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Lifestyle motivations, contextual changes and their effects on the  
Craft Entrepreneurs

by

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This thesis is dedicated to Lisa; who always believed in Bookie and encouraged me to get excited and make things.

And Ryan, who will never stop pushing me forward.

## **Abstract**

This study sets out to contribute to the research of entrepreneurial motivations of craft entrepreneurs from a lifestyle perspective. It contributes to the research fields of both crafting and lifestyle. In addition the purpose of this thesis is to attempt to provide valuable information to the research field and uncover data for future research. The geographical location of the research is the southern region of Skåne, Sweden, the research setting thus namely being the city of Malmö.

The research design is qualitative and findings are made through in-depth interviews which include both craft entrepreneurs as well as professionals working within the crafting industry. The craft companies have been established between 2001 and early 2015 and represent a variety of materials and techniques to produce their craft products. By evaluating the motivations of the crafters this research attempts to facilitate a better understanding of the creative entrepreneurship of crafting.

Research limitations of this research include the complexities of crafting and a lack of existing literature on crafts entrepreneurs as well as the personal nature of the creative crafts industry: the level of involvement of each crafter is distinct and may have affected the results of the research. Furthermore the qualitative approach of this study leads to an increased amount of data, intertwined factors and limitations of distinguishing and connecting mentioned factors. The research is also limited to the geographical area of Malmö, which may present limitations of applying this study within a different context or geographical location.

The paper makes use of existing research on entrepreneurial lifestyle motivation to determine what has motivated local crafters in Malmö to embark in entrepreneurial activities. A brief overview into the current context, in which these entrepreneurs operate in, will facilitate towards a better understanding of their circumstances. By presenting this brief overview of crafting itself, the institutional and societal changes this paper aims to form an understanding of current events and their effects on crafting. The framework presented makes use of multiple lifestyle researches for an overall picture of lifestyle entrepreneurship. Hornday's theory of three types of business owner provides an exemplary model of entrepreneurial motivations which serves as a comparison for the empirical data.

The research findings indicate that crafters are motivated by lifestyle reasons of enjoying their occupation, wanting to be their own boss, designing their own working hours as well as making customers happy. In addition exceptions were noted as some crafters were highly motivated by the additional income and the challenge of making a successful sale. Further research is suggested within the area of craft entrepreneurship, their motivations and background as well as the contextual effects on their entrepreneurial ventures.

Keywords – crafting, lifestyle entrepreneurship, craft entrepreneurship, creative occupation, surge of crafting.

# Table of Contents

<b>List of figures .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 Research Purpose .....	6
1.2 Research Limitations .....	8
1.3 Outline of the thesis.....	9
<b>2 Literature review .....</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1 The definition of crafting .....	11
2.2 Phenomenas related to crafting .....	13
2.3 Entrepreneurial motivation typologies .....	15
2.3.1 Classical entrepreneur .....	17
2.3.2 Lifestyle entrepreneur .....	18
2.4 The context of craft entrepreneurship .....	20
<b>3 Methodology .....</b>	<b>24</b>
3.1 Data collection process.....	25
3.2 Research Approach .....	27
3.3 Data Collection Method .....	27
3.4 Data analysis and coding.....	28
<b>4 Analysis and discussion.....</b>	<b>30</b>
4.1 Research case chart .....	31
4.2 The crafters' lifestyle perspective .....	32
4.3 The context of the crafting industry in Malmö .....	40
4.4 Other findings.....	42
<b>5 Conclusions .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>6 Bibliography .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>51</b>

# List of figures

Figure 1. Three types of small business owner.....	16
Figure 2. The outline of the main steps of the research.....	26
Figure 3. The matrix chart.....	29
Figure 4. An overview of the interview sample.....	31

# 1 Introduction

The twenty-first century has experienced a renewed interest in crafting and the considerable resurgence has happened in several terms both individually, professionally as well as in the form of community projects (Jakob, 2012; Peach, 2013; MacDonald & Rossi, 2013). Craft-making is currently being rediscovered and instead of taking on a role as a domestic hobby it has become a popular form of entrepreneurial occupation. The literature indicates that crafting has in fact become a growing sector of employment as well as a positive career choice (Jakob, 2012).

Despite this rise in popularity, in many ways the consideration and discussion involving crafts within academic communities is not as up-to-date as other societal developments, for instance digital advancements (Lees-Maffei & Sandino, 2004). For this reason it feels timely to begin a conversation involving these practices and contribute to the re-appropriation of craft. As craft has been a vital part of history and culture, by bringing together makers and thinkers we may create engaging and innovative perspectives on contemporary making.

The creative industries are not generally associated with entrepreneurship and business life. Motivations behind choosing such an entrepreneurial route may be based on personal reasons such as lifestyle preferences, spatial influences, current market trends or entrepreneurial interests. However, as entrepreneurship in crafts - in terms of small and medium-sized companies - is growing fast in popularity, this paper will be analysing lifestyle as a driver of creative work in order to understand ways in which creative people become professional crafters and simultaneously entrepreneurs of their own talent (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006).

Looking further into entrepreneurs' motivations will uncover whether they are driven by lifestyle or economically. This may have implications for further occupational development as well as policy implications (Koster et al., 2010). This also bears relevance because these companies contribute not only to transforming local economies, but also expand local networks and communities, interrelations between inhabitants as well as create new cultural identities (Jakob, 2012; Peach, 2013; Anderson, 2000; Freshwater, 2000, MacDonald & Rossi, 2013). As this niche area of entrepreneurship has not been a focus of entrepreneurial

research, this paper will be examining this special type of entrepreneur from a lifestyle perspective.

Creative industries are claimed to be an extraordinary sphere of economic production: while the creators work on their craft time flies and success is the result of God-given talent as well as great networks and contacts (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006). Creative work entails spontaneity, unpredictability and follows no strict rules while the mix of business brings along management, planning and organizing of the creative production. Craft entrepreneurs are typically considered to craft products stemming from their creative passion and of their own liking, which is highly important, as this inner creative motivation is the main source of economic production for them (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006).

This research was inspired by the writer's personal interests in crafting as she owns a small craft business. Having taken part in several design fairs, markets and following the scene from Finland, it is time to dig deeper into the factors behind crafters' motivations.

## 1.1 Research Purpose

From an academic perspective there has been extensive research into entrepreneurial motivation within numerous creative fields such as arts, artisan food production and technology (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006; Tregear, 2005; Feeser & Dugan, 1989). In addition there are multiple studies which have been conducted in various fields of crafting to uncover for instance knowledge of natural materials in crafting (Gkirmipa, 2014), determining the differences of art and craft (Snelson, 2004; Fine, 2003), as well as the value shifts in policies of Belgian crafting (Gimeno-Martínez, 2014). However, there is a noticeable lack of empirical studies of today's artisans and their goals and entrepreneurial motivations (Tregear, 2005). From a geographical perspective substantial attention has been paid to institutional influences on crafting in the United Kingdom as well as in the United States, however very little literature, if any, has been published regarding the Nordics. This region has mainly gained research attention for its traditional crafting (Hemslöjd) and from a pedagogical point of view of teaching children in a school environment (Pöllänen, 2009, 2011; Metsärinne & Kallio, 2014; Arvidsson, 1989).



As crafters begin their journey into entrepreneurial activities it is fascinating to look into their lifestyle motivations behind running their business: this primary reasoning behind becoming an entrepreneur guides their journey in entrepreneurship. For this purpose the thesis will integrate the field of lifestyle entrepreneurship and look at the crafters choices from this specific perspective in order to gain a better understanding of their motivations. As entrepreneurs in creative industries must bridge the gap between the artistic side and the economic management side of their occupation it is highly likely that lifestyle supports them in this effort (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006). To form a greater perspective and in order to collect as rich data as possible the research will take into account a variety of crafters as well as professionals working within the field of crafting.

This study sets out to contribute to the research of entrepreneurial motivations of craft entrepreneurs from a lifestyle perspective. In addition the purpose of this thesis is to provide valuable information to the research field and uncover data that can be used for future research of craft entrepreneurs. The research is carried out in the southern region of Skåne, Sweden, the research setting thus namely being the city of Malmö.

Although this study focuses on the motivations of the crafters themselves, the context in which these creative entrepreneurs work in is currently undergoing significant changes and especially institutional influences must be noted as they are impacting the creative industries. By understanding the industry, its on-going changes and the nature of craft making, we may better understand the motivations as well as the personal aspirations behind those motivations.

Crafting has evolved in the past years to a stage in which technology has enabled crafters to an entire new level of reach. Even those working in isolation may participate in the new engaging crafts era as crafters all around the globe are sharing, purchasing and reviewing each other's work. This community-based crafts engagement has its roots all the way in the nineteenth century Arts and crafts movement. Though each point in time is coloured by its own atmosphere, certain similarities may be drawn between the decades and the different surges of crafting (MacDonald & Rossi, 2013; von Busch, 2010; Peach 2013; Jakob, 2012).

Within this research crafting is meant as the description of product creation and is not related to other areas of designing or artistic expression. The use of the word design in this specific work is to describe crafting skills and the process of planning and producing crafted items and hand-made objects.

The research will be conducted from a craft maker's perspective as well as include people related within the industry, such as craft event organisers, researchers and shop owners. However, this research will exclude craft consumers.

## 1.2 Research Limitations

The emphasis of this paper is to look especially at small craft companies and for this research the context is the Malmö region of southern Sweden. The author is aware of limitations caused by a qualitative study conducted on a limited selection of crafters. Consequently this limits the findings to a niche area of craftsmanship within this small geographical area and cannot be generalized to small craft companies outside this region. The external validity of this research may therefore be limited by the specific geographical location. In addition the study is limited to micro-sized craft businesses of up to 3 employees.

Due to recently moving to the city of Malmö the author has an intrinsically limited availability of research subjects. Therefore it must be noted that the majority of research subjects are female and thus the findings provide a more comprehensive view of local female craft entrepreneurs. In addition some of the interviewees are foreign entrepreneurs and their relocation in Malmö has been due to personal reasons. Also any possible language barriers may affect the interpretations of the research questions and therefore effect the empirical data. These factors will undoubtedly have an impact on the research. In addition the scope of this work will exclude any views on success and related measures.

It is important to understand the challenges of accessing crafts data due to the lack of an all-encompassing definition of the field itself. The measuring of craft sales, the amount of employed crafters and the craft products being produced essentially boils down to which definition is adopted for the methods and people's skills behind these crafts.

Depending on which perspective is chosen, crafting may be interpreted as art or as the making of functional products. This separation of art from craft is a twentieth century cultural phenomenon (Peach, 2013). As the distinction between the two continues to puzzle both the creators themselves as well as the academics this work will concentrate its efforts on collecting empirical data from various entrepreneurs creating products for their customers from various materials using their hands. Their personal interpretation of their crafted

products and them as either artists or crafters may vary. This thesis will not be taking a stand on whether crafting is art and vice versa nor will it take art and art history into account.

Due to the personal nature of the crafts industry and craft production it is likely that the interview material will be subjective in nature: the sole entrepreneurs involved in their respective businesses are highly involved on a personal level as well as being tied to the physical location of their premises.

### 1.3 Outline of the thesis

The literature review chapter following this introduction will first look at the definition of crafting in order to form a better understanding of this activity as a concept. Following this will be a brief overview of phenomena related to crafting. This will be followed by relevant theoretical framework involving creative entrepreneurs and their lifestyle motivations. The chapter will be finished by a contextual outline of institutional, technological and social contexts.

In order to understand creative entrepreneurs this work seeks to make a comprehensive outline of crafting as an occupation and contextual factors affecting entrepreneurs making a living within this industry. These factors mould the entrepreneurial environment in which these creative individuals operate in.

Moving along from the theoretical framework, the research methodology will be presented. This chapter describes the selection criteria of the interview subjects, the empirical data collection process and the data processing methods.

Finally the data and results will be presented, as well as a discussion to set the findings into context and look deeper into their importance. The paper will aim to uncover the practical implications of these findings and link them to the existing research on the topics presented. Finally it will make suggestions on which aspects could lead to further research.

## 2 Literature review

The vast majority of academic literature regarding crafting is concentrated on the historical aspects, the wellness factors behind craft making, as well as craft pedagogy: teaching in a school context. Taking into consideration the sheer amount of knowledge and studies on craft, its self-expressional aspects (Pöllänen, 2011; Luutonen, 2008) and its effects on people's mental wellbeing (Pöllänen, 2012; Sennett, 2008) and cognitive learning opportunities (Pöllänen, 2009) it is rather surprising to notice the lack of research into crafts entrepreneurship and the motivations of embarking into craft as a venture.

In order to understand the concept at hand, the paper will first look closer at the definition of crafting within academic literature. Some strands of literature claim that the fundamental side of making by hand is a basis for human activity (Kojonkoski-Rännäli, 1998, p. 119; Karppinen, 2008, p. 86). As a whole however, the literature concerning crafting activities suggests two different aspects: a personal aspect of self-fulfilment and expression and an institutional aspect of political agendas and economic influences. These latter phenomenas will be covered in the following section "Phenomenas related to crafting". These lay the foundation and context in which the crafts entrepreneurs run their businesses in.

When examining definitive concepts it is important to notice that they are concerned with what is common to the phenomena in question, rather than offering variety (Blumer, 1954).

Following the definitions and related phenomenas is the literature review containing a detailed section on the entrepreneurial motivation typologies of both classical entrepreneurs and lifestyle entrepreneurs. The final section will cover the context in which crafters are operating their businesses. This covers the institutional, technological and social contexts.

## 2.1 The definition of crafting

The complexities and contradictions of craft, crafting and crafters have led to the outcome of very limited academic research being conducted on these terms and practices (Jakob, 2012). This is rather surprising considering the vast body of work stemming from art history and design history. Thus the exact definition of crafting is extremely complicated and hard to come-by and Jakob (2012) even states that there is no all-encompassing definition of crafting or the industry.

Craft includes the design and making processes, during which only hand-controlled machines are used (Pöllänen, 2012). In many ways completely different occupations could be considered as crafting: a carpenter is as much a crafter as is a conductor or a lab technician (Sennett, 2008). As all of these professions are dedicated to good work, even someone working with computer coding can be defined as crafting nowadays. Crafting by hand, however, is closely associated with authenticity, quality and as something personal and “genuine” (Crafts Council, 2010). Certain literature examines the phenomenon through political and economic perspectives (von Busch, 2010) while others connect it to arts, self-expressionism and quality in one’s work (Sennett, 2008). For this work crafting will take the role of designing and making tangible objects which people can touch, wear and enjoy in their everyday lives.

Simply characterising crafting is an incredibly complicated task, as it is so multidimensional (Sowden, 2015; Jakob, 2012; MacDonald & Rossi, 2013). Craft as a word has several definitions in different contexts depending on the philosophy and target of who is determining it. The definition may be looked at from the angle of the maker, the process, the products or the user of the final product (Ihatsu, 2002). As an overview the following paragraphs will take a look at the tangible views, the personal side and the institutional aspects of crafting.

From a tangible point of view craft represents a design and making process which involves nothing more than hand-controlled machines and assumes the maker has knowledge of the action (Mason, 2005; Anttila, 1983) and Kojonkoski-Rännäli (1998) determines that making by hand is the foundation for human activity and that it always involves concrete material to be dealt with. It is in fact skilled manipulation of materials (Rosner, 2009). The Crafts

Council (2010) defines crafting as any handmade object made by a craft maker and including ceramics, glass, wood, furniture, metalwork and jewellery.

On a more personal and emotional level crafts has also been associated with wellbeing and even offering meditative qualities (von Busch, 2010). “*Craft involves the application of human skill and invested time*” (Rosner, 2009, p. 1). In addition the process of crafting is directed by thinking: it begins with the crafter’s idea of something being made, the reflection process during the realization and the actual process containing the target as well as self-evaluation (Anttila, 1993; Ihatsu, 2002; Pöllänen, 2008). A craft product may in addition involves complex values and emotions while shaping the maker’s identity (Kojonkoski-Rännäli, 1998). A frequently quoted crafts writer, Richard Sennett (2008, p. 24), determines “All craftsmanship is quality-driven work” and that craftsmen’ dedicate themselves to good work for its own sake (Sennett, 2008, p. 20). Sennett sums up that the skill attaining aspect of craftsmanship holds emotional rewards which are twofold, meaning that people are pulled into tangible reality and can be proud of their work. Peter Dormer (1994), whom many consider an influential thinker of craft, finds that crafting concerns mainly the attitude towards the process of making and that handicraft is the link between intention and expression. This characterises his conception of the hand made as a special craft knowledge, which is a tacit unconscious knowledge learned by experience and embedded in practice, and to which Mazanti (2004) concurs as a knowledge which cannot be expressed in words.

From a societal standpoint Stevens (2011, p. 45) discusses the relations of crafts to current economic fluctuations: “Especially during turbulent times, crafting represents stability, a solace in the tacit” with Jakob (2012) adding that people may be finding their way out of the recession by redefining their careers into crafting ones. In addition crafting is represented as a form of resistance towards the powers of capitalism and technology representing the search for authenticity tangibility (Sennett, 2008; Jakob, 2012). Crafted objects convey meanings and values of our culture through the way they are used, purchased, categorized and finally – discarded, and even though this may seem obvious, these values tell us about continuously changing values of underlying concepts such as self-conception and individualism (Sowden, 2015).

The above mentioned representations of crafting may be seen as evidence of the complicated nature and multiple views and implications crafting entails. However, for the purposes of this

research crafting will be considered as tangible objects made by crafters using their own hands. In addition these objects must not be made using heavy machinery or electronic equipment, in other words including products made using only hand operated small-size tools.

## 2.2 Phenomenas related to crafting

This section will take an overview into the spatial and institutional context phenomenas and their definitions forming the context in which craft entrepreneurs operate their businesses in. Looking into these concepts will help us understand their impacts and influences on the creative entrepreneurs. It is nearly impossible to pinpoint which of these phenomenas have sparked others or in which order they have appeared in, however scholars continue to argue that these have had a magnitude of effects on the crafting industry.

### **The “third wave of crafting”**

The third wave of crafting is a term used in the literature referring to the most recent revival of crafting in Western societies. According to Jakob (2012) the first wave took place at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and further literature claims as specific as to the movement being officially founded in 1887 when a designers’ group met in London and formed the “Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society” (Kaplan, 2004). The second wave has been linked to the hippie movement and its appreciation towards hand-made goods in the 1960s to 1970s. During this hippie -era crafts appreciation was related more to their political and naturalist elements than the aesthetic and quality related elements (Jakob, 2012; Peach, 2013 ). Though craft revivals of different periods will have similarities it is important to bear in mind that they are always unique and due to craft’s constantly reinvented nature each revival always reflects the present and future rather than previous eras (Peach, 2013).

### **DIY**

The increased interest in crafting has brought along with it a growth of DIY (an abbreviation of do-it-yourself). Crafting, DIY and upcycling have united together not only as activities but

also as ideologies and lifestyles (Jakob, 2012; Stevens, 2011, Rosner, 2009). These ideologies include engaging with work which avoids the use of global mass-production, mass-marketing as well as passive mass-consumption. Their similarities are evident also when looking at the craft market place because the nature of craft is essentially involving oneself in the process of being creative and creating something new the do-it-yourself or as it is more commonly known, DIY, is closely related and in some instances easier for people to relate to (Jakob, 2012). The active and creative lifestyle combining crafting and DIY encompasses personal design activities into “Everyday Creativity” (Jakob, 2012; Rosner 2009). In her research Rosner (2009) suggests further research into this integration of craftsmanship; the time, skill and care invested in it.

### **Craftivism**

The concept was originally conceived by Betsy Greer in 2003 and the word craftivism itself is a merger of the words craft and activism (von Busch, 2010; Peach 2013). This phenomenon is closely linked to a rise in crafting and what is named “the third wave of crafting”. Craftivism campaigns for political and social change using crafting as a vehicle. The craftivism movement along with online groups such as Stitch ’n Bitch (used as reference to social knitting clubs since around World War II) take advantage of new media innovations in order to promote their cause (Peach, 2013).

As an example, *Logoknits* involved participants to use a software program to transform logos and symbols into knitting patterns and take a stand in issues such as ongoing wars (von Busch, 2010). This crafters’ political activism is a way of changing the world using passionate creation even on a smaller scale, though Greer finds that craft’s greatest potential is in its ability to gather people together for reflective engagement. This creates time for a more personal level of discussion rather than large anonymous masses marching streets in demonstrations (von Busch, 2010; Greer, 2008).

By using social media platforms craftivism, for instance, tackles the traditional female role of being the centre of the home as well as bringing knitting to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It combines crafters from all parts of the world through technology, changing crafting from an isolated occupation into a social network over the Internet (Peach, 2013; von Busch, 2010).



This combination of craft bringing people together as a response to the social distance digitalisation has created, and simultaneously utilising technology brings forward the fact that the current craft revival simultaneously embraces and rejects technology. This forms quite a contradiction (Peach, 2013; von Busch, 2010).

## 2.3 Entrepreneurial motivation typologies

Different entrepreneurial typologies evolve around the field of those who venture into their own business. However, when discussing creative industries, artists and artisans the main motivation which academics typically use is that of the lifestyle entrepreneur. For these types of people lifestyle allows them to use this motivation as a vehicle to achieve self-fulfilment rather than a career decision, and though this is common also for other types of entrepreneurs for lifestyle entrepreneurs it is in a larger role (Buttner & Moore, 1997; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006). The main characterization of a lifestyle entrepreneur is that they are not as economically orientated as other types of entrepreneurs: instead entrepreneurship offers them the opportunity of a better lifestyle (Henricks, 2002; Rodriguez, 2003). Between the two main types examined in this paper, classical and lifestyle or opportunists and craftsmen, Koster et al. (2010) classify the lifestyle entrepreneurs as craftsmen.

Scholars and researchers have suggested various definitions of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs' nature and circumstantial factors and the effect an environment has on the decision to become an entrepreneur (Amit et al., 1993). Drawing upon Hornaday & Aboud, 1971; McClelland, 1965; Meuller & Thomas, 2001; Timmons, 1978, Koster et al. (2010) state that personal attributes are frequently associated with entrepreneurial motives, values and behaviour. These include independence, locus of control, confidence, resourcefulness, self-reliance and taking initiative. There are also views that entrepreneurs within creative industries must bridge the gap between their creative calling and the financial part of self-management and that this is accomplished through a "bohemian lifestyle" (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006). Also the personal characteristics of entrepreneurs are not only seen as an influence on the type of firm that is created, but also the way in which it is managed (Lafuente & Salas, 1989).

Drawing from Tregear's (2005) research several scholars speak of a three-type categorisation of the entrepreneurial types: both Stanworth & Curran (1976) as well as Filley & Aldag (1978) propose a model of three types of entrepreneurs: the classical/promotion, the manager/administrative and the artisan/crafter entrepreneurs. The former presenting the findings of Stanworth & Curran and latter of Filley & Aldag. This distinction of three different types is exemplified in figure 1 below.

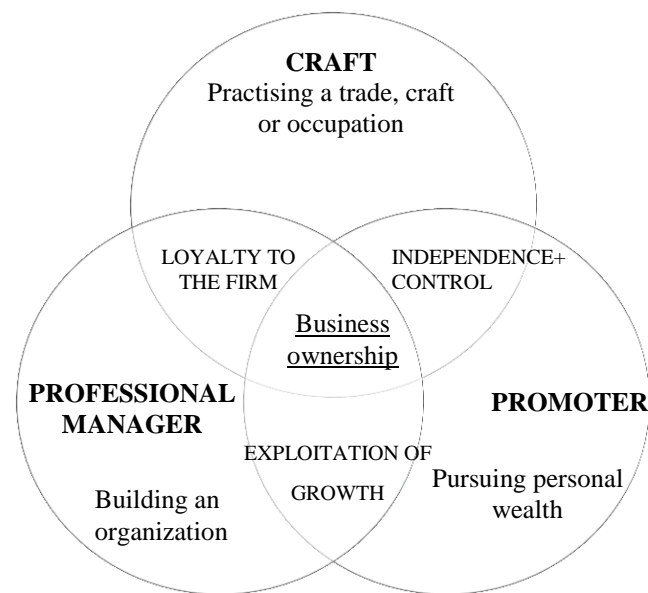


Figure 1. Three types of small business owner (Hornday, 1990, p. 28).

The distinction within the literature clearly separates the mainly economically driven classical type of entrepreneur from the lifestyle oriented entrepreneur (Koster et al., 2010). Amit et al. (1993) also find that entrepreneurs can be categorized into two main categories of the profit-seeking and the non-profit-seeking types. This paper will focus on the characteristics of the craftsmen, which have also been defined as non-profit seeking and lifestyle oriented entrepreneurs. In order to form a greater picture of the differences between the types a short description of the classical entrepreneurs will be presented.

Looking closer into entrepreneurs' motivations we will be able to determine the specific factors behind their entrepreneurial decisions. This may have implications not only for the future development of these activities, but also policy implications and further development towards the quality of life (Koster et al., 2010). By evaluating entrepreneurial motivation we

can analyse the reasoning behind this marginal, understudied group entering into entrepreneurial actions. Furthermore we can look at how their motivations guide their orientation toward either product or customer directions. These orientations will be discussed further in the following section 2.4.

To conclude, the specific characteristics, definitions and motivations of entrepreneurs continue to cause debate. However, different typologies have been used to create categories of entrepreneurs in an effort to make this area of research more systematic. By presenting below two typologies of entrepreneurs this paper continues to examine which of these typologies are relevant for craft entrepreneurs. The classical entrepreneur description will offer a contrast to better understand the lifestyle entrepreneur, a distinction generally associated with craft entrepreneurs.

### 2.3.1 Classical entrepreneur

The classical entrepreneur, as described above, may be classified as an opportunist. The categorization is mainly because this type of entrepreneur is more economically oriented with an intention of making a profit and developing their business (Koster et al., 2010; Tregear, 2005), though economic rewards are not solely a specific definition. Also Amit et al. (1993) presume entrepreneurs to be profit-driven. Schumpeter (1934) conceptualises entrepreneurial activity as a major element for economic performance as well as a driver of capitalism and economic activities. The main attributes which characterize classical entrepreneurs are: 1) creating something new, 2) devoting time and effort 3) embracing a variety of risks 4) and enjoying the rewards such as independence and personal satisfaction, but also profit rewards (Hisrich & Brush, 1985).

The main difference of these two types of entrepreneurs is that the classical type tends to focus on profit and money-making (Norman, 2004; Koster et al., 2010; Schumpeter, 1934). Douglas and Shepherd (2002, p. 88) argue that “there is still doubt on the suggestion that people mainly choose self-employment as a means of gaining higher income than they could attain as employees”.

### 2.3.2 Lifestyle entrepreneur

Depending on the author this type of entrepreneur is also called the alternative, artistic, or even bohemian lifestyle entrepreneur (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006). Lifestyle entrepreneurs are recognized as a specific type of business person, who like being their own boss, but they also offer a different view of success in comparison to those who are financially motivated (Henricks, 2002; Koster et al., 2010). Based on the distinction between the two dominant types (opportunists and craftsmen), Koster et al. (2010) classify the lifestyle entrepreneurs as craftsmen and Tregear (2005) continues describing them "...the artisan or craftsperson is an ambiguous entity."

Henricks (2002) mentions the term to be first introduced by William Wetzel in 1987 while another strand of literature suggests that Henri Murger originally introduced the phenomenon of an artistic way of life in 1857; beyond the mainstream lifestyles (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006). This lifestyle is characterized as deliberately turning away from middle-class ideals (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006). However beyond the ideologies there is a sense of a calling other than economic ones, this being the opportunity and prioritisation of a better lifestyle (Henricks, 2002; Rodriguez, 2003; Tregear, 2005) and the creativity serving as a vehicle for self-fulfilment instead of only earning one's living (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006).

This lifestyle decision is often characterized as a devotion to "art for art's sake", but also acts as an important source of work motivation for creative entrepreneurs. Lifestyle entrepreneurship is often linked to principles such as spontaneity, unsteady employment, a lack of income, constant improvisation and an enjoyment of life rather than fixed work schedules (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006). Also other literature addresses the issue of lower income, but does not see lifestyle signifying non-existent income, but rather found to be a way to employ and engage in something enjoyable (Gomez Velasco & Saleilles, 2007). There are also aspects of contradiction within creative entrepreneurship as these independent entrepreneurs must integrate two identities: the creative side of their motivation and the identity of a small company (Menger, 1999).

Further motivations behind this choice are numerous. A general indication within the literature points to lifestyle entrepreneurship as being indeed a vehicle to achieve self-

fulfilment rather than a career decision (Buttner & Moore, 1997; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006). This is common for both types of entrepreneurs, though for lifestyle entrepreneurs it is in a larger role (Buttner & Moore, 1997). In addition there is a convincing amount of further motives of becoming a lifestyle entrepreneur such as autonomy and independence (Collins & Moore, 1970), self-realization (Parker, 2004), dissatisfaction with career (Douglas & Shepherd, 2002), need for achievement (McClelland, 1965), desire to exploit an opportunity (Gaglio & Katz, 2001), and the desire to innovate (Schumpeter, 1934).

Whereas corporate life offers a pre-determined location for employees to socialize, the aspect of non-permanence within the creative entrepreneurship makes it understandable that public spaces play an important role for connectivity and communication within the creative community, and in the past these would typically have included cafes, pubs and restaurants (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006).

Perhaps traditionally the perception of an artistic or bohemian lifestyle is applied to irregular employment; however the contemporary understanding of this lifestyle is broader as the field of artistic creativity has become broader bringing along film, video and web design. Along with this, society has adapted to the multiple work arrangements of today that vary from open-ended contracts to project based employment. However, lifestyle entrepreneurship helps to blend personal life with work (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006).

The creative industries are the part of the economy which relies on artistic motivation as their main source of production (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006) and unlike other occupations creative entrepreneurs bring their talent as well as their personality to the market, and in this sense exploit their individual resources more comprehensively than other industries (Menger, 1999). That adds an interesting aspect as Eikhof & Haunschild (2006) claim that doing an activity for its sake and as a work motivation exceeds all organizational efficiency programs.

Drawing from the various literature lifestyle entrepreneurs could be characterized as individuals carrying out their dreams in the form of entrepreneurial activities. Instead creative workers can dedicate themselves to individual performance, devotion towards their craft as well as networking. As an outcome, self-employed creatives do not need to feel as what Eikhof & Haunschild (2006, p. 240) call “*cold-blooded and hard-hearted entrepreneurs*”. For these reasons we must understand that the motivations behind this personal type of

employment are also multi-faceted and in most cases intertwined as personal aspects and professionalism meet.

These motivations described will serve the empirical research as a basis on which to determine the main motives of craft entrepreneurs.

## 2.4 The context of craft entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurial actions are always tied to a certain context in which the entrepreneur must operate in. Though context has been acknowledged for its effects on entrepreneurial activities according to Welter (2011), there is a growing recognition of the context helping us to understand this economic behaviour better. Entrepreneurs face contexts which provide both opportunities and set boundaries. When discussing craft entrepreneurs their contexts include social contexts; networks such as family, spatial contexts; the country of operation, communities and neighbourhoods and institutional contexts; for instance culture, society and the political and economic systems (Welter, 2011). By understanding these contexts and their effects, we can better understand the underlying motivations of craft entrepreneurs as well.

### **The institutional context**

Surges of crafting have been influenced by involving highly political and economic agendas (Peach, 2013; von Busch, 2010; MacDonald & Rossi, 2013; Sowden, 2015). The history of these crafting “movements” extends all the way to the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the phenomenon known as “The Arts and Crafts movement”. This first movement is considered to have been a response to the industrial age and what its leaders perceived as the un-human aspects of the industrialisation; thus forming goals of both political as well as aesthetic value (Sennett, 2008; Sowden, 2015).

The founders of The Arts and Crafts movement considered the mechanised production methods to produce inferior, soulless goods and misery to the working force by using production machinery, polluting the environment and dividing the labour tasks. John Ruskin’s ideologies and critique of industrialism formed the basis of this first surge; however the actual

political movement was put into motion by William Morris later during the nineteenth century. Morris's critique on industrialism was based on art being nurtured from good labour conditions and the earth's beauty was to be maintained by establishing a just society (MacDonald & Rossi, 2013; Sowden, 2015; Sennett, 2008). Through engaging and creative work, these men believed they could reshape society into something better and improve the environment leading to mentally fulfilled people and a good distribution of wealth. This movement managed to domesticate crafts as an idealized hobby and not an economical occupation – undertaken for love instead of wages (MacDonald & Rossi, 2013; Sowden, 2015).

The next surge of crafting is considered to have taken place during the 70's and fast-forwarding to this era in Britain the socio-economic atmosphere included economic recession; inflation followed by rising unemployment leaving the nation in debt and experiencing industrial strikes. These factors contributed to a loss of confidence in the state and institutions (Peach, 2013). Political instability in Vietnam as well as student rebellions contributed to a rise of youth counterculture - opposing consumerism and conformity. Around the same time the growing concern around the impact of industrial processes and the growth of nuclear energy formed the start of modern environmentalist movements (Peach, 2013). All of these aspects contributed to people searching for creative autonomy, ways to express themselves and sparked a need to live sustainably – which in turn provided ideal circumstances for craft to flourish. As a response a group called CAC (The Crafts Advisory Committee) was founded in 1971 with the task of ideological development and management of craft. This state-backed, central organisation is now known as the Crafts Council (Peach, 2013; von Busch, 2010).

Parallels between past times and the current revival of crafting can be drawn: crafting is yet again being acknowledged for its vital role within the national economy in the UK. Various government bodies offer initiatives such as grants and apprentice programs to show commitment toward raising the profile of crafts (Peach, 2013). Although each period must be seen as a unique set of circumstances, it can be argued that craft revivals are combined to economic instability and changes in the political atmosphere (Peach, 2013). A modern day form into which these movements embody into, is the already mentioned craftivism. This is a format which combines creativity, fun and activism all into one (Peach, 2013; craftivism, 2016). It is a demonstration of the continuing power of the 19<sup>th</sup> century ideologies in today's communities and the politicisation of craft practice (Sowden, 2015).

## **The technological context**

As technological advances and mass production have drifted people away from tangible experiences the more crafts and their communities receive support due to their ability to bring physical and emotional comfort as well as stability to an unstable world (Jakob, 2012; Sowden, 2015). This mass production and consumption formulated a model of industrialized offerings of only a limited variety of products (Sennett, 2008).

As mentioned in Kolstee & Crijns's (2015) work the force of greater variety has pushed not only the beer industry into a revolutionized state, but also the wine and coffee industries within the last two decades. This cycle of consumption has reached a turning point and is heading toward a model of customers dictating what types of products they want and which are tailored for their exact needs. From this perspective personally crafted products play an important role in the future. Therefore it is important to understand spatial and market trends which affect entrepreneurs in different sectors. In her article Peach (2013) states that the current craft revival is simultaneously including technology into the crafting work as well as rejecting it from an ideological perspective. Peach (2013) also mentions Henrik Most, a craft writer, to have pointed out the fact we are living in an increasingly digital age which causes people to fundamentally need to return to more tactile experiences. From this point of view the current revival simultaneously embraces and rejects technology.

Social networking websites have brought a platform on which work can be bought, contemplated and reviewed. These include sites such as Facebook, Etsy and Myspace. For many crafters working thus far in seclusion or even isolation, these sites have provided a social way to reach out and a platform for engagement and sharing of creativity (MacDonald & Rossi, 2013; von Busch, 2010). This community-based approach is by no means a recent phenomenon. The leading figures of the Arts and Crafts Movement, were well aware of crafts value as a professional practice and as a social endeavour (MacDonald & Rossi, 2013).

According to Jakob (2012) online craft sales are at an all-time high. Good examples of this are for example Etsy.com and DaWanda.com in the United States, however it is questionable whether these websites are driving the motivation for crafting as well as the sales figures up or are they rather serving their own agendas. Jakob (2012) draws a rather grim picture of reality in the article "*Crafting your way out of the recession?*" as she explains how Etsy.com



combines craft supply sales and crafted product sales into the website's total sales figure – drawing a rather romanticised view of the actual hand-made product sales figures.

### **The social context**

The social context of entrepreneurship includes the social networks of family and friends (Welter, 2011). These types of networks offer a large amount of support in the format of understanding, emotional support, encouragement as well as capital, information and potentially even employees. Social ties have been shown to be a strength in overcoming risks of newness and small size as well as supporting ethnic minorities and female entrepreneurs.

A form of social context which is supporting and pushing craft entrepreneurs forward, are the craft markets. Often organised by crafts supporters or networks, these offer an important source of income and a marketing platform for small crafts companies (Jakob, 2012).

### 3 Methodology

Due to the personal nature of the crafters and their work, the chosen research method for this study is qualitative. This approach provides the researcher with relevant data of an unmeasurable, personal nature and the data gathering is conducted as qualitative interviews. The interviews were held using open-ended questions in order for interviewees to answer with the relevance they saw necessary. In addition this interviewing format allowed for in-depth information and richer data to form a comprehensive understanding of the cases.

The study utilises different data sources: 1) interviews with crafters and people working within the industry; 2) e-mails and calls to follow-up; 3) blogs, websites and newspaper articles related to the cases in order to form specified questions for the in-depth interviews. However, the main source of data is the qualitative interviews.

As mentioned earlier, Mason (2005) and Anttila (1983) both describe in their work that craft is comprised of the design and making process, in which no more than hand-controlled machines are used and which presumes knowledge of the philosophy of action. Therefore the empirical research will be conducted involving craftsmen and women using only minimal machinery of low technology to hand-craft their products. For validity reasons the study required crafters using a variety of materials; thus the researcher created a diverse sample of crafting companies in order to structurally back the findings. The research subjects were required to make the products themselves by hand or using hand operated tools and produce their crafts in Malmö by running their own crafting occupation through their company. Depending on each crafter, the amount of work hours put in each week may vary. This aspect was not predetermined in order to include dissimilar crafters as research subjects and create a variety of data.

The research subjects were discovered by searching for crafts communities within the city of Malmö. The search was carried out over the Internet, walking around the city and by reaching out to existing contacts known to work within the crafting industry or in co-operation with crafters. The search uncovered communities of crafters such as Forma Gruppen, Skånes

Hemslöjdsförbund and several shops offering crafted products for example From Skåne, Form/Design Center and Mitt Möllan market. Professionals within the industry were able to recommend further contacts within their respective networks and the shops were exceptionally helpful in offering entire databases of crafters whom to contact. This snowball sampling method produced a large quantity of possible and relevant research subjects (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In total 35 crafters and related people were contacted in order to find the eight suitable research subjects. The potential interviewees were sent an e-mail request to participate in the research and confirmed to be suitable subjects for the research after which the interview time and place were agreed on.

The research setting is the Malmö crafting industry between 2001 and 2016, which is when the included companies were founded. Since the timeframe spans over a period of a decade, it is considered sufficient to form an overall view of crafters' lifestyle preferences and contextual changes. The multiple case aspect allows the researcher to draw generalisable conclusions which are not tied distinctly to a singular research subject (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The variety of crafters will also supply this research with more diverse findings.

### 3.1 Data collection process

The interviews were conducted between the 1<sup>st</sup> of April and the 29<sup>th</sup> of April. The research was conducted as one in-depth interview per craft company, which took between 60 and 90 minutes. At the beginning of each interview the purpose of the interview was explained and the privacy preferences were determined. All subjects agreed for their names to be used for research purposes. In order to properly guide the interviews and pay full attention to the crafters all interviews were recorded and later transcribed to a general conversation level. In total the interviews generated 32 pages of transcripts.

Two slightly different sets of questions were produced: one to match the crafters and one for the actors within the industry (please see appendix 1 and 2). The interview questions were formed according to the theoretical framework as well as general questions about the crafters. These produced the following categories:

1. Background of the crafter and the personal aspect of crafting
2. The meaning of crafting and lifestyle choices
3. Changes within contexts

Naturally the questions are inter-related as the background of a person’s career choice is often entwined with lifestyle choices. Nonetheless, this structure was chosen as a basis for the interviewing process. Each question was also designed to draw on multiple facets of the entrepreneurs’ lifestyle choices, for instance “What do you relate crafts to?” could trigger diverse answers from environmental ideals to self-expression and freedom of career. A few additional questions were placed in order to open further discussion. Keeping the questions open allowed the researcher to label the answers to multiple aspects of the research. A flexible structure allowed the interviewing of diverse companies to be conducted using a fairly similar questionnaire.

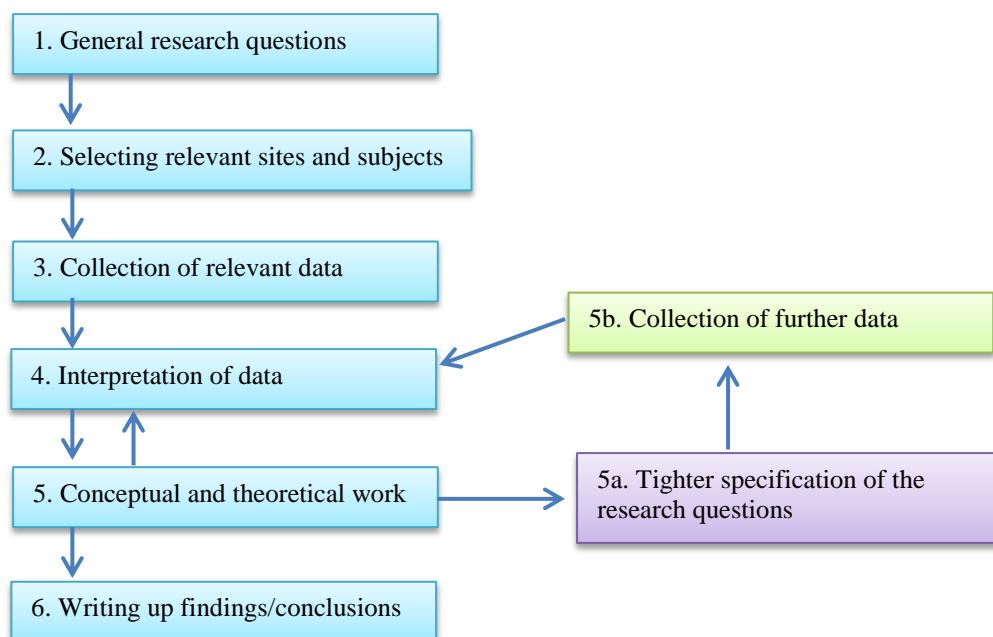


Figure 2. The outline of the main steps of the research (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 390).

## 3.2 Research Approach

Due to the personal nature of crafting this study was conducted as a multiple case study in a qualitative manner. The analysis is based on eight interviews out of which four were conducted with craft entrepreneurs of micro-sized craft firms and four with prominent figures associated closely with the local crafts industry. The study aimed to reach various different forms of crafters producing different kinds of small sized products produced locally within Malmö. The companies are at different stages of their respective company life and cater to different groups of customers within a large variety of sales channels. By not limiting these factors of the study it is possible to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being researched (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

## 3.3 Data Collection Method

When researching and discussing crafting it is important to realise the incredible magnitude of different types of crafting, which may range between materials used (from wood to glass, metal and recycled materials) and the methods used to produce them. CODA (The Craft Organization Development Association) defines crafts via 17 techniques and 13 end product categories (Jakob, 2012; Crafts Council, 2010). This study will limit its scope to researching crafters producing tangible objects using lightweight materials, in this context including anything lighter than 10 kilograms in weight and a meter in diameter. In addition the objects must be made using their own hands and no heavy machinery or electronic equipment, in other words this includes only hand operated tools.

The data collected in this study was collected by conducting open interviews of the craft entrepreneurs. The process was carried out as one open interview per entrepreneur of an average duration between 60 and 90 minutes taking place in the company premises. The interviews were recorded on location and transcribed to a general level of main themes and answers. The transcriptions added up to a total of 32 pages. By recording the interviews the researcher was fully focused on the interviewee and their responses in order to make necessary follow-up questions already during the interview. The questions were structured as open-ended questions to follow the literature review themes and relevant additional questions

related to either working within the craft industry or crafting as an occupation. Additional follow-up questions were made by e-mail and phone calls.

Any possible additional material (such as newspaper articles, publication or blog posts) concerning the crafters' lifestyles were taken into account when formulating the research questions and findings.

The selection criteria for the research subjects was to include eight crafters and people making a significant contribution to the crafting industry in Malmö. Out of the total eight research subjects four were craft companies with a maximum turnover of half a million Swedish krona per year and a maximum of three employees. This will allow the research to concentrate on small craft companies. The further four people contributing to the crafting scene were determined by either involvement in arranging crafting events, having established a retail business selling crafts or involvement with crafting associations. Involvement in associations strengthened insider information of government policy implementation and contribution within local crafting in Malmö. No further requirements involving for instance the crafters production methods or re-usage of materials were placed.

### 3.4 Data analysis and coding

The major obstacle of a qualitative research method is the fact that it quickly generates a large amount of rich data, which poses difficulties in the analysis process. Working through different sources of information such as field notes, interview recordings, transcripts and documents can be labouring (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Therefore it was important to find an analytical path in which to co-ordinate through the data. For this research the methods of grounded theory and coding have been applied. In accordance with this method the data collection and analysis proceed side by side continuously referring to each other.

The analysis of each interview was carried out by first transcribing the recorded data. From there the data was broken down into components as relevant answers were labelled in predetermined colours within the text: for instance all relevant information throughout the interview regarding background and history of the crafter was coloured in blue. This systematic approach allowed the application of the coding method in order to organize the gathered data and sort the findings by subject matter (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

In addition a matrix chart was compiled merging the results of each interview into one comprehensive version of the findings. The matrix was formed by placing each of the 8 interviewees, or research subjects, on the top row and each topic of research on the left hand side. This design allowed the findings to be placed each in their own respective slot crossing between the interviewees and the topics. The topics of research were divided into the following categories on the left side of the matrix: their field of crafting, the background and period of time they have been producing their crafts, the meaning of crafting to them personally, self-employment motivations, the meaning of being self-employed, awareness of crafting making, ideologies related to their occupation, communication with other crafters, spatial and institutional contexts affecting them. The findings placed within the matrix were also labelled in different colours using post-it notes to carefully separate topics and in an attempt to separate overlapping findings. Cross-related findings were placed at the lower edge of the matrix chart to be noted, but not confused with directly related findings. Please find an example of the matrix chart in figure 3.



Figure 3. An example of the matrix chart used to process the data and form the analysis.

This procedure aimed to examine the various motivations of the entrepreneurs and compare the multiple cases to the theoretical framework findings in an organized manner. The outcomes of the analysis can be found in the analysis and discussion chapter.

## 4 Analysis and discussion

This chapter will present the empirical research on a case-specific level. The following page displays a research case chart containing basic information of all interviewees, after which the crafters lifestyle motivations are discussed relating the findings to the literature. To wrap up the cases are compared to one another. The section following will discuss the context of crafting linking the interviews with craft professionals working within the field. The final part of this chapter includes other findings such as the controversies of the crafting industry.

Within this chapter exemplifying quotes have been used for the purpose of presenting findings. These include quotes directly from the empirical research as well as external sources discovered during the research process, such as websites.

The systematic coding process of the data proved that many of the aspects of crafting are highly interrelated and consequently topics have been divided into themes that were seen appropriate. The findings have been divided similarly to the theoretical framework and the final section discussing controversies was added as several were noted within the empirical findings.

*“You know the feeling when you are just here and making this piece in front of you, you just think that the rest of the world does not matter. Other people can do what they want, but for now it is just you and the piece you are working on.”*

-Kinna Sturesson



## 4.1 Research case chart

Craft company	Guldsmed	Dots and Dino	Linza by Linda	Handy hands
<b>Founder</b>	Kinna Sturesson	Anne Alcott	Linda Larsson	Hannah Runnqvist
<b>Area of crafting</b>	Goldsmith by training. Uses precious materials.	Sewed products for mothers and their children.	Map inspired jewelry from metal parts and old maps.	Recycled home items and accessories.
<b>Established</b>	2001	2014	2009	Early 2015
<b>Entrepreneurial motivation</b>	In order to work with what she likes. Having a company is the format to do so.	Being her own boss and deciding everything. The freedom aspect.	Aims to anticipate trends. Knows how to make and how to sell. Gets to be the boss of everything.	Freedom to design her work hours is most important. Crafting makes her feel good and combines her passions.
<b>Sales channels</b>	Her own shop, Formagruppen shop and occasional exhibitions.	Etsy web shop, crafts markets. Also has a Facebook site, Instagram and a blog.	Two reselling shops and then visits markets. E-mail orders in a big role.	One shop reselling in Malmö, visits markets and has a webstore on the way.
Case	Luisa Carbonelli	Christian Svensson	Anna Seravalli	Hossein Lavi
<b>Project</b>	Involved arranging Mitt Möllan craft market since 2014 through Briza Maxima.	Been working with crafts professionally for almost 10 years now, closely involved with STPLN.	Craft researcher and lecturer at Malmö Högskola.	From Skåne shop founder, involved with Creative Plot.
<b>Motivation</b>	Chooses the crazy products and political agendas – personal involvement in making choices.	Can focus and relax. A “Jack of all trades”.	Interaction design, design and social innovation.	Promoting creativity, bringing crafters to the consumers through the shop.
<b>The meaning of crafting</b>	Project run by a private property investment company. Supposes there is government support for crafters.	The meaning of self-fulfillment, a sort of meditative state of mind. Understanding and developing society.	It can bring you a sense of place in society, for instance if you are not employed but take part in community workshops.	It represents who we are as both makers and as users.
<b>Ideologies of craft</b>	Has political agendas and is a way of expressing one’s self.	Craft in itself is not related to anything, but is also related to everything.	It is an ecological way to produce and fix. It can bring people together.	It is an opportunity for mental wellbeing and satisfaction. Through craft we communicate our identity.
<b>Contextual shifts</b>	There is a noticeable increase of interest in the Mitt Möllan market.	People are interested in crafting.	A lot of common workspaces have surfaced.	A lot of community projects emerging and projects such as the From Skåne shop.

Figure 4. An overview of the interview sample.

## 4.2 The crafters' lifestyle perspective

This section will cover the background, life stories, and intricate company details of each crafter including how the crafters learnt their crafting skills. To conclude the cases are compared to one another and discussed in relation to the literature.

### **Guldsmed: Kinna Sturesson**

Kinna Sturesson offers her own hand-made jewellery collections as well as takes customer orders for unique pieces in her shop-come-workshop in Malmö. In addition to her own shop she sells her products at the collective Formagruppen shop of crafts and takes part in occasional exhibitions. To a large extent her orders consist of engagement and wedding rings, including personal gifts such as baptism presents or anniversary gifts. She has been working in her Malmö shop for 13 years now and is a full-time crafts entrepreneur.

Kinna's background is in sculpting and during her years of working with sculptures, she noticed her work was shrinking in size, which led her to the thought of taking her work into a format which she could earn a living from: jewellery making. She mentions while searching for her shop premises it was clear where she wanted to find a space, because St Knut is a calm and pleasant area with young couples and families who would have jewellery needs. Also the fact that she lives in the neighbourhood affected her choice of location.

Kinna also spoke of her craft as being a personal means of expression and an opportunity to bring her imagination forth giving an artistic value. She continues telling how the products are opportunities of expression as wearable items – enabling the user to reflect their personality and feelings – it is symbolic. Her products are for special occasions, gifts or keepsakes of loved ones lost, meaning some of the most personal and loved items people will ever own.

*"I see the piece of jewellery as a portable sculpture. It can reflect a thought, mediate a feeling or express an opinion. Anything that affects you is a source of inspiration."*

-Kinna Sturesson ([www.formagruppen.se](http://www.formagruppen.se))

She describes her crafting as an opportunity for self-expression and a way of embodying her imagination. As a crafter she feels she can follow her own fantasies and by offering both ready-made items as well as customised products it represents both aspects. Silver and gold crafting is an occupation she enjoys and could create pieces endlessly, but by having a company it brings along many other aspects other than just crafting the products. She is an entrepreneur in order to make a living out of what she enjoys doing: in her own words “It is the format I must adopt in order to do so”. This matches up with the lifestyle theory seamlessly as according to both Eikhof & Haunschild (2006) and Gomez Velasco & Saleilles (2007) this type of entrepreneur is linked with enjoyment through their work. However, the business side of crafting reveals some frustrations as it involves multiple aspects which all must be done by herself: accounting, offer writing, cleaning and of course the sourcing of materials confirming Menger’s (1999) theory of contradiction within integrating two identities: the creative side and the identity of a small company.

“The customers must be satisfied so I just listen and take in what they say because I must create what they want, and in this way half of my wages is from the customer being satisfied”. Kinna also shares her experience of the harsh side of customer service: if there are any problems during the offer making the customer will disappear, along with all the hours invested thus far.

In Kinna’s case she prioritises her walk-in customers rather than working at trade shoes or buyers fairs. Producing large jewellery orders and earning a higher income is therefore not her aim; she rather focuses on the custom orders. As Eikhof & Haunschild (2006) present in their theory, money is not a motivator and Kinna mentioning “it is impossible to become wealthy in this occupation” confirms this theory.

Through her goldsmith company Kinna is able to combine multiple aspects of her life into her occupation as an entrepreneur: she can work and live within the same area making a living out of a combination of previous skills integrated into a form of crafting. Though she enjoys what she creates for her customers, the management and daily operations of a company are very strenuous and take time away from the creating side of her entrepreneurship.

## **Dots and Dino: Anne Alcott**

Anne makes products for children and their mothers from her home-based studio. She aims to make colourful and joyful products to suit the mothers and not only the childrens' taste since "the parents are the ones who are using it every day, and we need something else than kids patterns in our lives". Anne aims to use as much recycled materials as possible and purchases ecological fabrics depending on availability. She has had her company for about two years now in their family home; her work space is set in a separate room with its own entrance so that customers may collect their orders. The craft business offers her a monthly income, however she does not rely on it as a full-time occupation, and the family is also supported by her husband's income. Anne sells her products on her Etsy webstore and frequently visits craft markets. In addition she has a Facebook site, an Instagram account and a blog to market her products on.

Anne Alcott has a degree in interior design and a background in the performing arts of theatre, which she continues as a hobby here in Malmö. Crafting has not previously been a part of her life, but nowadays it means freedom, happiness in a relaxing way and also offers an outlet to her creativity. Crafting is also a shared activity with her son, which creates a special bond between the two. She feels crafting has redefined her skillset and allows her to make people happy.

Her inspiration is strongly based on family encouragement, because her husband gave her the sewing machine as a present. Their family needs took it to the next level, because after her son was born she couldn't find items of her liking in the shops – she decided to make them herself. She tells how the endless ideas of creating an even more diverse product range could be never ending. The intriguing aspect of Anne's crafting is that she is self-taught through YouTube. She had no prior experience or even interest in the sewing or seamstress business. Despite little previous crafting experience she has been able to combine previous professional skills bringing them together in the business side of her crafting: drawing, marketing, photography and pattern making. The opportunity of deciding all these elements for her own business is an enjoyable aspect for Anne. This became apparent from her comment of "I am not really a team player, I like to be the boss". The literature reinforces this statement as Henricks (2002) and Koster et al. (2010) describe lifestyle entrepreneurs as a specific type of entrepreneur preferring to be their own bosses. In Anne's case she never tried to even apply for what she calls "a normal job".

To Anne crafting is indeed a vent for her creativity: it frees her mind and she feels that otherwise she would “explode”. Above all she feels it is freedom and an exploration of her creativity, because she would have never thought she could sew. In this way she finds that crafting can show one’s hidden talents, if you give it the chance. Crafting has helped her redefine her skillset and offers an opportunity to be happy and feel relaxed. This again confirms Eikhof & Haunschild’s (2006) as well as Gomez Velasco & Saleilles’s (2007) theory of lifestyle entrepreneurs working with what they enjoy.

On an even more personal level she conveys a sense of connection through crafting between her and her son as she expressed crafting being a way to see him develop. They often craft together in the afternoons when he comes home from day-care and through this joint activity she gets to teach him skills and see him advance.

For Anne within the business the most important aspect however, is staying true to herself: “...at the end of the day I am selfish and want to please myself first. If someone does not like my products there is always the next sales stall”. She has also experienced the hardships of customer service, describing: “Customers are becoming more demanding and as a crafter you must put in a lot of effort: it’s not enough to just send the product anymore.” She puts in a lot of effort in sending beautiful packages and hand written thank you notes along with her products. Although running the business is something she also enjoys, the accounting and product management are aspects she would rather not deal with and is happy to receive some support from the family with these.

### **Linza by Linda: Linda Larsson**

Linda makes map inspired jewellery in the form of necklaces, earrings and bracelets. Originally her maps were discarded from the school she works at and she rescued them thinking they would be of use some day. Alongside her full-time occupation as a teacher Linda has had her crafts company running since 2009 and currently sells her products through two shops in Malmö, visits craft markets frequently and receives numerous e-mail orders. The income of her crafting business she uses towards the pleasures of life, such as travelling. Linda has been crafting for most of her life and she runs her crafting business from home.

Linza by Linda has a long history of crafting with her mother, her sister in-law as well as a fellow craft entrepreneur. They share the will to craft, give honest feedback to each other, but also all have craft companies. Linda has a need to keep busy and prefers to work a lot – constantly creating with her hands. This is what brings her balance. Her previous “big hit product” was fresh water pearl jewellery, for which she sourced the materials from China. For her map jewellery she orders the parts from both China and the United States.

The old atlases Linda found to be beautiful and saved them from the digital takeover: “...we don’t really teach atlas knowledge anymore as it was, and I put them aside because they were too nice. I was already making jewelry and then at some point they merged.” Combining prior skills and new materials was how her current products came about.

Her crafting motivation is partially based on her occupation at the school not being enough, she simply needs something more to do. Linda has a strong need to use her hands and produce things meaning that all her free time goes towards activities of her crafting business: if not making the actual products then folding bags for them. For her, the enjoyment of making items is integral to the whole craft-making aspect and this is yet again in line with the theory of Eikhof & Haunschild (2006). In addition making people happy and hearing the stories of customers tearing up are a motivator for her: she begins telling stories about customers that send her photos of their loved ones wearing her products which touched them deeply. She finds it important for people to understand where the products come from since the maps are old prints, not photocopies, which brings a personal aspect for customers to wear them. The aspect of making customers happy is not an apparent aspect in the literature: lifestyle entrepreneurship is very much based on the personal need to express rather than a need to please others.

Another major motivator is the enjoyment of making a sale. She finds it a positive challenge to entice customers to her stand and engage them in a conversation about the locations in her products. She will always drop the hint of the possibility to custom order and this is how she receives multiple e-mail orders. Sometimes the locations people wish for are a real challenge to find, since maps usually include only larger cities or villages. This sales aspect brings Linda closer to the classical entrepreneur theories of profit focus mentioned by Norman (2004), Koster et al. (2010) and Schumpeter (1934). It also links to Douglas and Shepherd (2002) as they mentioned self-employment as a means to gain a higher income than as an employee and this is exactly what Linda is doing: the crafting business supports a better

lifestyle than only working in her current occupation. In her words “you work a lot and you get something back”.

Linda mentions enjoying being her own boss, handling the management and getting to take care of all the aspects of her business. She enjoys designing and updating the website and taking pictures for the business card. This is reinforced by the literature of Henricks (2002) and Koster et al. (2010) describing lifestyle entrepreneurs as preferring to be their own manager.

### **Hannah with Handy Hands: Hannah Runnqvist**

Hannah makes home items and accessories from recycled materials using mainly textile materials to produce her crafts. She has a wide range of products, but the main aspect is the use of recycled goods in the production process. Hannah has had her company for a year and a half now, selling her products in one shop in Malmö as well as taking part in multiple craft markets and events along with a few fellow crafters. In addition she teaches crafting at Folkuniversitetet and is currently working on a webstore. Her work locations include her home, the university and a communal crafting space, which she pays an annual fee to use. Crafting and teaching crafts is her full-time occupation.

Hannah’s background is in environmental chemistry and this environmental knowledge combined well with her much loved and life-long hobby of crafting. Hannah explains that crafting “allows you to individually express yourself”. For her the main attraction of crafting is the opportunity to work with something that she enjoys and makes her feel good, which is again linking the empirical to the theory through Eikhof & Haunschild’s (2006) as well as Gomez Velasco & Saleilles’s (2007) lifestyle theories of enjoyment through occupation. Crafting also includes a process, as she explains “It’s doing something with your hands, a creative process that includes both the mind and the hands”. Another meaningful aspect for Hannah is the freedom of designing her own working hours which links directly to Collins & Moore (1970) as they mention autonomy and independence as a lifestyle entrepreneurial motivator.

She mentions that being a sole entrepreneur means that things move slowly: as she is the only individual pushing the company forward for instance the web store will take a while to get up

and running. Also she finds it tough to focus on building a sensible product range, because her creative enthusiasm nearly takes over to create whatever comes to her mind and following this sporadic momentum is not always the financially best solution.

In Hannah's case her background as an environmental chemist and the fact that her products are solely made using recycled materials is the foundation of her company. Through crafting she is able to link her skills and what she enjoys doing into a living. To conclude Hannah finds that Swedes are currently very environmentally conscious and this aspect may bring more success to her crafting business in the future.

### **Comparison of cases**

Without exception all the crafters interviewed stated that their entrepreneurial activities allowed them to get to work with something they love, like, enjoy, and feel relaxed doing. In Kinna Sturesson's words "It is the format I must adopt in order to do so", while Linda describes the different elements of her business as something she does not consider to be work. Anne and Hannah find crafting to make them happy and relaxed. These findings match up with the lifestyle theory seamlessly as according to Eikhof & Haunschild (2006) this type of entrepreneur is linked with enjoyment of life through their work. Also the statement Linda makes of her occupation not seeming as work coincides with the mentioned theory of "time flying by" as the creative entrepreneur works on their craft (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006).

Both Anne and Linda found that being their own boss and being able to decide on all aspects of their businesses was an important factor of being an entrepreneur. This is an aspect the literature confirms as according to Henricks (2002) and Koster et al. (2010) lifestyle entrepreneurs prefer managing themselves as their own bosses. On the other hand, Kinna and Hannah did not mention this as an important motivational factor for their businesses. On the contrary for Kinna it seemed as though managing the business aspects is a mandatory hurdle to keep the business running to enable her crafting. On Hannah's side she found that running the company on her own slows down the creative processes. In addition, for Anne and Kinna the customer service side raises frustrations as customer expectations are often unrealistic and very high. Menger's (1999) theory of combining the two personas and the difficulty of doing so is notable in these instances.

For Hannah the freedom of designing one's own working hours and the chance of combining personal life and occupation rose as an important aspect. This combination of personal and



professional life was clear as all of the respondents worked from home or very near their home and in Anne's and Linda's case even craft with family members. As Eikhof & Haunschild (2006) mention, lifestyle entrepreneurship helps in blending personal life with work.

The background of the crafters seems to have an impact on their entrepreneurial choices. All four have combined previous skills or knowledge, either from their previous professions or from their earlier crafting experiences. In Anne's case there is an artistic involvement and creativity within the performing arts which may be considered to have an impact. For most interviewees crafting offered them an opportunity to combine skills and passions – bringing them together. In Hannah's case her background as an environmental chemist and her recycled crafted products form the perfect union for her company. For Anne bringing together her skills formed a great combination for her company's needs: drawing, marketing, photography and pattern making fit perfectly together. For all of the crafters their occupation is a vent of their creativity, but this also poses challenges: the need to create is often so great that they feel it is hard to concentrate or focus on a sensible product range. The literature is relatable in this aspect as Eikhof & Haunschild (2006) discuss the concept of creativity and self-management as an entrepreneur.

The majority of crafters stated that money was not a motivator for them and that "it is impossible to become wealthy in this occupation", which is also a factor mentioned by Eikhof & Haunschild (2006). This came up in the interviews with Kinna and Anne, though Hannah did not demonstrate any financial motivation other than creating a living out of her crafting. The struggles of making ends meet was of a subject of discussion with Kinna and Anne as they brought forth that in no circumstances could they charge their customers for the real hours it takes making the products. Only Linda mentioned financial gain to be a motivator for her crafting business and she saw making as many sales as possible a nice challenge.

The social context played an important part for several of the crafters: Linda's jewellery making is an activity which she can share with her family as they also craft professionally; Hannah goes to craft fairs with her crafting colleagues and Anne was encouraged to begin crafting by her husband as well as combines her crafting time with her son.

Contradicting findings to the lifestyle entrepreneur were also noted, as Linda Larsson reported she enjoys working a lot and that making as many sales as possible is a high motivator for

her. This can be related more towards a classical entrepreneur motivation since the classical type is more economically orientated and also intends to develop their business (Koster et al., 2010; Tregear, 2005).

An important aspect of the crafters' occupation was to make people happy. Especially Anne and Linda mention this as a significant motivator of their crafting businesses. When speaking with Kinna it comes across more as a mandatory, for her to survive. Within the theoretical framework however, this is not an aspect taken into consideration. All major bodies of work mention creative entrepreneurs fulfilling their visions and their passions first and foremost before considering their customers.

### 4.3 The context of the crafting industry in Malmö

Hossein Lavi, one of the founders of From Skåne (a crafts shop), has an interesting point of saying that our purchases reflect who we are and our values adding that “when people have a better position in life, say financial safety, this facilitates them to follow their dreams”.

Similarly Christian Svensson brings up the aspect of crafting being somewhat of a class divider as nowadays those with a better financial situation and disposable time are able to put these towards acquiring craft materials and making crafts. In addition Anna Seravalli highlights the fact that the community projects she works with are mainly targeted towards unemployed citizens and immigrants. This would lead to the possibility of crafting in fact becoming more associated as an “upper-class“ -activity. Is this a completely new lifestyle relating to crafts which is emerging?

Kinna has noted there are far more young people applying to have their work displayed at Formgruppen at the moment than before. She can see changes as initiatives in the community: as galleries and communal creative work spaces. She finds crafting to be a need in our genes, and maybe it is even more necessary now than earlier – “when you work with your hands you get very focused and settled and get a very special relationship with items you create from the start”. And perhaps the things we create personally have more meaning to us than things we purchase. As she mentions “We live in an absolutely crazy world” and people need to find peace in making – this demonstrates her view of why crafting is on a rise at the moment. She also speaks about the current alienation towards the products we are surrounded

by. This also fits with the theory of crafting bringing us back to moments of physical and emotional comfort as well as stability to an unstable world (Jakob, 2012; Sowden, 2015). In addition Peach (2013) mentions Henrik Most pointing out people reaching back to tactile experiences as a result of the digitalisation of our age. This connection shows theoretical and empirical findings walking hand in hand.

The increase of craft makers has been noticeable according to Luisa. Every Mitt Möllan market has more and more enthusiastic crafters applying and she must turn down a large amount of enthusiasts. These include both professionals, hobbyists and a mixture of crafters with what she calls “a professional intention”. When looking at the theory it is also evident that the amount of crafters has indeed increased remarkably (Jakob, 2012), however concrete evidence of craft consumers increasing has not yet been discovered.

All the participants were in agreement that there is a noticeable increase in community projects and workshops within Malmö and it is involving the surrounding community successfully. As mentioned by MacDonald & Rossi (2013) the community-based visions of crafting are not only a recent discovery. It appears that this community engagement as a phenomenon is re-emerging through crafts. Christian confirms this shift by sharing that the local government is supporting crafting by offering grant opportunities when the projects involve the community and especially the younger generations.

The cases revealed an increased use of technology in the crafting process. In fact Anne created Dots and Dino by simply learning to craft using online instructions from Youtube, and this is solid proof of technology affecting crafting on a fundamental level. It is common belief that crafting takes years of practice and experience in order to master and this finding contradicts this belief. Anne also participates in several digital platforms and takes part in other crafters’ marketing projects on social media platforms – simultaneously enhancing her own marketing by sharing content, but also connecting with other crafters. This connection between crafters networking online is pointed out in the theoretical literature of MacDonald & Rossi (2013) noting that social networking websites are in fact bringing crafters closer and making crafting respectively more social as an occupation.

Also for Linda a large part of her personal orders arrive by e-mail from people who have seen her at the markets and this form of receiving orders forms a large part of her income. Without the existence of this option her crafting business would be very different.

Christian speaks about the co-working space of STPLN offering open workshops for everyone to come and try crafting and technical making as these two meet. He actually sees both technical knowledge and crafting very similarly: they have the same problem solving processes: “These should just be merged, not exclude one or the other”.

## 4.4 Other findings

### **The controversies of crafting**

As Luisa explains there is no curating between professional and hobby crafters, which leads to a problem of variation in pricing. Luisa would estimate that the majority of crafters at Mitt Möllan are “with an intention of full-time employment” but are still supporting themselves with other employment. In this sense, the market offers them an opportunity to test their product. She mentions a lady selling knitted hand warmers for 50 SEK and that surely she is not making any income this way. In Luisa’s opinion there are too many print crafters at the moment and she is constantly in the position of turning many of them down as it is important to have a variety of different products. She also always prefers looking for products that are interesting with a storyline or political stand.

### **Ideological discrepancies**

The main direction of crafting activities tends to be related to either high quality, recycling or local production. All the crafters are participating in one of these aspects, however there is a clear contradiction in the work of Linda: she simultaneously takes part in the recycling movement by acquiring old maps for her crafts, however she orders new materials from the United States or China. This indicates her participation in the mass consumption simultaneously, which may pose some contradictions. Although she does not market her products as completely locally produced, but if known, would this affect a consumer’s decision to purchase? There is an underlying question here of where we draw the line between crafting and production.

## 5 Conclusions

The aim of this research was to uncover the motivations of craft entrepreneurs from a lifestyle perspective and contribute to the research fields of both lifestyle and craft entrepreneurship. The research uncovered several motivations of crafters in Malmö as well as contextual changes within their operating surroundings of Malmö. Throughout the process it became evident that creative entrepreneurship, especially within craft entrepreneurship, has suffered a lack of research. Generally speaking the craft entrepreneurs are an unknown and ambiguous entity (Tregear, 2005).

Today, a great proportion of the academic discussion around crafting highlights the meaning of crafting as well as a “craft movement” and craft activism within this phenomenon. In one way the picture conveyed is that all crafting since the Arts and Crafts movement has in one way or another been politically fuelled. Nonetheless the literature is not entirely misplaced as the spirit of the time along with economic uncertainty and ecological ideologies shape and encourage entrepreneurial activities in certain directions.

The findings revealed that the notion of lifestyle plays a role for many of the crafters interviewed and therefore reinforced the theoretical framework. This became evident from the crafters communicating that crafting brings them a sense of freedom as well as offers them an outlet for self-expression and a vent for their creativity. In addition, lifestyle entrepreneurship was noticeable from the fact that their occupation was closely intertwined with their personal life and social contexts and their work quarters were closely located to their home or even in their homes. These findings match with Welter’s (2011) contextual theory.

The results confirm the lifestyle literature as far as crafters asserting that they work with something they enjoy, feel relaxed doing and which creates a sense of self-fulfilment. This also matches with the political history of crafting as Morris’s ideal of “joy in labour” during the first surge of crafting was a basis of the movement. This motivation of enjoyment also

demonstrated a connection to the crafters' work and a lack of alienation as they connect to their occupations on a personal level.

Also the aspects within lifestyle entrepreneurship of designing one's own working hours and profit being less of a priority were confirmed, as the interviewees reported that they could never reach a financial compensation comparable to their invested working hours. However, contradictions arose within this area, as one of the crafters was also very motivated by profits and the actual sales as a process, though in the background her interest includes an aspect of making people happy. This concludes that crafting entrepreneurs are motivated by lifestyle reasons, however there are significant exceptions to this as well.

Generally speaking the entrepreneurs who were not financially fully relying on their crafting as their sole source of income tended to emphasise the importance and motivation of making their customers happy. This is a noticeable exception to the lifestyle theorists as they see a main motivation in creative entrepreneurship being that of pleasing one's self first.

Crafts entrepreneurs tended to find frustrations within their business management and customer service as well as managing themselves and their creativity as an endless source of crafting products. Meeting the demands of customer expectations and the difficulties of making realistic offers to meet with price expectations came across clearly from both Kinna and Anne. From an income aspect the crafters are often in situations where they must compromise and settle in order to survive. The only crafter not matching with this finding is Linda, though she is not fully financially reliant on her crafting income.

The lifestyle of following ones dreams as an institutional context is becoming a reality as stated by both Hossein and Christian: "My generation is incline to follow their dreams and taught to be whatever they want to be". Furthermore Hossein's statement "crafting is no longer only seen as a hobby, but a lifestyle" both in the terms of items we make as well as the items we purchase. The meaning of crafts being an extension of ourselves, and the items we are creating as a society, are a manifestation of what we want to be. The practical implication of this is that crafting is creating opportunities for people to follow their dreams of making in order to carry out the lifestyle that suits them. This may even relate this to what is known as the hipster trend and the increased interest of handcrafted foods and beverages.

It must be noted, however, that there is a significant concern to be raised here about who is able to participate in the contextual changes of crafting? If crafting activities are nowadays

limited by financial power and the available time is there not a disadvantage of whom is able to take part in the making as well as the purchasing of crafts, since the actual items for sale often come with a significant cost. The time and effort put into them must to some extent correlate with the work put in. Perhaps there is a balancing force created by the community involvement aspects, aspiring to offer crafting to everyone incline.

Practical implications of this study show that there is currently an unfair market place of crafting. The empirical research uncovered aspects which point to a noticeable controversy of having both professional crafters and hobby crafters being placed in the same sales space. As Luisa described she believes the crafters “have a professional intention”. The problematics of this are dual: the latter may offer their products at far more affordable prices as there are no company costs to cover and also the aspects of quality are questionable. One could also doubt whether the difference in pricing may also be due to products being outsourced from elsewhere. The concerns of a surge of hobbyists were also apparent from Anne’s statement of quality related reservations and the fact of added pressure from customers as expectations have accumulated. The saturated craft marketplace is now offering a lot as purchase “extras” and this also places pressures.

Theoretical implication would suggest consumers having higher expectations and that the craft market curators are searching for interesting stories. There may be an aspect in the future that the story behind the makers and their products will become highlighted and an added advantage to those crafters who understand the importance of this. There is clearly an aspect of subjectivity when looking at the craft marketplace: the curating of each event is carried out according to the taste of a few, which naturally affects the outcome of for instance political agendas surfacing among the products. As Luisa mentions her interests guide her choices in the process of arranging the event. It is therefore questionable whether the political stand of crafts is in fact driven by the people behind the scenes.

The digital age has also affected crafting businesses and is taking over in many ways as online communities continue to thrive, sales have moved to web shops and crafters are exchanging opinions as well as instructions. However it is apparent that this is an enabler for crafters to communicate and make their craft by combining digital and traditional. Also the communal space of STPLN is offering crafting combined with technological tools, which is a new introduction of our digital time. From this an agreement with the literature can be made – the crafting is simultaneously rejecting and embracing technology by first separating people at a

communicational level and again bringing them together in order to be creative using technology. Linda's example of technology taking over the geography teaching relates to the technological powers of today.

Further research into the area of craft entrepreneurship, their motivations and background as well as the contextual effects on their entrepreneurial ventures would be beneficial to increase the understanding of how and why these craft companies exist.

The setting of this study is during a period of institutional and contextual changes in Sweden, involving mass immigration and consequentially possible other major changes within society. Therefore this limitation creates uncertainty whether this study may be replicated in a similar setting. Although this research was conducted in the craft setting of Malmö, the results may be generalisable to other areas depending on context.



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# Appendices

## Appendix 1. Interview material for crafters

### 1. Background of the crafter and the personal aspect of crafting

- What is your field of crafting?
- How long have you been working on this field?
  - Is it your full or part-time occupation?
- Do you have an ethical perspective in your craft?
- Do you communicate with other crafters?

### 2. The meaning of crafting and lifestyle choices

- What is crafting and what does it mean to you?
- The meaning of being self-employed to you?
- Would you describe yourself as an artist or a crafter?
- Do you relate crafts to any ideal?
- Do you communicate with other crafters?

### 3. Changes within context

- What is the current state of crafting in Malmö?
- What reasons are behind this?
- Do you focus on product range or customer orders?
- Which sales channels do you use for the sales of your products?
- What challenges do you face as you sell your crafts?
- Do you feel there are any controversies in crafting?
- Have you noticed a change in the purchase behaviour? Has this helped you to continue in your profession?
- Do crafters have business knowledge? Is it necessary?

## Appendix 2. Interview material for industry people

### 1. Background and the personal aspect of crafting

- What is your field?
- How long have you been working in this field?
- Do you relate crafts to any ideologies?
- Does crafting have any controversies?

### 2. The meaning of crafting and lifestyle choices

- How would you define crafting and what does it mean to you?
- The meaning of being self-employed to you? (If applicable)
- Would you describe crafters as artist or crafters?
- Do you relate crafts to any ideal?

### 3. Changes within context

- What is the current state of crafting in Malmö?
  - What reasons are behind this?
- Which sales channels do crafters use at the moment?
- What are your experiences of why customers purchase craft?
- What challenges do crafters face?
- Do you feel there are any controversies in crafting?
- Have you noticed a change in purchase behaviour?
- Do crafters have business knowledge and is it necessary?