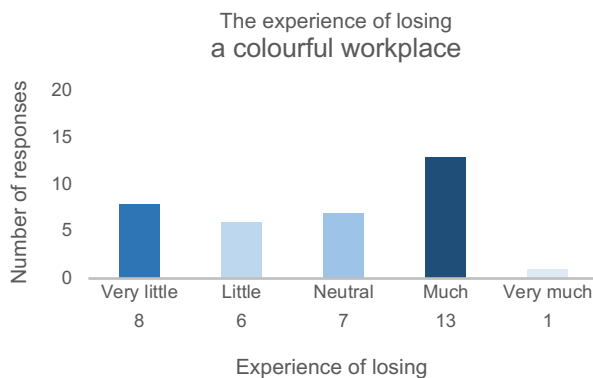


Figure 11: The experience of losing a colourful workplace

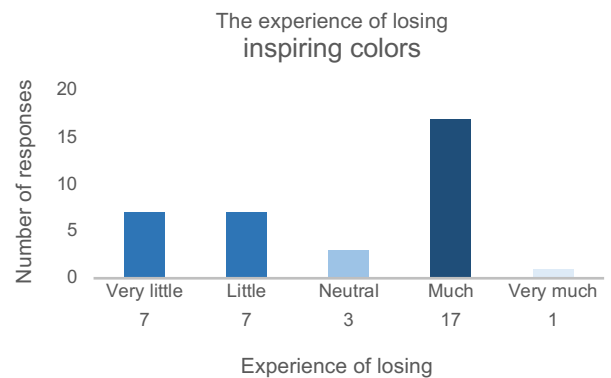


Figure 12: The experience of losing inspiring colours

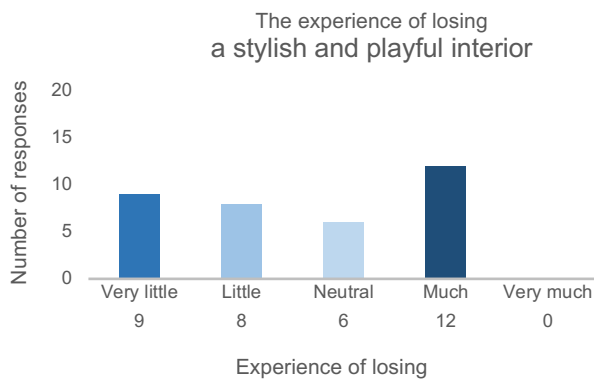


Figure 13: The experience of losing a stylish and playful interior

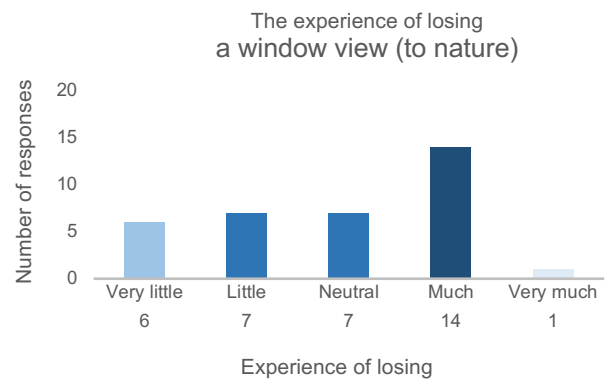


Figure 14: The experience of losing a window view (to nature)

During the interviews, the freelancers explain why working at a visual interesting workplace makes them feel creative. Kirsten for example clarifies how a colourful and visual sparkling environment contributes to her self-perceived creativity:

'When the interior of a workplace appeals to me, I get inspired. A stylish workplace can be the reason I like to work there, it makes me enthusiastic. So, I think... Yes, a visual appealing workplace definitely plays a role. A grey space does not thrive my creativity. No' – Kirsten, 26, freelance journalist and copywriter.

For Lieve, a visual interesting workplace is a source of inspiration too. During the interview, she explains how the smallest things that are visually appealing to her, can inspire her:

'A visual appealing environment makes me think about why certain things are that persuasive. So, I can look at a bar and think: why is this so appealing to me? Realizing that it is appealing to me, and why it is so appealing, inspires me in doing my own job' – Lieve, 23, marketing and communication professional.

Other people (Liegl, 2014; Spinuzzi, 2012; Bhansing et al., 2018) and visual elements (Alacovska, 2018; McCoy & Evans, 2002), but also the energetic ambience of a workplace can inspire freelancers and thrive their self-perceived creativity (Drake, 2003). According to Drake (2003), intensive activity at a certain place – also defined in earlier research as a so-called 'buzz' (Drake, 2003; Asheim et al., 2007; Growe 2019) – can spark creative ideas amongst creatives too. From both the diary-surveys and the interviews it has become clear that the participants prefer working at an energetic environment for this reason (Orel &

Almeida, 2019). Lieve describes how such a sparkling, energetic ambience inspires her in doing her job:

'I think I get inspired by not-so-obvious things. For example: you have to create a painting, and the canvas lies in front of you. At home, you really have to think about what you will put on that canvas, while in a busy café, with inspiring colours around you and handsome bar keepers, that is all of a sudden quite easy, because all those things are coming at you, like a form of inspiration' – Lieve, 23, freelance marketing and communication professional.

That energetic environment as a form of inspiration is also what Lieve is missing the most:

'I miss that energy, the inspiration that a workplace can give me when a lot is happening. Colours, people, employees, and the inspiration they give me' – Lieve, 23, freelance marketing and communication professional.

An 'experience of losing' she shares with Stijn, who acknowledges that an energetic ambience at extended workplaces can create a sparkling environment that thrives his creativity:

'My favourite place in Utrecht to work, is located at a corner. [...] There is a big flow of people walking in and out, people are always nicely dressed and it is just located in a busy street in Utrecht, so everything that passes by... Well, those are triggers I need to feel creative. [...] I really miss working at cafés like that, with all those people, that energetic ambience, and everybody who is working there too' – Stijn, 21, freelance journalist and photographer.

Although the diary-surveys do not contain any questions about an energetic ambience specifically, the participants were asked to indicate to what extent they miss certain aspects that define the ambience at extended workplaces. Figures 15 and 16 show that the freelancers miss the elements that develop – or at least: encourage – a buzzing ambience. The experience of missing the ability to work at a large worktable, often with others on it too, and work in a (controlled) noisy environment point out that the participants seek extended workplaces with an interactive and thus sparkling and energetic ambience, where it is not deadly quiet and they are able to work not only amongst others, but also *next* to others (Drake, 2003; Orel and Almeida, 2019).

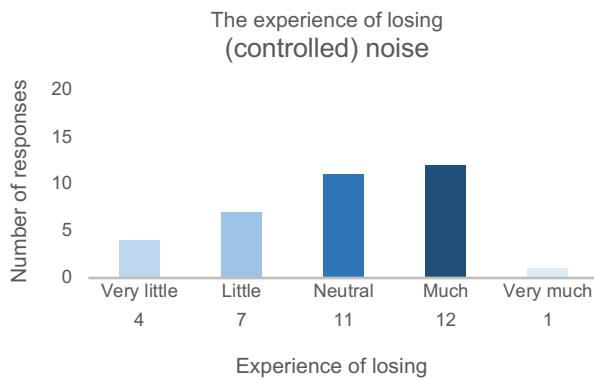


Figure 15: The experience of losing (controlled) noise

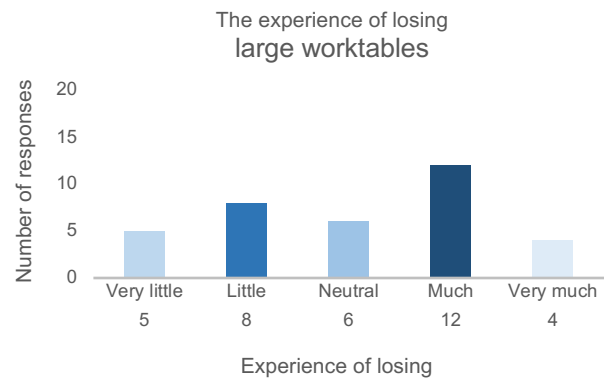


Figure 16: The experience of losing large worktables

An environment that is energetic and visual interesting thus makes sure that an extended workplace is transformed into a sparkling working environment that inspires freelance creatives in doing their job. Surrounding themselves with other people, working besides them at the same, large work table, which is part of a playful, colourful interior triggers new ideas. In that sense, a sparkling environment inspires freelancers and therefore thrives their self-perceived creativity (McCoy & Evans, 2002; Drake, 2003; Orel and Almeida, 2019).

However, from the interviews it has become clear that the elements which are often a form of motivation and/or inspiration to freelancers, can provoke irritation as well; in order to trigger motivation and/or inspiration, the elements which can transform the workplace into a sparkling environment, must appear in a certain way.

The thin line between inspiration and irritation

The crowd, the amenities and the ambience: together they can create an energetic workplace that inspires freelancers in different ways – they *can*, because in the interviews the participants emphasize that the line between inspiration and irritation is quite thin when they are working at extended workplaces.

A significant number of respondents mention that a source of inspiration can change into a source of irritation when the elements which inspire freelancers in the first place, overstimulate them. According to Sailer (2011), bringing people together definitely enhances creativity, however, there still needs to be a balance between communication and concentration. When a place does not allow workers to concentrate at all, an energetic ambience can irritate them instead of inspire them. Sailer (2011) argues that too much noise is often the problem. Martin and Lieve recognize this trigger for irritation when they are working at extended workplaces:

'Wherever you work, there will always be people who keep on chatting while you are working. Sometimes, when I just cannot handle it, I go home, because all that chatter does not work for me' – Martin, 31, freelance digital graphic designer.

'I like to work amongst other people, but when I think someone is too loud, or wears a perfume that is way too strong, they can really annoy me as well' – Lieve, 23, freelance marketing and communication professional.

Moreover, Vivian explains how other people can annoy and/or hinder her too when it is just too crowded:

'I prefer a crowded but cozy place, although I do not want people to sit really close to me. [...] There really must be some space between me and them' – Vivian, 27, freelance marketing and communication professional.

The participants thus argue that an energetic crowd can be inspiring, but only when their presence does not overstimulate them (Sailer, 2011). Although the diary-surveys do not ask participants why they do *not* miss working at extended workplaces – since the diary-surveys were designed based on the theory of the experience of losing and thus on what the participants *do* miss, and why – some of the freelancers clarify this thin line between inspiration and irritation in the last section of the survey, where they can leave a comment. In that section, Britt writes that she did not miss working at an extended workplace the day she filled in the survey, because she really had to focus on her work that day, which would have been hard when she was working in a café or at the workplace of a client since other people or other tasks would then have distracted her. On one of the days that Verena was forced to work from home and filled in the diary-survey, she more or less experienced the same; because she had to work in shifts that day, she would not have chosen to work at an extended workplace anyway since that would have distracted her too much.

Although both Britt's and Verena's argument to not miss working at an extended workplace emphasize the findings of this research that working at extended workplaces is not preferred when freelancers aim for productivity instead of creativity (Forbes and Domm, 2004), it also underlines the argument that the way in which elements appear, define if they are actually inspiring, or just irritating (Sailer, 2011).

Conclusion and discussion

Analysing the trend amongst freelancers to work at extended workplaces has been quite challenging during this worldwide coronacrisis. Yet, this research has led to new insights about the choices that freelancers make regarding their workplace. From the semi-structured interviews with ten freelance creatives and the 35 diaries they filled in as an additional research approach, it has become clear that the irregularity of the workplace is both a battle and a big plus for freelancers. In this research, both topics came up for discussion, but it is the latter that has led to an answer to the research question of this thesis: How does working at extended workplaces make freelancers feel creative?

In order to feel creative, freelancers must experience the sense of freedom and (be able to) pursue creativity as a state in the first place (Harnad, 2006). When freelance creatives are not free to decide where and when they want to work themselves, for example because their clients decide so, they tend to pursue productivity as a state (Forbes & Domm, 2004). Therefore, feeling creative starts with feeling free, an insight that builds upon literature about the precariousness of freelance work and the controlling behaviour of clients.

However, this study mainly focusses on the circumstances that *do* make freelancers feel creative, instead of the circumstances that forces them to pursue productivity as a state – like dominant clients. The three dimensions introduced by Florida (2012) to define the quality of place on a large scale – that is: location – turn out to be suitable for defining the quality of place on a smaller scale too. During in-depth interviews and in their online diary-surveys ten freelancers have noted how the amenities, the crowd and the ambience need to appear in order to stimulate their self-perceived creativity. And that is: as a safe, social and sparkling haven (Liegl, 2014; Spinuzzi, 2012; Bhansing et al., 2018; Alacovska, 2018; McCoy & Evans, 2002; Drake, 2003; Asheim et al., 2007; Growe 2019; Orel & Almeida, 2019). This implies that freelancers feel most creative at extended workplaces when they feel comfortable, socially involved and inspired. The following elements of the workplace contribute to the creation of extended workplaces as a safe, social and sparkling haven:

Safe haven

- The amenities: electric sockets, a toilet nearby, a proper chair and table, enough daylight, good coffee and/or food
- The crowd/the ambience: other people, including possible staff, who make creative workers feel welcome

Social haven

- The crowd: other people, who make creative workers feel less lonely, inspire them, motivate them and make them feel part of a group

Sparkling haven

- The amenities: visually interesting elements, such as warm colours, a stylish interior and visual appealing details. But also: physical elements which encourage interactivity, like large worktables
- The crowd/the ambience: other people, music and (controlled) noises, which create a buzz, but are not too loud

This thesis thus exposes the elements that freelancers seek when they swap their homes or the office of their clients for alternative workplaces. Knowing the reasons for this great social need amongst freelancers, generates more knowledge about and understanding for the uncertainty of a stable, inspiring and comfortable workplace of freelancers. Moreover, this research emphasizes that working in isolation harms individuals' creativity, but even more important: their well-being.

Furthermore, this research has added value to a broader academic debate, since it has gained new insights about how creativity is embedded in time and place. Earlier research in creative labour has extensively confirmed that creativity is both time- and space-dependent (Amabile & Gryskiewicz, 1989; James, Brodersen & Eisenberg, 2004; Egan, 2005; Montag, Maertz Jr & Baer, 2012; Spinuzzi, 2012; Binnewies & Wörnlein, 2011; Blagoev, Costas and Kärreman, 2019; Weinberger, Wach, Stephan & Wegge, 2018). This study has contributed to this field of research by combining the two and outlining a clear overview of how freelancers deal with both time and space in their search to a creativity-encouraging workplace. Although the findings of this research mainly provide new insights about freelancers' space-related preferences, the creative workers argue that variety in their work – which implies: changes over time – is important for their self-perceived creativity too (Sagiv et al., 2010). On a more daily basis, time-related preferences turn out to be very personal. However, freelancers almost unanimously state that working between set times – often defined by that same dominant client – rather hinders than improves their self-perceived creativity (Pitts, 2016; Forbes & Domm, 2004).

Moreover, this research contributes to workplace creativity as a field of research, since it has been written in a unique period of time. The outbreak of the coronavirus, which started as a major limitation, has made it possible to shed light on workplace creativity as a research topic from a completely different perspective. Examining how working at extended workplaces makes freelancers feel creative through their experience of losing the ability to change workplaces, has exposed – or rather: confirmed – which elements of the workplace are truly important to them.

Limitations and further research

So, although the outbreak of the coronavirus has made this study quite unique, it started as a major limitation. Two months after the start of this master thesis project, the coronavirus led to a worldwide pandemic. Due to the measurements taken by the Dutch government, working at extended workplaces was all of a sudden not one of the possibilities anymore. Around that same time, the interviews and the diary-surveys were designed. Especially the latter became almost completely irrelevant since the survey questions were designed to illustrate how freelance creatives were at that specific moment experiencing working at an extended workplace; the diary-survey was meant to fill in after a day of working at an alternative workplace. After the coronavirus emerged in the Netherlands, that whole research approach collapsed. Also, face-to-face interviews were no longer possible.

Although it has been quite stressful to deal with this limitation, I succeeded to turn the coronacrisis into something positive. The theory of the experience of losing from Brown (2014) made it possible to continue with the diary-keeping as an additional research method. In fact, the new version of the diary-survey improved the uniqueness of the research, since the experience of losing is only relevant to apply under such extreme circumstances. However, it can be questioned if the results from the revised diary-survey would have been the same as the results from the original diary-survey. Although the one method is not necessarily better than the other, it has to be taken into account that the original diary-survey would have led to a different answer to the research question of this paper. Therefore, further research could consider this research method in the future, when we can leave the coronacrisis behind us, in order to find out if the results are then somehow different.

Moreover, the lack of diversity in the target group can be seen as a limitation of this research. For the recruitment of the participants, convenience and snowball sampling techniques were used. As a result, the participants of this research have more or less the same age and the most of them live in cities. Although the latter is quite common for creatives (Florida, 2012), it can be an interesting approach for further research to investigate how freelancers who live in smaller villages, where extended workplaces are not around the corner, deal with their workplaces. Also, it would be interesting to diversify the age of the target group. With the youngest participant being 21 and the oldest 31, this research only covers a small community. In further research, a more diverse target group could be considered, to find out how creatives with children deal with their workplace, for example.

Finally, an interesting approach for further research could be to find out if there exist any differences between certain demographics. Although quantitative analysis is more suitable for that, the data from the diary-surveys could have been used to discover patterns amongst certain populations as well. However, the scope of this research unfortunately did not allow that. Further research could find out if that leads to additional insights.

Appendix

Table 1: Interview questions linked to guiding concepts

Concept	Interview questions
Introduction – personal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How old are you? 2. What is your nationality? 3. Where do you live? 4. What and where did you study? 5. What kind of freelance work do you do? 6. For how long have you been doing that already?
Introduction – professional	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why are you working for yourself, instead of working for a boss? 2. Is freelance work something you want to do the rest of your life? And why (not)? 3. How did you experience being a freelancer when you just started? 4. How do you currently experience being a freelancer? 5. Why do you think the role of a self-employee suits you? 6. Could you describe the skills you think are needed to be a freelancer/self-employee? 7. Are there particular goals that you work towards? 8. How do you want to reach those goals?
Self-perceived creativity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you think is creativity? 2. In this research, creativity is understood as a "trait" and "state" (Harnad, 2006). In the first place, it can be argued that creativity is a trait, meaning that some individuals are more creative than others. Besides that, creativity is also a state: even when you possess creativity as a trait, you simply cannot be creative all the time. Creativity can thus be seen as a circumstance, that comes and goes. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Do you think that you as an individual possess creativity as a trait? b. Do you think that creativity can be understood as a state/circumstance, too, that comes and goes? c. When/at which circumstance do you feel particularly creative? d. When/at which circumstance do you feel particularly <i>not</i> creative?

Quality of place	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where/at what place(s) do you feel creative? 2. Do you also work at those places? Or where/at what place(s) do you work? 3. On what elements does your workplace depend on? 4. Regarding the workplace, do you attach value to... <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The amenities (what is there)? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. What kind of amenities/physical elements do you attach value to? ii. Do you also attach value to the effort that has been put into the appearance of the workplace (in terms of style/attractiveness)? And why? b. The crowd (who is there)? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Do you prefer other people around you while working? And why? ii. What kind of crowd do you prefer? For example: only like-minded people (so workers, too), people with a specific background, or a more diverse crowd? c. The ambience (what is going)? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. How do you experience working at the workplace of a client/company in terms of the ambience? ii. Do you prefer a formal or an informal ambience? And why? 5. Do you think a workplace (in terms of space) can make you feel (more) creative? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How do you think the preferences regarding the workplace (in terms of space) you just mentioned correlate with your self-perceived creativity? 																		
Rhythm of work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When/at what moment(s) of the day do you feel creative? <p>The time interval scheme of Wang and Chern (2008) that can be used to help the interviewee answer this question (more specifically):</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="558 1489 1388 2016"> <thead> <tr> <th>Time interval</th> <th>Self-perceived creativity</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>08:00 – 10:00</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>10:00 – 12:00</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>12:00 – 14:00</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>14:00 – 16:00</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>16:00 – 18:00</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>18:00 – 20:00</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>20:00 – 22:00</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>22:00 – 00:00</td><td>0</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Time interval	Self-perceived creativity	08:00 – 10:00	0	10:00 – 12:00	0	12:00 – 14:00	0	14:00 – 16:00	0	16:00 – 18:00	0	18:00 – 20:00	0	20:00 – 22:00	0	22:00 – 00:00	0
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	02:00 – 04:00	0
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. When/at what moment(s) of the day do you work? 3. What does the moment(s) you work depend on? 4. Regarding the workplace, do you attach value to... <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The extent in which you are able to work at your own pace? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Do feel limited in your freedom when you are working at the workplace of a client? And why (not)? ii. What workplaces allow you to adopt your own work pace? 5. Do you think a workplace (in terms of time) can make you (more) creative? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How do you think the preferences regarding the workplace (in terms of time) you just mentioned correlate with your self-perceived creativity? 	
Quality of place and rhythms of work connected	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is your choice of workplace time-dependent? 2. If yes, when do you prefer a specific workplace, and why? 3. When you are struggling in doing your work, how do you then find a solution for that (or in other words: seek for inspiration/creativity)? And is that solution sometimes space or time-dependent? 	
Experience of losing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you, now you are forced to work from home, value being able to work at an extended workplace more? 2. What do you miss (the most) of working at an extended workplace? 3. Do you want to participate in an extending research in which you have to fill in a diary-survey about compulsory working from home? The survey is very short, and you have to fill it in, preferably up to five times, after a day of working from home. It is about your experience of losing the ability to go working at an extended workplace. Receiving as much diaries as possible is important for the data-collection of this research. 	

Table 2: Survey questions linked to guiding concepts

Concept	Survey-questions																																										
Introduction – personal	<p>This diary is from: _____</p> <p>Enter a date:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Mon</th> <th>Tue</th> <th>Wed</th> <th>Thu</th> <th>Fri</th> <th>Sat</th> <th>Sun</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>29</td> <td>30</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30					
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Introduction – professional	<p>Dear diary,</p> <p>Today I worked from home, due to the coronacrisis.</p> <p>I worked at: _____ From (time): _____ To (time): _____</p> <p>And here: _____ From (time): _____ To (time): _____</p> <p>And here: _____ From (time): _____ To (time): _____</p>																																										
The experience of losing	<p>I did/did not miss working at an extended workplace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> I did <input type="radio"/> I did not <p>If I was able to work at an extended workplace today, I probably would have worked at: _____</p>																																										
Self-perceived creativity	<p>This is how creative I felt today:</p> <table> <thead> <tr> <th>Not at all</th> <th>Not really</th> <th>Neutral</th> <th>A bit</th> <th>A lot</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Not at all	Not really	Neutral	A bit	A lot	0	0	0	0	0																																
Not at all	Not really	Neutral	A bit	A lot																																							
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Quality of place – the amenities	<p>I particularly missed these amenities from extended workplaces:</p> <table> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Very little</th> <th>Little</th> <th>Neutral</th> <th>Much</th> <th>Very much</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Furniture</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Indoor plants and flowers</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Calming colours</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Inspiring colours</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Privacy</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Very little	Little	Neutral	Much	Very much	Furniture	0	0	0	0	0	Indoor plants and flowers	0	0	0	0	0	Calming colours	0	0	0	0	0	Inspiring colours	0	0	0	0	0	Privacy	0	0	0	0	0						
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Privacy	0	0	0	0	0																																						

	Window view (to nature)	0	0	0	0	0																																																						
	Any window view	0	0	0	0	0																																																						
	Quantity of light	0	0	0	0	0																																																						
	Daylight	0	0	0	0	0																																																						
	Indoor climate	0	0	0	0	0																																																						
	Positive sounds	0	0	0	0	0																																																						
	Positive smell	0	0	0	0	0																																																						
Quality of place – the crowd	<p>I did/did not miss the crowd:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> I did <input type="radio"/> I did not <p><i>Only fill in this question when you chose 'did'.</i></p> <p>I did because working with others around me... [you can check off multiple answers]:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Makes me feel less alone <input type="radio"/> Makes the workplace “a happening place”, which makes me feel energetic <input type="radio"/> Motivates me to keep on working; the others are a sort of audience to me <input type="radio"/> Makes me feel part of a group; the others are also working or are busy on their laptops <input type="radio"/> Makes me feel part of a group; the others are like me in a personal way, I can identify myself with them 																																																											
Quality of place – the ambience	<p>I particularly missed these aspects that define the ambience at extended workplaces:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Very little</th> <th>Little</th> <th>Neutral</th> <th>Much</th> <th>Very much</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Open-plan space(s)</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Flexible and playful positioning of furniture</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Large worktables</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A colourful workspace</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Comfortable temperature.</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High concentration of plants</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Controlled noise</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trust</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>							Very little	Little	Neutral	Much	Very much	Open-plan space(s)	0	0	0	0	0	Flexible and playful positioning of furniture	0	0	0	0	0	Large worktables	0	0	0	0	0	A colourful workspace	0	0	0	0	0	Comfortable temperature.	0	0	0	0	0	High concentration of plants	0	0	0	0	0	Controlled noise	0	0	0	0	0	Trust	0	0	0	0	0
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Trust	0	0	0	0	0																																																							
Rhythm of work	<p>I was/was not able to adopt my own rhythm of work today:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> I was <input type="radio"/> I was not 																																																											

When I work at an extended workplace, adopting my own rhythm of work is easier/harder:

- Easier
- Harder

Only fill in this question when you chose 'easier'.

Adopting my own rhythm of work at an extended workplace is easier, because:

- I experience job control at an extended workplace; I can do my work when I want to
- I can adopt my own work pace at an extended workplace; I do not feel forced to push up my work pace, but I am not distracted as well
- I can easier work outside of the standard working hours (from 9 to 5) at the extended workplace (for example because you associate your home in the evening with free time)

Closing

Also, what I think of compulsory working from home due to the coronacrisis and would like to add:

Table 3: Coding tree with the initial codes, sub-themes and final themes

Initial codes	Sub-themes	Themes
<p>Working as a freelancer Freelance work is (often) false self-employment Freelance work can be quite similar to employment I am not sure if I want to stay a freelancer my entire career I have a few big and important clients I need help with being a freelancer, and I am open to it I started as a freelancer because I did not like working for a boss I started as a freelancer because that gave me more possibilities/desired work I don't feel the need to work for a boss in the (foreseeable) future I (maybe) want to work for a boss in the future I enjoy working as a freelancer more than when I started Starting/working as a freelancer wasn't/is my own idea and/or choice When I just started, I found working as a freelancer already great When I just started, I found working as a freelancer difficult Working as a freelancer has a lot of advantages</p> <p>Finances I work as a freelancer because of the high(er) income The financial part of being a freelancer is difficult The financial part of being a freelancer is interesting Work is more important than making money Having your own office or desk in a coworking space is (too) expensive The costs of working at extended workplaces are not a problem to me</p> <p>Unpredictable As a freelancer, you must be able to deal with setbacks As a freelancer, you must be able to/want to take risks As a freelancer, I find it difficult to plan my future Freelance work is precarious work</p> <p>Acquisition As a freelancer, a network/networking is important As a freelancer, you must be social</p> <p>Loneliness Working as a freelancer can be lonely As a freelancer, I do not feel part of anything Not being able to work together is difficult for me as a freelancer</p> <p>Ambition As a freelancer, I already reached my goals As a freelancer, I work towards specific goals As a freelancer, you must be ambitious As a freelancer, you must be passionate Working as a freelancer has made me more ambitious As a freelancer, I find it important to keep improving myself As a freelancer, my goal is to make a living out of it I find it important that I enjoy my work The balance between working hard and enjoying what you do is difficult At traditional workplaces, I experience a strong work ethic</p>	<p>Precarious work</p>	<p>Freedom</p>
<p>Independence As a freelancer, you must be able to work independently As a freelancer, you must be self-protecting As a freelancer, you must be self-confident As a freelancer, you must be stress-resistant I like that I do not have to explain anything to anyone as a freelancer I like to be able to decide my own rhythm of work as a freelancer I like to be able to decide my own workplace as a freelancer I like to make my own decisions As a freelancer, you must be disciplined As a freelancer, you must be responsible As a freelancer, you must be structured As a freelancer, you must be able to work under pressure As a freelancer, you must be able to/want to work very hard The controlling behaviour of clients is unnecessary and/or annoying Working for a boss is not better than working as a freelancer When I can decide my own rhythm of work, I feel more creative at work I do not necessary need people around me while I am working At traditional workplaces, I feel limited in my freedom At traditional workplaces, I feel that I'm being watched and/or checked At traditional workplaces, I do not feel limited I can decide my own rhythm of work when I am not being controlled</p> <p>Entrepreneurship As a freelancer, you must have an entrepreneurial spirit As a freelance journalist, there is a lot of competition As a freelancer, you have to work harder than employees Good and clear communication and negotiation with clients is important The communication with my clients is good The pressure to perform as a freelancer is difficult Trust between freelancer and client is important</p> <p>Flexibility As a freelancer, you must be flexible I like the flexibility of being a freelancer I like the freedom of being a freelancer Regularity is not impossible as a freelancer I like the variety in my work I find variety in my work important</p>	<p>Autonomy</p>	<p>Freedom</p>

Liveliness/vibrance

At extended workplaces, (the right level of) background noise is important to me
At extended workplaces, an energetic ambience is important to me
I miss the energy and/or ambience at extended workplaces during corona
I miss other people at extended workplaces during corona
I like to work with other people around me
I like to work with my colleagues in person
I do not mind to have people around me while I'm working
At extended workplaces, I do not mind what kind of people are there
At extended workplaces, I do not mind what other people are doing

Feeling comfortable

At extended workplaces, the feeling of being welcome is important to me
At extended workplaces, a café in particular, friendly staff is important to me
At extended workplaces, a good and/or big table is important to me
At extended workplaces, a good chair is important to me
At extended workplaces, a high chair is important to me
At extended workplaces, a (good) toilet nearby my work spot is important to me
At extended workplaces, enough space is important to me
At extended workplaces, good food and/or good coffee is important to me
At extended workplaces, a nice temperature is important to me
I miss the service at extended workplaces during corona
I miss good food and/or good coffee at extended workplaces during corona
A relaxed ambience at my workplace is important to me
At extended workplaces, a lot of (day)light is important to me
At extended workplaces, an electric socket nearby is important to me
At extended workplaces, good Wi-Fi is important to me

Informality

I prefer an informal workplace
I feel more creative at an informal workplace than at a formal workplace
At extended workplaces, a homey ambience is important to me
At extended workplaces, a stylish interior is important to me
I miss the stylish interior at extended workplaces during corona

Creativity

Creativity can be aroused
Creativity has everything to do with motivation and/or inspiration
Creativity is not only important in the creative industries
Creativity means (inventing and) creating new things
Creativity means doing something different
Creativity means doing something extra
Creativity means making something better
Creativity starts with a problem and is a problem-solving activity
Getting properly dressed thrives creativity and/or productivity
When I work in shifts/with set times, productivity is more important than creativity
I see myself as a creative person
As a freelancer, you must be creative
My creativity level is not always the same
My mood can influence my creativity
My workplace can influence my creativity

Stimulus for creativity/productivity

External stimuli thrive creativity
I feel creative in the summer/when the weather is good
I feel creative when I am at an alternative workplace to the home
I feel creative when I am brainstorming
I feel creative when I am outside
I feel creative when I am well-rested
I feel creative when I am working in a flow
I feel creative when I have not (too) much on my mind
I feel creative when I have time to think about it
I feel creative when I work with other people around me
I feel creative/get new ideas at random moments
I feel/get creative when I see/read people's work
A change of ambience and/or setting thrives motivation and/or creativity
Other people at extended workplaces motivate me to work (harder)
When I do not feel creative at work, I change workplaces
When I do not feel creative at work, I reorganize my current workplace
When I do not feel creative at work, I talk to other people about it
When I do not feel creative at work, I try again later
When I do not feel creative at work, I use tools to thrive creativity
When I work in shifts/with set times, I am more productive

Hindrance for creativity/productivity

I do not feel creative/feel less creative when I am being pushed
I do not feel creative and/or productive close to the deadline
I do not feel creative in the morning
I do not feel creative when I am having stress
I do not feel creative when I am insecure
I do not feel creative when I am overstimulated
I do not feel creative when I am tired
I do not feel creative when I don't feel well
I do not feel creative when I don't understand the subject
I do not feel creative when I still have a lot of other things to do
I do not feel creative when my workplace is too calm and quiet
I feel less creative at the end of the afternoon, just before dinner
Other people at extended workplaces can annoy and/or hinder me
The controlling behaviour of clients makes me feel less creative and productive
When I do not get an idea right away, I find it difficult to feel creative
Working at home too often/constantly, makes me feel less creative
Working at traditional workplaces does not improve my work
At home, I feel less productive and/or creative
At home, my creativity is limited
At traditional workplaces, I do not feel creative

(Positive)
energy

Inspiration
and motivation

Creativity
encouragement

Actual workplace

My client (often) decides when and where I work
I (regularly) work at a café
I (regularly) work at home
I (regularly) work at my own office or desk in a coworking space
I (regularly) work at other people's homes
I (regularly) work at the workplace of a client
I (regularly) work/have worked in another country/all over the world
I do not always work at extended workplaces because of the distance
I do not (always/often) work at places where I feel most creative
I do not always work at extended workplaces because of the costs
When I (have to) work in the evening, I work at home
The workplace is difficult for me as a freelancer
When I work in shifts/with set times, I work at home
At traditional workplaces, I do not feel limited
At home, I am focused at my work
At home, I am easily distracted

Actual rhythm of work

My client (often) decides when and where I work
I work in shifts
I work at different moments of the day/throughout the week
At a café, I can (to some extent) decide my own rhythm of work
I can force myself to work at any time, also if I do not feel creative
I do not (always/often) work at moments I feel most creative
I (often) work when I feel creative
When I work at extended workplaces, I do so at daytime
When I work at extended workplaces, I do so in the morning
At home, I can decide my own rhythm of work

Preference of workplace

I like to work at a café
I like to work at the workplace of a client from time to time
I find it important that home is a relaxing area (only)
Having your own office or desk in a coworking space has a lot of advantages
I appreciate the ability to work at extended workplaces more during corona
It is the constant change of workplaces that makes me feel creative
I miss coming home, a relaxing area (only), after a workday during corona
I miss to change workplaces during corona
I miss traveling to extended workplaces during corona
I prefer to work with people I like/can identify with
Renting my own office or desk in a coworking space is something I consider
The choice of a workplace is (often) easy for me
The choice of a workplace is dependent on its ambience
The choice of a workplace is dependent on its distance from home
The choice of a workplace is dependent on its location
The choice of a workplace is dependent on my mood
The choice of a workplace is dependent on the deadline
The choice of a workplace is dependent on the kind of work I need to do
The choice of a workplace is dependent on the time of the day
I do not (yet) miss working at extended workplaces during corona
At extended workplaces, a work vibe is important to me
At extended workplaces, I prefer to not know other people
At extended workplaces, I prefer that other people are working, too
Working at extended workplaces gives me energy and/or inspiration
I (can) feel creative at home

Preference of rhythm of work

I like to work at 'normal' times (from 9 to 5)
I find it important to keep rhythm and structure
I like to work in shifts/with set times
I miss my old rhythm of work during corona
I prefer not to work eight hours (straight)
I prefer to work at daytime
I prefer to work in the morning
I do not feel more creative and/or productive when I work more and/or longer
I feel most creative and/or productive during the day
I feel most creative and/or productive in the evening
I feel most creative and/or productive in the morning
I feel productive and/or creative close to the deadline
I would like to feel creative at other ('normal') times (9 to 5)
My rhythm of work is dependent on my deadline
My rhythm of work is dependent on my mood
My rhythm of work is dependent on my night's rest
My rhythm of work is dependent on my partner
My rhythm of work is dependent on my social life
My rhythm of work is dependent on the kind of work I need to do

Actual work
pace and
place

Variety in
time and
place

Desired work
pace and
place

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