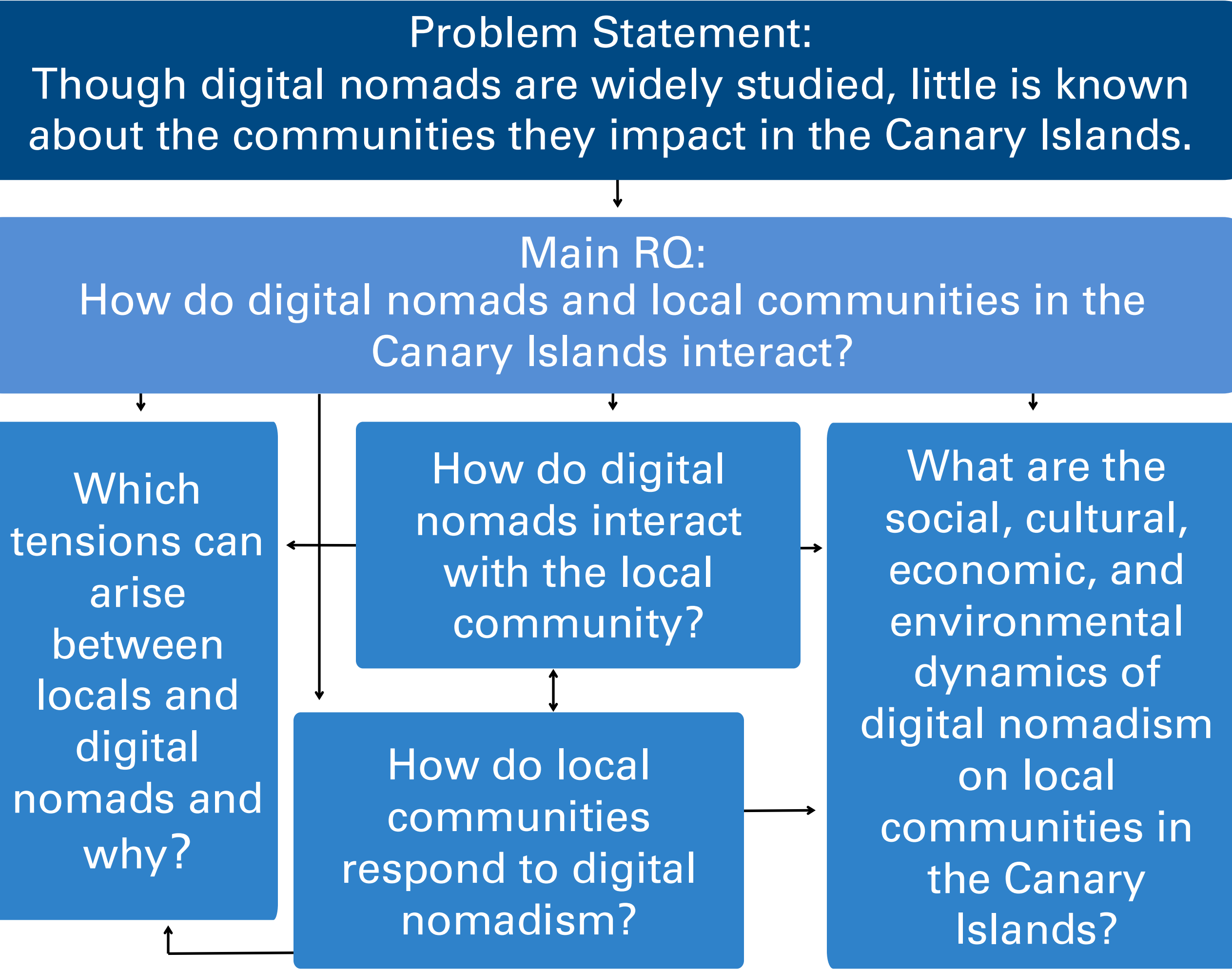


Exploring the Dynamics of Digital Nomadism on Local Communities in the Canary Islands

Why Digital Nomadism?

Global Relevance: Remote work and digital technologies reshaped lifestyles - especially since COVID-19.
Research Gap: Most studies focus on nomads; the host communities are underrepresented.
Research Goal: To study digital nomads' interactions with the community, focusing on challenges and opportunities.
Personal Motivation: The researcher was inspired to study the dynamics after experiencing them herself.

“Digital nomadism is a practice in which digital workers give up on “settled” living and embark on nomadic world travel, and perform work from different locations around the world, taking advantage of digital infrastructures and coworking spaces” (Schlagwein & Jarrahi, 2020, p. 3).



Theoretical Background.

DIGITAL NOMADISM

Digital nomads combine tourism with living and working locally, though they rarely become integrated in local life (Prester et al., 2020; Lacárcel, 2025).

HOST COMMUNITIES

Migration: Digital nomads usually move from the **Global North** to the **Global South** (Bahri, 2024).

Host-Guest Theory: Tourism creates relationships that bring benefits and conflicts (Nash & Smith, 1991).

THE CANARY ISLANDS

The Canary Islands are a hotspot for digital nomads, but face housing, cultural, and sustainability issues.



Figure 1: The Canary Islands (Google Maps, 2025)

Methodology.

Approach: Ethnographic fieldwork in Corralejo, Fuerteventura (Feb/March 2025)

Data Collection:

- 4 weeks of participant observation and diary
- 20 semi-structured interviews (digital nomads and locals)
- Informal insights (WhatsApp groups, community events)

Analysis: Qualitative Content Analysis (inductive, MAXQDA)

Findings.

1. Social Separation and Limited Integration

“Because you know when people, they come and go, but you stay and then you just get tired of knowing people all the time and they leave.” (Interview with Giulia, February 2025)

2. Cultural Transformation and Identity Loss

3. Economic Dependence and Social Inequality

“Meaning that of course the prices have gone up, they've risen definitely due also to digital nomads because salaries are different.” (Interview with Nico, February 2025)

4. Housing Affordability and Resident Displacement

5. Environmental Strain and Local Frustration

Discussion.

Answer to main RQ: Digital nomads and locals interact little due to language barriers, short stays, and economic inequalities, leading to separate societies with little contact.

Practical Implications: To balance nomad-local relations, destinations should foster interaction, regulate housing, and promote sustainability.

Limitations and Recommendations: Future research should include different islands, a longer timeframe, digital platforms, and updated theories.

Conclusion.

Digital nomadism can create social separation, unequal economic benefits, and environmental strain. However, with inclusive policies, it can become mutually beneficial.