

EMBRACING A NEW ERA OF CLOTHING CONSUMPTION

A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS OF
REDISTRIBUTED OWNERSHIP AND UTILITY-BASED
NONOWNERSHIP

JULIA LARSDOTTER

VIVIANNE YANCE

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Embracing a new era of clothing consumption: *A qualitative study on consumer perceptions of redistributed ownership and utility-based nonownership*

ABSTRACT:

Clothes play an important role in our lives; not only providing protection, but also offering a way to express ourselves and who we are to the world around us. However, the purchasing of clothing has escalated into unsustainable volumes whereas the utilization of clothing, on the other hand, has decreased. It thus becomes clear that the way we consume clothes is placing an enormous strain on our environment and proving unsustainable in the long-run. This study will therefore explore how consumers to a greater extent can be inspired to engage in new and more sustainable clothing consumption alternatives. More specifically, this will be done by investigating how consumer perceptions differ between consumption of a second-hand clothing item that has been redistributed for a new cycle of ownership versus a rental clothing item that is utility-based. To achieve this, a qualitative study was carried out consisting of 24 semi-structured interviews with Swedish consumers from urban cities. Findings show that consumers indeed do have environmental concern, but that this is not the sole driving motivator for how they consume clothing. Participants of this study are well-acquainted with the concept of redistributed ownership, however, they find it difficult to extend beyond more than simply a complementary activity to traditional clothing consumption, in part due to the stigma surrounding it. As for utility-based nonownership, participants perceive it to be a novel and at times strange concept. The high degree of innovativeness results in several perceived risks including personal sacrifices in terms of money, time and effort, as well as an uncertainty of its positive environmental impact. A high degree of service-provider formality as well as transparency prove to be key findings important to note by practitioners when designing a service offering that can win support from consumers and gain traction in the market.

KEYWORDS:

Sharing economy, collaborative consumption, redistributed ownership, utility-based nonownership, second-hand clothing, clothing rental

AUTHORS:

Julia Larsdotter (22875)

Vivianne Yance (23252)

TUTOR:

Susanne Sweet, Associate Professor, Department of Marketing and Strategy

EXAMINATOR:

Henrik Glimstedt, Associate Professor, Department of Marketing and Strategy

Carin Holmquist, Professor Emerita, Department of Entrepreneurship, innovation and technology

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Master Program in Business and Management

Stockholm School of Economics

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Definitions

Sharing economy

A phenomenon which involves consumers collaborating and “sharing” otherwise underutilized resources for either monetary or non-monetary reward (Botsman, 2013).

Collaborative Consumption

“People coordinating the acquisition and distribution of a resource for a fee or other compensation, which may involve bartering, swapping, or trading activities” (Park & Armstrong, 2017; Belk, 2014a).

Collaborative Apparel Consumption

Collaborative consumption within the context of apparel.

Redistributed ownership

A collaborative consumption mode based on ownership of used goods that are redistributed from where they are not needed anymore to where they are, e.g. online apparel resale, consignment, or swapping (Botsman & Rogers, 2010; Park & Armstrong, 2017).

Utility-based nonownership

A collaborative consumption mode that entails a consumer being granted access to an apparel good such as for example an apparel renting services where access duration can differ depending on the offering (Botsman & Rogers, 2010; Park & Armstrong, 2017).

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

It is not easy to envision a world in which there are no clothes; they play an important part in our lives in one way or another. They offer protection and are for some people a way to express who they are as individuals to the outside world (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). Closely connected to clothing is the concept of fashion, separated from functionality and full of symbolic meanings, values and desires (Becker-Leifhold, 2018). Being fashionable, in relation to clothing, has come to involve the ever-changing fashion cycle that spins at an increasing speed demanding constant changes and trend updates (Armstrong et al., 2015). Today fashion is more available than ever through the phenomenon of fast fashion, which provides consumers with trendy styles at a quick turnaround pace, increasing the amount of collections offered in a year at lower prices (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017; Armstrong et al., 2016). However, the way we produce and consume clothing has devastating societal and environmental effects on the world we live in. Textile production is currently responsible for an annual total of 1.2 billion tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions which is expected to rise by more than 60 percent by the year 2030 (United Nations Climate Change, 2018). Not to mention the millions of tonnes of plastic microfibers that end up in the ocean (Business of Fashion & McKinsey and Company, 2017) and the health effects of toxins on both wearers and workers (Ellen MacArthur, 2017).

Clothing sales have nearly doubled in the past 15 years, while clothing utilization has decreased (Ellen MacArthur, 2017). Some garments are only worn seven to ten times before discarded (*ibid*) and as little as 1 percent of the material that goes into producing clothing is recycled and turned into new clothing (Business of Fashion & McKinsey and Company, 2017). On a global scale, this throw-away culture is costing a yearly value loss of USD 500 billion (*ibid*). The over-consumption and massive underutilization of clothing has been identified as one of the primary challenges faced by the industry today and experts call for a restorative and regenerative movement to disrupt the linear system (Business of Fashion & McKinsey and Company, 2017; Mistra Future Fashion, 2017).

On a positive note, the lifespan of a fashion product has become more elastic as a result of the evolvement of pre-owned, repair, rental, and refurbished business models (Business of Fashion & McKinsey and Company, 2018). Pre-owned clothing, also known as second-hand clothing, has been experiencing a steady increase in scope and economic value captured in the past 20 years (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Iran & Schrader, 2017; Roos & Holmberg, 2016; Xu et al., 2014). Traditional physical retailers (e.g. Beyond Retro, Stockholm-based Arkivet, Herr Judit), online retailers (e.g. Vestiaire Collective, TPH), and online platforms (e.g. Sellpy, Tradera) are all tapping into the pre-owned clothing market. As for clothing rental, this alternative business model is also on the rise (Armstrong et al., 2016; Lang & Armstrong, 2018; Park & Armstrong, 2017; Tao & Xu, 2018) with a growing number of industry players entering the market (e.g. Rent the Runway, Sabina & Friends, Something Borrowed).

Needless to say, there is an ongoing shift in our society concerning the way we consume clothing. The transition is part of a phenomenon called the sharing economy (Botsman, 2013). The “sharing”

consumption activities of purchasing pre-owned clothing and renting clothing are versions of collaborative consumption. Notably, neither pre-owned nor rent business models necessarily require a new piece of clothing to be produced and sold. Instead, collaborative consumption emphasizes shared usage over ownership. For that reason, researchers welcome collaborative consumption and view it as a possible solution to the problem of over-consumption and underutilization by advocating an increased reuse of clothing and reduced need for new clothing through either a redistribution of owned goods or access via utility-based nonownership (Armstrong et al., 2016; Gopalakrishnan & Matthews, 2018; Lang & Armstrong, 2018; Piscicelli et al., 2015).

Luckily, consumers today are showing a greater concern for sustainability (Han et al., 2017), which is reflected in Sweden's Christmas gift of the year 2018, a public recognition based on current societal trends that was given to the recycled garment (Hui, 2018). Furthermore, it has been forecasted that the resale market may be bigger than fast fashion in ten years, which poses the question of what will happen to traditional ownership as more brands explore alternative businesses such as rental and resale (Business of Fashion & McKinsey and Company, 2018). The signs of a positive and sustainable development are however in part beclouded by the so-called attitude-behavior gap identified by researchers which highlights a poor translation of environmental concern into consumption behavior among consumers (Chan & Wong, 2012; Joy et al., 2012; McNeill & Moore, 2015). In Sweden alone, the private citizen throws out an approximate eight kilograms of clothes annually despite much of it being in good condition (SVT Nyheter, 2019), indicating that there is still a way to go to fully understand developing consumer preferences and shifts when it comes to owning versus renting.

1.2 Research Purpose

Bearing the aforementioned in mind, it is of importance to understand how consumers to a greater extent can be inspired to engage with these new and more sustainable alternatives compared to the traditional take-make-dispose model. The purpose of this thesis is therefore to investigate consumers' perceptions of the two different consumption modes redistributed ownership and utility-based nonownership within an apparel context. This will be done more specifically by exploring the pre-used business models of secondhand and rental to understand what implications consumer perceptions have on these business models trying to establish themselves in this market. We hope the findings will shed light on the opportunities and challenges faced by these commercial actors to attract more customers and achieve greater scale.

1.3 Research Question

The purpose is guided by the following research question:

How do consumer perceptions of the two different consumption modes 'redistributed ownership' and 'utility-based nonownership' differ and what implications does this have for commercial pre-used business models?

1.4 Expected Contribution

Collaborative consumption is expected to play an important role for the future of fashion (Pedersen & Netter, 2015), and to date, no researchers have fully explored how consumers' perceptions differ between consumption of an item that has been redistributed for a new cycle of ownership versus an item that is utility-based (Park & Armstrong, 2017). Thus, there is a research gap in need of attention. By bridging previous theory collected from separate studies on clothing rental and second-hand clothing with research within the area of collaborative consumption, a new take on these more sustainable ways of consuming clothes can be found. Not only is the aim to contribute to current body of research, but also to provide practitioners with valuable insights that can help them shape their business models designed around collaborative apparel consumption and ultimately gain a more widespread acceptance amongst consumers. By achieving this, the thesis aims to contribute to a greater purpose, which is to give the global environmental sustainability agenda a nudge in the right direction.

1.4 Delimitations

In the two consumption modes of redistributed ownership and utility-based nonownership there are different types of business models. In previous research within this field, following types of business have been identified; short-term renting, subscription-based renting, swapping, online consignment, consignment stores, thrift stores and resale stores (Park & Armstrong, 2017; Gopalakrishnan & Matthews, 2018). Considering what is most common in the context in which this study is conducted, it is delimited to include consigning stores, thrift stores and resale stores from redistributed ownership, which will from here on out be denoted as second-hand, excluding swapping. Considering utility-based nonownership, both short-term renting and subscription-based renting is included, but rather explored in a compound than separate and thus referred to as rental throughout the study.

The study is further delimited to the Swedish context, and due to resource constraints, only urban cities are considered in terms of geographic scope. Both genders are included (50/50), but age is delimited to only include people between 22 to 43 as this group is both informed and vary in purchasing power.

2. Literature Review

In the following sections, a comprehensive review of literature and theories relevant for the research field is presented. The review ends by presenting the theoretical framework which will act as a starting point for the empirical findings and analysis to come.

2.1 Collaborative Consumption

The sharing economy has launched several novel “sharing” consumption activities which have come to inspire the development of related concepts within research such as sharing (Belk, 2014a), collaborative consumption (Belk, 2010; Botsman & Rogers, 2010; Hellwig et al., 2015; Ozanne & Ballantine, 2010), and access-based consumption (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Schaefer et al., 2015). The concept has since been deemed to be among “10 Ideas That Will Change the World” (Walsh, 2011) and has been compared to the industrial revolution regarding its impact on how one thinks about ownership (Botsman & Rogers, 2010).

As for its definition, researchers have come to different conclusions, but according to Belk (2010) many of them are too broad. He instead describes CC as *“people coordinating the acquisition and distribution of a resource for a fee or other compensation”* (Belk, 2014a). For the purpose of this paper, the definition from Park and Armstrong (2017) is adopted, which is based on Belk’s (2014a) view on CC but adapted to the apparel context. The definition is as follows: ***“people coordinating the acquisition and distribution of a resource for a fee or other compensation, which may involve bartering, swapping, or trading activities”***. This since it is in line with contemporary apparel sharing such as clothing rental and resale (Park & Armstrong, 2017). It is important to note that CC as a phenomenon was born in the digital age and mainly consists of sharing activities facilitated by the Internet (Belk, 2014a), but certain non-digital sharing activities may still be included in the term (Gopalakrishnan & Matthews, 2018) and therefore are also taken into consideration in this study.

2.2 Collaborative Apparel Consumption

In the context of apparel, a majority of CC research has been conducted qualitatively, looking at consumer preferences and motivations. One such study is conducted by Mun and Johnson (2014) who explored interviewees’ perceived benefits, motivations and costs linked to CC (Lang & Armstrong, 2018). Another study by Armstrong et al. (2015) examined preferences related to apparel swapping and renting through consumer focus groups. The barriers and opportunities of fashion libraries have also been researched by Pedersen and Netter (2015). In a recent study by Lang and Armstrong (2018) they dive deeper into the interrelationships between a consumer’s intention to adopt CC and their individual personality traits. Gopalakrishnan and Matthews (2018) study CC by comparing the business models of second-hand clothing stores and traditional retail stores. They find that variety, thrill of finding great deals, cheaper price and value for brands are predominant motivators for shopping second hand. The subject has also received some quantitative investigation such as the study by Becker-Leifhold (2018) in which the theory of planned behavior grants a lens to explore the role of values for collaborative fashion consumption adoption. However, little is still known about collaborative apparel consumption and most studies

have so far been conducted in the context of other industries, which may differ greatly since consumption of apparel goods is likely to be more inherently emotional and motivated by hedonic functions (Park & Armstrong, 2017).

Based on Belk's (2014a) theory in combination with an investigation of actual existing collaborative apparel consumption businesses, Park and Armstrong (2017) suggest two primary consumption modes in today's market; redistributed ownership and utility-based nonownership. **Redistributed ownership** is similar to traditional consumption as it is based on ownership. The difference is that redistributed ownership concerns used goods that are redistributed from where they are not needed anymore to where they are and includes examples such as online and offline apparel resale, consignment, or swapping (Botsman & Rogers, 2010). In the case of **utility-based nonownership**, a consumer is only granted access to an apparel good and thus ownership is not transferred.

Within these two consumption modes, Park and Armstrong (2017) identify four different kinds of existing business alternatives; short-term renting, subscription-based renting, swapping, and online consignment. Short-term renting and subscription-based renting are both cases of utility-based nonownership, but with different duration terms for access, whereas swapping and online consignment are two forms of redistributed ownership. Physical second-hand business models such as consignment stores, thrift stores and resale stores are also recognized as forms of redistributed ownership (Gopalakrishnan & Matthews, 2018).

2.3 Framework of multilevel consumption

In a study about art consumption behavior, Chen (2009) developed a multilevel perspective that compares possession of and access to an object. This perspective formed the framework of multilevel consumption (FMC), which challenges the traditional belief that possession is the ultimate way to form a relationship with an object. Instead consumers can choose possession or access depending on varying desires. In the specific case of art consumption, those consumers who chose to buy art desired a lasting intimate relationship with the artwork whereas those consumers who chose to access art through collection and exhibit visits desired a circumstantial and distant relationship with the artworks.

Park and Armstrong (2017) extend the FMC model beyond art consumption and suggest it can also be applied to collaborative apparel consumption in which the two consumption modes can be compared to traditional ownership (Figure 1). They assert that only exploring values and desires is too limiting and a more comprehensive approach is warranted. Such an approach therefore takes into consideration multiple levels of relationships which are affected when a consumer engages in CC; the consumer-product relationship, consumer-consumer relationship and consumer-business relationship.

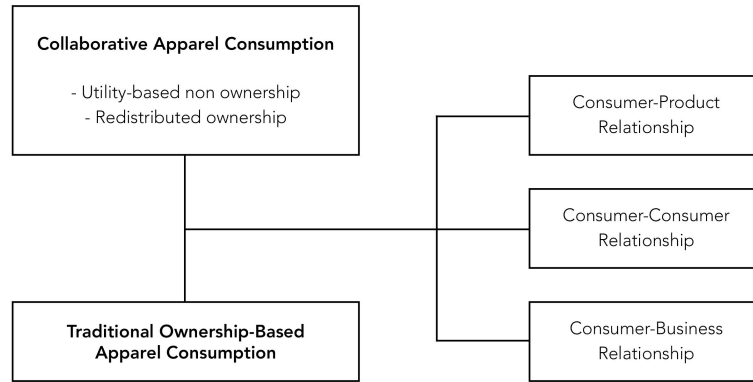


Figure 1: The extended framework of multilevel consumption (Park & Armstrong, 2017)

These three relationships are in turn influenced by different factors embedded with related dimensions as summarized in Table 1 according to the framework by Park and Armstrong (2017).

Table 1: Framework for differentiating collaborative consumption models (Park & Armstrong, 2017)	
Factor	Related Dimensions
Consumer-Product Relationship - Time - Product Characteristics (type)	Attachment constrained by: - One-time or reoccurring transactions - Duration with product - Price - Quality - Symbolism - Visibility of consumption (public/private)
Consumer-Consumer Relationship - Sociality	- Anonymity vs. communality - Public/private consumption - Spatial distance between consumer and object
Consumer-Business Relationship - Formality/Institutionalization - Position - Convenience	- Business–Consumer or Peer-Peer - For-profit/nonprofit - Perceived risk - Political consumerism; low cost, premium, sustainable etc. value propositions - Sense of sharing; joint ownership, pro-social intentions, absence of direct reciprocity - Innovativeness - Required time, effort, responsibility - Convenience - Accessibility of the product - Price model flexibility - Time and cost savings - Delayed acquisition

2.3.1 Consumer-Product Relationship

Studies in the context of collaborative consumption regarding the relationship between person and object are inconclusive, but it has been found that time and product characteristics are relevant factors for exploration (Park & Armstrong, 2017).

2.3.1.1 Time

In a previous study on car access by Bardhi and Eckhardt (2012), it is found that the temporary time period of use does not enable consumers to extend the self to the object. However, Park and Armstrong (2017) propose that if a consumer has access or usage right during a longer period of time, ownership-like tendencies may evolve. This is strengthened by Durgee and O'Connor (1995) who have found that product attachment is lower for access-based goods, but the variety renting offers may allow more self-exploration. Based on this, Park and Armstrong (2017) propose that *“product attachment is lower for utility-based nonownership apparel offerings such as short-term and subscription rentals than traditional apparel ownership”* (p. 470). It is also proposed that for redistributed ownership that deeper product attachment might emerge owing to the similarities with traditional ownership (Park & Armstrong, 2017).

2.3.1.2 Product characteristics

Product characteristics as price, quality and symbolism are important differentiators for utility-based nonownership and redistributed ownership (Park & Armstrong, 2017).

Price

Some researchers have found price consciousness as a key motivating factor for engaging in access-based consumption (Durgee & O'Conner, 1995) while others found that price is not as important (Möeller & Wittkowski, 2010). From investigating access-based apparel models, Park and Armstrong (2017) found affordability as an important selling point which was also confirmed for redistributed ownership. In addition to the FMC (Park & Armstrong, 2017), studies have found economic motivators such as affordability and the possibility to make a bargain to be significant for second-hand clothing consumption (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Yan et al., 2015). It is therefore proposed that *“price consciousness is positively associated with consumers' motivations for collaborative apparel consumption”* (Park & Armstrong, 2017, p. 470). A study by Armstrong et al. (2016) found that consumers were partly motivated by financial benefits of rental such as the possibility to experiment or use an item without financial risk or investment. It is important to take the price of the product if owned into account as this might influence consumer decisions of choosing either access or ownership (Baumeister, 2014).

Quality

Quality is less important for consumer satisfaction in utility-based nonownership offerings than for traditional ownership (Lawson, 2010), although high quality products have also been proven to correlate with consumer satisfaction for clothing rental (Scholl, 2006). From a consumer perspective, Park and Armstrong (2017) suggest that quality might be less of a concern than for traditional ownership because the motive for collaborative consumption may be mainly status- or trend-driven. It is proposed that *“quality of products is less of a concern to the consumer in collaborative apparel consumption than in traditional apparel ownership”* (Park & Armstrong, 2017, p. 470). Adding to the FMC,

when accounting for second-hand apparel criteria the quality of the product is actually influencing resale to a greater extent, low prices are not sufficient to prompt purchase (O'Reilly et al., 1984).

Symbolism & Visibility of Consumption

Traditional acquisition modes with tightly coupled symbolic elements are more resistant to modification as it requires alterations in meanings (Mylan, 2015). Self-expression makes it more difficult to change the consumer-product relationship to some alternative mode (Schrader, 1999; Weinert, 2010). As fashion products are laden with symbolic meanings and consumed in more traditional ways, Park and Armstrong (2017) propose that *“consumers’ intention to adopt collaborative consumption is more difficult for apparel products than for other products that are less symbolic in nature”* (p. 470). The high social visibility of apparel entails that the consumption occurs publicly (Park & Armstrong, 2017), thus a broader group of people may have an effect on the consumer’s behavior in the collaborative consumption context (Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Baumeister, 2014). Adding to the FMC there is an *“insatiable demand for newness”* detected among consumers, which has previously been highlighted as a driving force behind fast fashion (Barnes & Lea-Greenwood, 2006, p. 269) and important for identity creation (Niinimäki, 2010). Armstrong et al. (2015) contend that meeting this emotional need will be imperative in order to realize sustainable alternatives for clothing consumption such as renting.

As social visibility and symbolic meaning are especially important for the second-hand object (Roux, 2006), this may further be added to FMC. Regarding rejection behaviors toward second-hand objects, Roux (2006) argues that if previously-used clothing is too closely associated with their former wearer they are not appraised for their own values, but rather indissociable from its previous owner. Because of fear of the unknown and strangeness, a degraded image of the former wearer is generated which is then projected onto the clothing. However, positive symbolic appropriation can be involved in exchange of used goods as well, thus fear of contamination does not necessarily influence purchase or wearing second-hand clothing (Roux, 2006). It may be added to here that consumers sometimes choose to wear second-hand clothing to stand out and feel unique (Thompson & Haytko, 1997; Guiot & Roux, 2010). Thus, it is possible to conclude that some consumers may associate both negative and positive symbolic meanings with second hand clothing.

2.3.2 Consumer-Consumer Relationship

The second level of relationship concerns how consumers relate to, or connect with, each other. Park and Armstrong (2017) highlight sociality as an important factor in this context and research beyond the FMC indicates that hygiene and damage also play a role in shaping the consumer-to-consumer relationship (Armstrong et al., 2016; Baumeister, 2014; Catulli, 2012; Hardin, 1968; Roux, 2006).

2.3.2.1 Sociality

Two dimensions are related to the sociality of a consumption mode; the anonymity or communality consumers might perceive when sharing goods (Park & Armstrong, 2017). Peer-to-peer collaborative consumption encourages communality (Botsman & Rogers, 2010; Albinsson & Perera, 2012), however, in the apparel industry, peer-to-peer services are rather rare as business models (Park & Armstrong, 2017). In access-based consumption, the interpersonal anonymity

between consumers can vary depending on if the context is private or public. In high anonymity contexts, consumers infrequently encounter other consumers, thus creating a “*society of strangers*” (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012, p. 884). Where the context is social, consumption is often shared with others which provides an opportunity for prosocial behavior (Belk, 2010). Furthermore, where the object is not owned by the consumer, it will increase the anonymity experienced in the consumption of the good, thus hindering intimacy (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Park & Armstrong, 2017).

Park and Armstrong (2017) propose that “*anonymity is higher in collaborative consumption for apparel than in traditional ownership*” and that “*there is more potential for communality in redistributed apparel ownership than utility-based nonownership*” (p. 471). This is based on the high level of anonymity inherent in utility-based nonownership schemes due to it being facilitated by a business which limits the communality. Here, users of a product do not know the identity of previous users (Albinsson & Perera, 2012). For redistributed ownership, Park and Armstrong (2017) argue that the potential for communality is higher, as swapping or consigning require cooperation between swappers and consigners, but, due to online mechanisms anonymity may increase. However, communality is an important aspect for alternative consumption modes, as it may generate shared meaning and values (Albinsson & Perera, 2012). What has further been found for physical second-hand stores are experiential motivations such as social contact that increase the community feeling (Guiot & Roux, 2010).

2.3.2.1 Tragedy of the commons

Adding to the framework by Park and Armstrong (2017), hygiene and damage are two relevant dimensions in the consumer-consumer relationship. Hygiene was especially a concern in those cases in which a garment is worn closely to the skin (Catulli, 2012); accessories, winter outerwear, suiting and similar items were thus viewed as less of a risk (Armstrong et al., 2016). Rejection behaviors toward second-hand clothing is often based on individuals’ view on clothing as a part of their or someone else’s extended self (Roux, 2006). In addition, Baumeister (2014) found that consumers fear the tragedy of the commons, meaning that consumers prefer the consumption mode that goes along with fewer risk. The nature of access-based consumption increases the perception of potential damage of the good because of other person’s use. In traditional ownership, consumers also perceive risk of failure, but feel more capable in assessing the potential risk due to the personal knowledge of the product. A study by Armstrong et al. (2016) found, in addition to the fear of tragedy of the commons in clothing rental, a fear of personal liability. According to this study consumers were worried about their own ability to care for the rented clothing and the consequences that would follow if they proved unable to do so.

2.3.3 Consumer-Business Relationship

A final relationship that is transformed is that between the consumer and the service provider. Important factors are; the formality or institutionalization of the arrangement, the positioning of the offering, and the convenience offered (Park & Armstrong, 2017).

2.3.3.1 Formality or institutionalization

The level of formality of a consumption mode, is influenced by whether the transaction is business-to-consumer or peer-to-peer (Baumeister, 2014), and also whether the facilitating organization is

for profit or not (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012). Utility-based non-ownership and redistributed ownership are different in this sense, with utility-based non-ownership being considered more formalized through established industry players and redistributed ownership viewed as only moderately formalized due to less formality in the consumer-consumer relations that take place in this consumption mode (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2015). Literature here is first and foremost considering redistributed ownership platforms facilitated by the Internet (Park & Armstrong, 2017), however, since redistributed ownership business models may also include physical second-hand stores (Gopalakrishnan & Matthews, 2018), they can be considered more formalized in nature (Park & Armstrong, 2017).

Perceived Risk

Formality affects how consumers relate to each other in business-to-consumer or peer-to-peer transactions (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2015). The degree of formalization can determine to which extent the service is viewed as safe and reliable, and whether or not a consumer perceives any risks by engaging with it (ibid). Adding to FMC, Armstrong et al. (2015; 2016) found such perceived risks to be hygiene, size and quality issues, and control over end results due to a lack of trust in the service provider.

Sign value of brands

Second hand offers an opportunity to afford well-known or luxury brands, and consumers enjoy finding these brands at discounted prices (Gopalakrishnan & Matthews, 2018; Weil, 1999). The selection of fashionable brands may thus have a positive influence on how consumers perceive the second-hand consumption alternatives available (Pedersen & Netter, 2015). As for clothing rental, Lovelock and Gummesson (2004) propose that the brand of the service is more important than product brand. This is supported by Bardhi and Eckhardt (2012) who find that sign value mainly comes from the consumption. However, it has been proposed that having already established brands introduce rental as a service may be a way of reducing the issues of credibility and safety (Armstrong et al., 2016).

2.3.3.2 Position

The consumer-business relationship may be boosted or inhibited by how the collaborative apparel consumption modes differentiate their offering in the market (Baumeister, 2014).

Political consumerism

As collaborative apparel consumption is considered more sustainable than traditional ownership (Armstrong et al., 2016; Gopalakrishnan & Matthews, 2018; Lang & Armstrong, 2018; Piscicelli et al., 2015), some consumers may perceive these new consumption modes as political tools through which they can act on their own personal beliefs (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Philip et al., 2015). Consumers may rent luxury clothing items for special occasions because they believe it is a waste to purchase something and only wear it once (Park & Armstrong, 2017). It is proposed that political consumerism may be *“an associated motive that encourages engagement in collaborative apparel consumption”* (Park & Armstrong, 2017, p. 472). Adding to FMC, there are consumers who buy second-hand clothing to avoid triggering demand for new clothing (Roux, 2006) partly due to ethical and ecological concerns (Guiot & Roux, 2010).

Sense of sharing

It is possible that the elements akin to sharing in the alternative apparel consumption modes affect consumer perceptions (Hellwig et al., 2015) and that some business models are more attractive to some consumers because they appear to involve less sharing (Park & Armstrong, 2017). Park and Armstrong (2017) further suggest that the greater the level of market mediation, the less peer-to-peer contact and sense of sharing for consumers. They continue to propose that *“consumers may perceive a stronger sense of sharing with redistributed ownership than with utility-based nonownership”* (p. 472).

Innovativeness

The innovativeness introduced by a consumption mode refers to the degree of change needed in order to adopt (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2015). Higher innovativeness may be perceived as more strange, thus adoption will be more challenging (Park & Armstrong, 2017). Redistributed ownership shares similarities with traditional consumption modes, hence the innovativeness level is moderate (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2015). It is further proposed that the level of innovativeness in utility-based nonownership offerings is relatively low as rental schemes are familiar to consumers through car-rental and similar services (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2015). However, Park and Armstrong (2017) still propose that *“innovativeness serves as a barrier to engagement in collaborative apparel consumption”* (p. 472).

2.3.3.2 Convenience

Park & Armstrong (2017) propose that convenience has a positive impact on the relationship between consumer and business. If a consumption mode demands a new behavior to be incorporated into everyday life and thus a higher level of personal engagement from the consumer, this engagement will be much more troublesome to bring about (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2015). However, what has been found for second-hand clothing consumption, is that some consumers find stimulation and excitement with certain channel characteristics, thus making these channels more than venues for solely shopping conveniently (Guiot & Roux, 2010).

How accessible a product is also relates to convenience. In utility-based nonownership, the clothing item is not as accessible, but the troubles of owning it are the service provider's responsibility. Consumers may however find ownership important when it comes to clothing; a product closely tied with identity and emotional meaning. This in combination with attachment to a frequently used consumption mode may result in a resistance towards new product-services (Hirschl et al., 2003). A delay in acquisition can be perceived as a sacrifice and inconvenience (Armstrong et al., 2016; Catulli, 2012; Tukker & Tischner, 2006). The uncertain product assortment for redistributed ownership may decrease the accessibility since it is reliant on the input of others (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2015; Park & Armstrong, 2017). Additionally, the accessibility of a clothing item can also constrain the time and costs saved in relation to a consumption mode (Chou et al., 2015).

Pricing has an impact on convenience as well. Some pricing schemes are more expensive, or they offer little wiggle room for the customer with usage minimum, service fees, or whether accepting pay per use or subscription-based payment (Baumeister, 2014; Tukker, 2004).

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Based on the literature review a theoretical framework has been constructed to guide the data collection and form a basis for analysis. Park and Armstrong's (2017) extended framework of multi-level consumption (FMC) is used in its entirety and lays the foundation, but is extended with the additional findings in the literature review above. This makes it possible to include the traditional form of physical second hand within the scope of redistributed ownership and more conclusively address the research gap as well as answer the research question. The white boxes (Figure 1) illustrate the factors and dimensions which the researchers have either extended or added to Park and Armstrong's (2017) FMC. The study will go on to explore consumer perceptions linked to the collaborative consumption modes redistributed ownership and utility-based nonownership by investigating the three levels of consumer relationships and the adhering factors and dimensions.

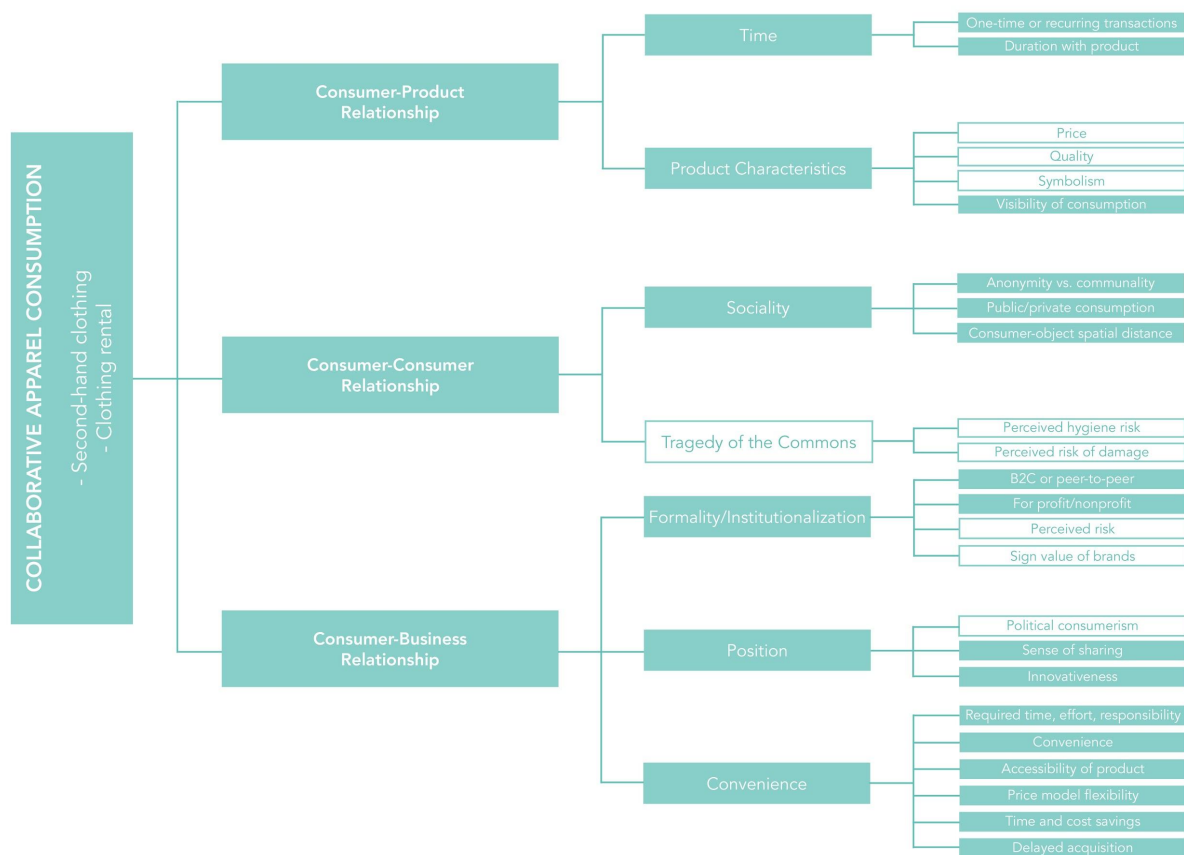


Figure 2: Theoretical framework

3. Methodology

In following sections, the chosen methodology will be presented. First, the scientific approach will be described, followed by a detailed description of the data collection. The chapter continues with a brief description of the data analysis process and ends with explaining the quality considerations.

3.1 Scientific Approach

3.1.1 Research Consideration

Ontology addresses how the nature of reality should be perceived. The central question is whether social entities ought to be considered as objective entities with an external reality, or if they should be considered from a subjective point of view as social constructions by perceptions and actions of social actors (Bell & Bryman, 2011). This study takes an ontological position of social constructivism and therefore focuses on different perceptions of collaborative consumption and assumes each individual has their own perceptions which are constantly constructed. Furthermore, due to the symbolic nature of clothing, meanings are considered to be in constant revision supporting the possibility to affect them in favor for more sustainable business models. From this standpoint, an interpretivist perspective is applied as it respects differences between individuals and requires to understand the subjective meanings of consumers (Bell & Bryman, 2011), thus their perceptions.

3.1.2 Research Approach

The exploratory purpose of this research allows to study an insufficiently researched area, as alternative consumption modes have mainly been investigated in contexts other than apparel (Park & Armstrong, 2017). By pursuing this research, new insights will be gained which can guide future research within this area (Saunders et al., 2009). As an exploratory study, the research objective is to investigate consumer perceptions of alternative consumption modes within the apparel context.

In line with the research objective of this study, a qualitative approach is applied as it allows for rich data to explore a problem (Saunders et al., 2009). Regarding the nascent state of this research area, a qualitative approach is suitable as it with openness and depth sheds light on a phenomenon (Edmondson & Mcmanus, 2007). Further, when exploring social perceptions, a qualitative approach is appropriate as previous research supports this (Roux, 2006).

An abductive approach was applied to overcome weaknesses related to the inductive approach and is appropriate for qualitative research due to the strong focus on interpreting empirical data (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009). Moreover, the flexibility and adaptability of an explorative study (Saunders et al., 2009) allow for an abductive approach to be used. By taking this approach the starting point was from empirical data rather than theory, and the empirical scope was consecutively developed with the support of theory through an iterative process.

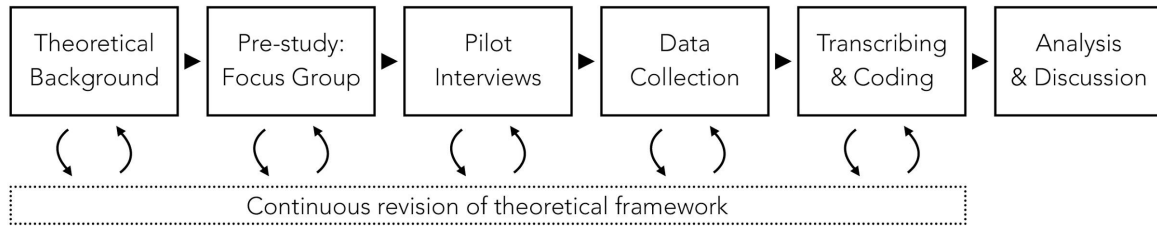


Figure 2: Illustrative depiction of the study's research process

3.2 Data Collection

3.2.1 Pre-study focus group

A preliminary focus group study was carried out with the aim of gaining a better insight into how Swedish consumers think about redistributed ownership in order to further narrow the purpose and scope of the study. Besides convenience, the method was chosen for the authenticity it elicits (Gibbs, 1997), which was in line with the purpose of the pre-study. Five focus-group participants were selected through purposive sampling (Saunders et al., 2009) based on gender and age. As a result, two men and three women within the ages of 23 to 32 participated, which is similar to the main sample. Participants were asked to fill out a short survey about themselves and their clothing consumption habits, which was later followed by a two-hour mediated discussion. Topics were outlined beforehand, but the participants were allowed a fairly free rein with as little interference as possible from the researchers to allow participants room to discuss what they found most important (Bryman & Bell, 2013). The insights gathered from the focus group resulted in current research scope that includes both redistributed ownership and utility-based nonownership. See Appendix 1 for complete focus group survey and guide.

3.2.2 Pilot interviews

According to Kvale (1997) pilot interviews can facilitate a mapping of important aspects to cover during an interview and Silverman (2013) recommends pilot interviews when conducting semi-structured interviews. Prior to launching the main study two separate pilot interviews were held with two Swedish consumers of the ages 30 and 40, which lasted for 60 minutes each. The primary reason with this was to test whether the design of method and interview guide fit well with proposed research question. The pilot interviews gave the authors a chance to examine the interview guide for any errors (Yin, 2010) in phrasing, sequence, and relevance of questions, not to mention an opportunity to practice and develop interviewing skills (Bryman & Bell, 2013). The main contribution was that interviewees required concrete examples to better grasp possible variations of second hand and rental offerings in today's market. By providing visual aid they were able to elaborate their thoughts further. The interview guide could thus be reformulated before the main study began (Peat et al., 2002) and due to these alterations, the data collected from the two pilot interviews was not included in the main study.

3.2.3 Semi-structured interviews

In this study interviews were considered the most appropriate method since the authors were interested in gaining a deeper understanding of individual consumers' views and opinions (Creswell, 2014). The method allows for some flexibility, which Alvesson (2011) explains is a strength because interview studies are about being open to find new, perhaps more realistic or theoretically exciting purposes and questions for exploration as the study unfolds. By asking open-ended questions the interviewees were given room to expand on themes of personal importance to them (Bryman & Bell, 2013) and the researchers could delve deeper into the knowledge and experience of the individual interviewees (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Due to this richer data could be gathered (Saunders et al., 2009) in comparison to if the questions had been of a more standardized kind (Ahrne & Svensson, 2011).

An interview guide was developed to provide structure and make sure that important topics for inquiry were covered. The guide was developed in an iterative manner, based on both theoretical framework and the pilot interviews and the focus group. The interviews begun with a short introduction to the study and the participant was informed of his or her anonymity in order to ensure a setting in which the participant felt he or she could speak candidly. This was later followed by questions which were more explorative in nature covering five parts; (1) clothing consumption behavior, (2) general sustainable consumption, (3) sustainable clothing consumption, (4) perception of second-hand clothing and clothing rental, and (5) concept test. The parts were sequenced in an order that would feel as natural as possible to the interviewee, starting off broad about his or her current clothing consumption and later segwaying into a more focused discussion about the subject at hand, placing greatest emphasis on parts 4 and 5. As a complement, part 5 consisted of presenting and subsequently discussing three different commercial concepts for these consumption alternatives. During the interview, follow-up questions posed by the interviewers were contingent on the respondent's answers, making it possible to direct the course of discussion (Yin, 2013). Furthermore, the interview audio was recorded with each participant's permission and transcribed in its entirety within two days to ensure correct remembrance of non-verbal cues (Brinkmann, 2013). See appendix 2 for interview guide.

3.2.4 Participant sampling

The main study consisted of 24 interviews with Swedish consumers. A purposive sampling method was adopted to select information-rich cases (Emmel, 2014). According to Emmel (2014), qualitative research samples are invariably small, making it a difficult task to capture variation in experience. For that reason the researchers sought to find the best possible way of obtaining insights to not only illuminate variation but also important patterns. Cases were thus chosen based on certain predetermined criteria, namely; gender, age, and location. As for gender, the researchers wanted to include both male and female consumers. Furthermore, the sample was narrowed down by only including consumers from urban Swedish cities with an over-representation from Stockholm and a limited age span due to the resource constraints of this study. An almost equally-balanced ratio of men to women was achieved (11:13) within the ages of 22 to 43. In accordance with Kvale and Brinkmann (2014), the number of interviews was deemed sufficient for answering the research question and the researchers noted a recurrence in themes discussed during the interviews. All participants are listed in Appendix 3.

3.2.5 Interview setting

The interviews carried out in person took place either in a conference room at the Stockholm School of Economics' marketing department, or at the participant's work office. One interview took place at a café. In the cases where participants were located in another part of the country, or unable to meet in person, interviews had to be conducted over the phone. The researchers sought to be as accommodating as possible for the participants who all offered their valuable time to the study. In order to ensure an ease in conversation and to avoid any misinterpretation all interviews were held in Swedish, the native language of both researchers and participants. Furthermore, the interviews spanned from 45 to 80 minutes and both researchers were present to check for coherency in interpretation (Eisenhardt, 1989).

3.3 Data Analysis

3.3.1 Data analysis method

By taking an interpretivist approach in this study, a thematic analysis was carried out in order to interpret the meanings in the data (Ritchie et al., 2014). When using a thematic analysis themes that are considered important to the research question emerge (Daly et al., 1997). This is an iterative process with a careful search in the data by reading and re-reading it to establish themes that become categories for analysis (Rice and Ezzy, 1999). This study uses a hybrid thematic analysis similar to Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) where an inductive data-driven approach was carried out simultaneously with a deductive thematic analysis. This allows themes both to emerge directly from the data together with deductive components so a second level of interpretive understanding can be achieved (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). After themes have been developed, a coding process takes place where words or phrases become labels for segments of data (Boyatzis, 1998). A code which is considered good, should *"capture the qualitative richness of the phenomenon"* (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 1).

This thesis began with an open, inductive, coding to find overarching themes, but simultaneously took support from a code template based on theory after a preliminary scanning of the data. The reason for choosing this method for analysis was to further investigate what has been found in previous research, but at the same time making sure to have an open analysis to find new insights due to the nascent nature of the research area.

3.3.2 Data analysis process

Two analyses were carried out in this study. The first analysis was carried out after the pre-study where the data was transcribed and sorted into overarching themes. The analysis of the pre-study, together with previous research, guided the direction for the main study. Further, only the analysis process of the main study will be described in detail.

Stage 1

After collecting data from 24 interviews (26 including two pilot interviews), the interview transcripts were entered into 'Saturate App', a web-based collaborative coding and categorizing tool for qualitative research. Due to the large amount of data, a first-order coding with an inductive,

open-ended, approach was carried out where concepts were established, an approach guided by Gioia et al. (2013). From here, a scanning of the concepts was made which further guided the theory development in this study. Here, theory was further developed and a template of codes was formed with three broad categories (consumer-product relationship, consumer-consumer relationship, consumer-business relationship) based on Park and Armstrong (2017). Each of these three categories has related dimensions which were either found in previous research or in empirical data.

Stage 2

From here, a second-order coding of data was made to summarize and identify initial themes. This process included reading transcripts, summarizing, and listening to raw data. To ensure reliability of the codes until this point, two interview transcripts were selected as test pieces for coding where the researchers coded the same two interviews and then compared them. After a discussion of the differences in coding, another two interview transcripts were selected to ensure further reliability of the coding. After this had been ensured, a scanning of the initial themes was made to further adjust the code template.

Stage 3

During this phase, the researchers made a template analysis of the data where theory-driven codes were applied to data with the intent of finding meaningful units to what had previously been proposed in research. By doing this, 7 themes and 24 categories were developed. The analysis of data was guided by these theory-driven codes but inductive codes were assigned to describe new themes that surfaced, as previous research had not captured all aspects. However, themes that could not be captured by one of the three broad categories (consumer-product relationship, consumer-consumer relationship, consumer-business relationship) were discarded.

The data analysis process is described as a linear process, but the process was carried out in a more iterative and dynamic manner. According to what Tobin and Begley (2004) state about qualitative research, the process implied moving back and forth between data collection and analysis. The data analysis process was accomplished by re-reading and re-coding transcripts to ensure that interpretations and developed themes were grounded in original data.

3.4 Quality Consideration

The quality of this study will be discussed according to two criteria in qualitative research; reliability and validity (Bryman & Bell, 2013).

3.4.1 Reliability

Reliability is another word for truth and has to do with whether or not claims made in research can be considered valid (Silverman, 2013). According to LeCompte and Goetz (1982), a distinction can be made between external and internal reliability. External reliability concerns the extent to which a study can be replicated, which Bryman and Bell (2013) note can be quite challenging due to difficulty in “freezing” a social context. However, to improve the external reliability of this qualitative study, the researchers made sure to include a detailed and comprehensive description of

the research process. Internal validity concerns whether or not the researchers of a study are in accordance regarding how they interpret the empirical data (Bryman & Bell, 2013). To strengthen the internal validity, both researchers were present at all interviews and discussed their interpretations together afterwards. Moreover, the data was coded separately and in the cases for which there was a difference in opinion, interpretations were discussed until a shared interpretation could be agreed upon. An important consideration is, however, that some bias cannot be avoided because empirical data is always contextually inserted into a semantic frame, thus knowing cannot be separated from the knower (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009). The authors have therefore strived to incorporate a dose of reflexivity in the study, which according to Alvesson and Skoldberg (2009) is characterized by careful interpretation and reflection throughout.

3.4.2 Validity

Validity is *“the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers”* (Hammersley, 1990, p. 57). In qualitative studies with analyses based on subjective interpretations, there is a risk concerning validity. Bryman and Bell (2011) divide validity into external and internal. Internal validity is achieved when the researcher’s observations are consistent with theoretical ideas put forth (LeCompte & Goetz 1982), a strength of qualitative research by means of a prolonged presence in a certain social group (Bryman & Bell, 2013). This study draws inference from a relatively broad sample of Swedish consumers, which according to Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) increases validity. Validity was further strengthened by the use of pilot interviews (Peat et al., 2002). Lastly, the study’s abductive approach entailed a continuous questioning of the researchers’ underlying assumptions and allowed a focus on the utmost relevant aspects of the empirical data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). External validity, on the other hand, has to do with the extent to which the results of a study can be transferred to other social contexts (Bryman & Bell, 2013). LeCompte and Goetz (1982) contest that this is an issue for qualitative studies with a tendency to use smaller samples. With this in mind, the researchers have strived to be as transparent as possible, providing a detailed account of the research process and clearly defining the boundaries and limitations of the study’s findings.

3.4.3 Ethical Considerations

The researchers have sought to conduct the study in an ethical manner according to the principles outlined by Bryman & Bell (2013) by making sure every participant, in preliminary and main study, was well-informed of the study’s purpose. Furthermore, the researchers asked for permission to record prior to the focus group and individual interviews, and all empirical data has been treated confidentially. See consent form in Appendix 4.

4. Empirical Results

In the following sections the empirical results will be presented following the structure of the theoretical framework. Any additional findings not already included in the framework are added in the relevant section. Quotes from the interviews are presented to substantiate the findings. Only findings supported by two or more interviewees are considered as empirical data. See Appendix 5 for a summary of the empirical results.

4.1 Consumer-Product Relationship

This section presents the empirical findings for the relevant dimensions (price; quality; health; visibility of consumption; uniqueness; need for newness) for specific factors (product characteristics) within the consumer-product relationship.

4.1.1 Product Characteristics

4.1.1.1 Price

Second-Hand Clothing

Six interviewees (Int. 1; Int. 3; Int. 5; Int. 8; Int. 12; Int. 18) say that price is the main motivator when buying second-hand clothing. Four participants (Int. 1; Int. 2; Int. 8; Int. 15) highlight the economic motivator even further and are particularly interested in making a bargain when shopping second hand.

“You can find nice clothing for a very good price. In a way, it is almost a sport. You get a small kick of endorphins if you find it” (Int. 1)

Clothing Rental

Five interviewees (Int. 8; Int. 14; Int. 15; Int. 23; Int. 24) report a belief that they will be less price conscious when renting clothes and that it could give them a greater freedom to experiment with their choice of clothing. Six participants (Int. 1; Int. 2; Int. 10; Int. 13; Int. 14; Int. 19) further believe that there is economic incentive to rent clothing from expensive brands that they otherwise would not be able to afford.

“It depends on which brands you want, if they are really expensive you can rent instead, but if you rent something for a third of the price it feels a bit stupid and unnecessary.” (Int. 14)

Another eight participants (Int. 7; Int. 12; Int. 17; Int. 20; Int. 21; Int. 22; Int. 23; Int. 24) compare the price of rental to the price of purchasing a piece of clothing and believe rental must be sufficiently cheaper in order to be a viable alternative. There are, however, a handful of participants, nine in total, who instead believe clothing rental to be quite expensive (Int. 1; Int. 2; Int. 5; Int. 6; Int. 7; Int. 12; Int. 14; Int. 20; Int. 24).

“It is of course very dependent on price. If it costs 1000 SEK to rent it [a garment] and it costs 1500 SEK to buy, then I might as well buy it. Because then I can use it a year later or so...” (Int. 23)

4.1.1.2 Quality

Second-Hand Clothing

Quality can be divided into those participants who see quality as a criteria when they buy second-hand clothing, and those who are less concerned about quality when buying second-hand clothing. Five interviewees see quality of the clothing as a criteria influencing them when they are shopping second-hand clothing (Int. 1; Int. 3; Int. 14; Int. 20; Int. 22). However, for four participants (Int. 5; Int. 10; Int. 16; Int. 18) quality is less of concern when they buy second-hand clothing.

“Almost every other clothing is of bad quality, I don’t like that, but now it’s starting to pop up some more second-hand stores for clothing with higher quality. I think that’s really good.” (Int. 13)

Clothing Rental

As for quality with regards to rental, two participants mention that they believe this consumption mode is more relevant for expensive products of higher quality (Int. 18) that are more durable (Int. 21).

It feels like it has to be quite expensive clothing with very good quality in order to not be given a piece of clothing that is burled or worn out. (Int. 21)

4.1.1.3 Health impact

Second-Hand Clothing

What was further found as a motivator for buying second-hand clothing are health concerns regarding newly produced clothing. Three participants (Int. 14, Int. 8, Int. 12) see it as a health risk to buy new clothing due to chemical residues and therefore buy second-hand clothing instead.

“I can get an unpleasant experience when I get a new garment and I smell plastic, even if I buy a cotton garment...It feels unnatural, unhygienic and carcinogenic.” (Int. 12)

4.1.1.4 Visibility of consumption

Second-Hand Clothing

Eight participants (Int. 3; Int. 5; Int. 6; Int. 9; Int. 17; Int. 20; Int. 21; Int. 22) mention that high social visibility of clothing creates a barrier for consuming second-hand clothing. Participants point out either fashion trends or the symbolic meaning of second hand itself as barriers to shop the clothing.

“I feel an inner stress; I want my kids to look nice, and it’s the same for me. It’s hard to get away from feeling more fresh and good in new clothing.” (Int. 3)

4.1.1.5 Uniqueness

Second-Hand Clothing

Eight participants (Int. 1; Int. 8; Int. 10; Int.13; Int.15; Int. 18; Int. 21; Int. 24) mention that a

motivation for buying second-hand clothing is the unique garments and style one can acquire.

“If a garment is second hand I think it’s only an upside... It’s much more fun to get an compliment for something that is unique.” (Int.15)

4.1.1.6 Need for newness

Clothing Rental

Five interviewees (Int. 5; Int. 8; Int. 17; Int. 22; Int. 24) believe that an advantage with rental is the higher variation in what you wear and its ability to fill a constant need for new clothing. On the other hand, there are two participants (Int. 5; Int. 12) who report that they do not experience this strong need to update their wardrobe with new clothing.

“I like the rental concept due to the variation component of it all; that you can return and get something new because that is a big part of what one likes with clothes...you don’t want to wear the same things all the time...you constantly seek something new...” (Int. 8)

4.2 Consumer-Consumer Relationship

This section presents the empirical findings for the relevant dimensions (anonymity vs. communality; perceived hygiene risk perceived risk of damage; personal liability) connected to specific factors (sociality; tragedy of the commons) within the consumer-consumer relationship.

4.2.1 Sociality

4.2.1.1 Anonymity vs. Communality

Second-Hand Clothing

Two interviewees (Int. 14, Int. 20) state that there is a negative anonymity aspect when buying second hand, and another interviewee (Int. 14) says that there may arise a feeling of communality between the owners of the redistributed good.

“I think it’s strange not knowing who’s been wearing the clothing before me, especially if it’s a bit frayed, if I have a face of the person who wore it I would feel much more OK to buy it second hand.” (Int. 14)

Clothing Rental

Three interviewees state that they are not keen on the anonymity aspect of clothing rental and prefer to have an idea of who has previously rented a garment. One participant (Int. 20) explains that she/he would like to see a picture of past renters and another participant (Int. 13) suggests signing up with friends whom she/he trusts. The third (Int. 23) wonders who the preceding renters are and what they have done with the garment.

“I think about who has had the garment before me...and what they have done with it. I get skeptical.” (Int. 23)

4.2.2 Tragedy of the commons

4.2.2.1 Perceived hygiene risk

Second-Hand Clothing

Four participants (Int. 3; Int. 9; Int. 21; Int. 24) perceive a hygiene risk for second-hand clothing due to another person wearing the garment. They also state that the perceived hygiene risk partly depends on the kind of garment in question.

“It’s another thing with a shirt you wear over a t-shirt; then it feels more OK that it has been used by another person. And the same for jackets; then it doesn’t matter. But it doesn’t feel nice for clothing closer to the body.”

(Int. 21)

Clothing Rental

Five interviewees have misgivings about the hygiene of rental clothes. Two interviewees (Int. 1; Int. 9) feel it depends on what kind of garment is rented. One participant (Int. 21) is concerned that the rental clothing will smell like another person and would rather keep the clothing to himself in order to avoid this. Three interviewees (Int. 6; Int. 9; Int. 22) are worried about hygiene depending on the number of users who share a piece of rental clothing and prefer a garment to only have been previously worn a few times.

“It is like second hand but hyper-second hand. That a person has previously used a second-hand garment doesn’t worry me that much, but if 1000 people have used it, it is perhaps another thing.” (Int. 6)

4.2.2.2 Perceived risk of damage

Clothing Rental

Five participants (Int. 1; Int. 4; Int. 6; Int. 13; Int. 21) report a worry regarding possible damage caused by other users involved in a clothing rental service and do not trust that people will take care of clothing that they themselves do not own.

“It feels like there is a tendency that if you don’t own things then you obviously don’t take care of it as well [as you would if you owned something]...” (Int. 21)

4.2.2.3 Personal liability

Clothing Rental

There is also a worry among three interviewees (Int. 3; Int. 14; Int. 15) that they themselves will damage the rental clothing. According to them this worry can potentially cause a feeling of nervousness and being inhibited while wearing the rented clothes.

“[There is] a little stress when it isn’t one’s own clothes if you get a stain or if it gets ruined. ...I think I would be a little bit stressed since you cannot really be yourself. Let’s say you get sweaty one day and it stains the shirt, how embarrassing.” (Int. 14)

4.3 Consumer-Business Relationship

This section presents the empirical findings for the relevant dimensions (B2C or peer-to-peer; perceived risk; sign value of brands; political consumerism; sense of sharing; innovativeness; required time, effort, responsibility; convenience; accessibility of the product; price model flexibility; time and cost savings) for specific factors (formality/institutionalization; position; convenience) within the consumer-business relationship.

4.3.1 Formality/Institutionalization

4.3.1.1 Business-Consumer or Peer-Peer

Second-Hand Clothing

The majority of the participants (Int. 1; Int. 3; Int. 4; Int. 8; Int. 9; Int. 10; Int. 14; Int. 16; Int. 17; Int. 19; Int. 21; Int. 22; Int. 23; Int. 24; Int. 24) are positive to higher formality in the second-hand clothing business, as having a formal business in charge would elevate the shopping experience. Some participants (Int. 1; Int. 3) believe that the shopping experience will be enriched as a formalized actor can guarantee higher quality. Others believe that the shopping environment is improved (Int. 8; Int. 9; Int. 21; Int. 22; Int. 23; Int. 24) and some perceive the clothing as more trendy and fresh (Int. 8; Int. 9; Int. 10; Int. 14) when a formal business is offering second-hand clothing.

“You’re guaranteed quality of the clothing, you can see that not everything goes into the store. You know it’s good clothing.” (Int. 3)

Some (Int. 14; Int. 19) believe that the shopping experience is improved due to a more professional personnel working for the formal actor in charge. Other respondents (Int. 4; Int. 9; Int. 16; Int. 17; Int. 19; Int. 24; Int. 24) state that when a formal business is in charge of the second-hand store, the store feels more like a ‘regular store’, which they perceive as positive aspect.

“The shopping experience is much better because it’s more trendy clothing, it’s a nicer environment and the people working seem much more professional.” (Int. 14)

Clothing Rental

Nine participants (Int. 5; Int. 6; Int. 7; Int. 8; Int. 9; Int. 10; Int. 22; Int. 23; Int. 24) are in favor of having a business run the clothing rental because they believe an industry actor can guarantee a much more secure service compared to peer-to-peer exchanges for which there is a fear of receiving damaged or unhygienic rental clothing.

“I would probably be more willing to rent from a company that has specialized in this service because it is more safe... There will only be uncertainties if you involve people [peers] who don’t work with this.” (Int. 6)

4.3.1.2 Perceived risk

Second-Hand Clothing

The perceived risk among some participants (Int. 1; Int. 10; Int. 20; Int. 24) regarding the hygiene

risk of another person wearing the garment before them is associated with the particular second hand store where the clothing is bought.

“Sometimes you need to be a bit more careful; you might need to look for bedbugs when you shop at ‘Myrornas’...it can smell a bit gross.” (Int. 1)

Clothing Rental

Four participants (Int. 3; Int. 13; Int. 22; Int. 24) perceive a risk of not receiving rental clothing from a service provider that fits either their size or style. They fear that not receiving adequate clothing one month could result in them not having anything to wear during that period of time. Three interviewees (Int. 10; Int. 20; Int. 23) stress the importance of a service provider maintaining the cleanliness, condition and perception of newness of a garment. Another one (Int. 10) expresses an uncertainty regarding the process in between users and wonders how the clothing is cleaned.

“...it feels a bit risky and you wonder; will I receive clothes this month that fit me size- and style-wise?” (Int. 13)

4.3.1.3 Sign value of brands

Second-hand Clothing

Ten interviewees believe that the availability of brands would increase the accessibility of second-hand clothing. Some mention that if a brand they like would sell their clothing through their own second-hand initiative, they would be more prone to buy second-hand clothing instead of new clothing (Int. 17; Int. 22; Int. 23). Others mention that it might become easier to find second-hand clothing if a brand they like would offer second hand in their store, which also would save them time (Int. 1; Int. 5; Int. 19; Int. 21). An additional three interviewees explain that if a brand would offer their clothing through second hand, they could afford brands they otherwise would not be able to afford (Int. 8; Int. 10; Int. 13).

“It’s [second hand] much more interesting if it’s a brand I like, a brand I would go to shop anyways.” (Int. 22)

Six participants mention that they would see a brand more positively if they would offer their clothing through second hand in their web shop or retail stores. Some believe this demonstrates taking responsibility for the environment, thus improving brand image (Int. 3; Int. 17; Int. 19; Int. 20; Int. 21). Furthermore, two participants believe that brands which have an intention to sell their clothing through second hand would have clothing of good quality (Int. 15; Int. 21). If a brand would offer its clothing through its own second-hand initiative, five participants say they might consider the brand to be greenwashing, especially if the brand is not careful with its marketing communication (Int. 2; Int. 4; Int. 14; Int. 15; Int. 19). One participant is afraid that an exclusive brand would take advantage of its premium prices to increase the price of second-hand clothing (Int. 14).

“It’s a balance between how they market their initiatives and what positive impact they really have on the environment, probably it’s very small compared to the negative impact of what they produce... You shouldn’t trust everything, because now there are many riding on the wave of people’s fear and consciousness for the environment.”
(Int. 15)

4.3.2 Position

4.3.2.1 Political consumerism

Second-Hand Clothing

The majority state that they consider second hand as more sustainable than traditional ownership-based apparel consumption (Int. 2; Int. 3; Int. 7; Int. 8; Int. 10; Int. 11; Int. 12; Int. 14; Int. 17; Int. 19; Int. 20; Int. 21; Int. 24). For some respondents buying second hand is an explicit political action (Int. 3; Int. 7; Int. 11; Int. 12; Int. 14; Int. 19; Int. 21; Int. 24), while others think that the sustainability aspect is a good advantage of buying second-hand clothing (Int. 2; Int. 10; Int. 17; Int. 20). Four participants (Int. 13; Int. 14; Int. 20; Int. 24) state that the sustainability aspect they perceive for second-hand clothing is giving them a good conscious. Although the majority state that the environment is important, for some participants their want for clothing is stronger than their concern for the environment (Int. 1; Int. 2; Int. 5; Int. 10; Int. 16; Int. 17; Int. 20; Int. 22).

“I would like to say it [environmental concern] affects me enough to shop more second hand, but unfortunately it doesn’t.” (Int. 17)

Clothing Rental

Because rental is a rather new concept for many interviewees in this study there is instead a speculation concerning whether the consumption mode is environmentally sustainable or not. A handful of interviewees (Int. 1; Int. 6; Int. 11; Int. 12; Int. 13; Int. 18), believe that rental would minimize the demand for newly produced clothing and thus has positive environmental effects. One interviewee (Int. 8) who has previously tried a rental service commends the concept as a way for her to shop clothing guilt free, but also explains that this depends on how the service is designed, for example if it involves a lot of plastic packaging and dry cleaning she does not consider it sustainable. Three participants (Int. 3; Int. 10; Int. 23) are unsure about whether the concept is in fact sustainable and point to transportation as a possible environmental culprit in the equation. Another six participants (Int. 5; Int. 7; Int. 9; Int. 13; Int. 19; Int. 20), do not perceive clothing rental to be a very sustainable clothing consumption alternative. Two interviewees (Int. 5; Int. 20) believe that there will be a high turnover of clothing due to the fact that the clothes will become worn out much quicker and consumers will prefer clothing that appears new. Some interviewees (Int. 9; Int. 13 and Int. 19) perceive a risk that they will get attached to the rented clothing and wish to purchase it, thus only increasing their clothing consumption.

“I wonder if you really reduce the consumption need. It feels like you rather feed it.” (Int. 13)

4.3.2.2 Sense of sharing

Second-Hand Clothing

According to three interviewees (Int. 10; Int. 14; Int. 19), it may arise a sense of sharing with previous consumers, which they consider as a positive aspect of redistributed ownership.

“It’s fun that the clothing has a spirit because of its history. You can become crazy when you think too much about who has been wearing it, but it’s fun.” (Int. 19)

Clothing Rental

One interviewee (Int. 20) mentions that the stronger the sense of sharing in a rental service, the stronger her/his dislike for it is.

“If it says ‘this garment has been used once or twice’ I would not have a problem with it. But if it says ‘this garment has been rented one hundred times’...Of course a garment could be rented numerous times, but that I am happily unaware of.” (Int. 20)

4.3.2.3 Innovativeness

Clothing Rental

Eleven interviewees (Int. 3; Int. 2; Int. 6; Int. 10; Int. 11; Int. 14; Int. 18; Int. 19; Int. 21; Int. 23; Int. 24) express an unfamiliarity with the concept of renting everyday clothing and have not previously heard of it or know how it works. Another five interviewees (Int. 2; Int. 5; Int. 18; Int. 19; Int. 23) react to everyday-clothing rental as a quite strange thing to do and do not completely understand the point of it. Two participants (Int. 6; Int. 19), however, convey that their perception of the concept improves during the interview as the idea of clothing rental is further explained.

“I feel that I like the idea more and more as I sit here. But I would never have thought of it myself... I like the idea now.” (Int. 19)

The level of interest for engaging in clothing rental varies among the participants. A couple (Int. 4; Int. 9) believe they may be open to it in the future. Three interviewees (Int. 13; Int. 16; Int. 19) say they would be more likely to try rental if friends recommend it or if it becomes a bigger trend. One interviewee (Int. 24) mentions that she/he has already signed up for a pilot run with Houdini and is very excited to try it. On the other hand there is a majority of participants who do not believe that a rental service for everyday clothing is relevant for them (Int. 2; Int. 6; Int. 11; Int. 12; Int. 13; Int. 18; Int. 21), but is possibly a great concept for other people who are in the public eye, have an interest in fashion trends, do not enjoy shopping for clothes, have a need for variation, or want to shop sustainably (Int. 1; Int. 3; Int. 7; Int. 10; Int. 11; Int. 12; Int. 14; Int. 15; Int. 17; Int. 18; Int. 19; Int. 20; Int. 22).

“I don’t belong to the target group at all because I don’t have a need to replace my clothes; I look the same all the time instead. It sounds incredibly good for people who get bored, want to change their look, want to stay up to date with trends and all of that.” (Int. 7)

Several participants (Int. 2; Int. 6; Int. 9; Int. 10; Int. 14; Int. 15; Int. 16; Int. 17; Int. 18; Int. 19; Int. 20; Int. 21; Int. 22; Int. 23; Int. 24) do however express a willingness to use clothing rental services as a complement to traditional clothing consumption. Interviewees are open to renting outerwear clothes (Int. 9; Int. 14; Int. 22; Int. 24) and are especially positive towards renting formal wear (Int. 2; Int. 6; Int. 10; Int. 14; Int. 15; Int. 17; Int. 18; Int. 19; Int. 20; Int. 21; Int. 22; Int. 23; Int. 24).

“I absolutely believe it to be super positive if you are going to a nice event and wear a nice party outfit.” (Int. 10)

4.3.3 Convenience

4.3.3.1 Required time, effort, responsibility

Second-Hand Clothing

Eight interviewees say they perceive it requires time and effort to shop second-hand clothing, as there are many different alternatives and limited sizes (Int. 5; Int. 6; Int. 8; Int. 15), especially as ‘traditional’ clothing consumption is cheap and convenient (Int. 10; Int. 13). Additionally, some believe clothing is presented in an incoherent way in the stores, and that there are few existing stores, thus taking much time to find second-hand clothing (Int. 7; Int. 12). In contrast to this, six participants (Int. 1; Int. 6; Int. 10; Int. 14; Int. 18; Int. 19) believe the required time and effort to shop second-hand clothing is a positive experience. Some state that it feels like a reward when they finally find something after making an effort (Int. 1; Int. 6; Int. 14), and others see it as a part of making the activity of buying second hand more exciting and fun (Int. 10; Int. 18; Int. 19).

“If you look carefully enough, you will eventually find something. There are so many alternatives, so it’s really time consuming to find something. It’s much easier to just go into H&M and find everything.” (Int. 10)

Clothing Rental

Four participants explain how they believe clothing rental would take too much time and effort from their everyday lives. They connect this personal cost to picking up and sending back clothes (Int. 4; Int. 9), and the care of clothing that isn’t their own (Int. 14; Int. 15). Four participants also mention the increased responsibility (Int. 13) that clothing rental would entail and how it would lead to too many choices (Int. 6; Int. 12) and thinking about clothes much more often than they usually would do (Int. 13; Int. 14).

“God what a pain. ... My life is fully-booked already and then you’re supposed to keep track of when to return things, and knowing what I want to wear in a month is really difficult to know.” (Int. 4)

4.3.3.2 Convenience

Second-Hand Clothing

Four participants state that the inconvenience of finding somewhere to actually shop second-hand clothing is an obstacle for them. They mention that stores with better assortment often lies in larger cities or that there are few existing thus making it inconvenient to find them (Int. 3; Int. 8; Int. 14; Int. 21; Int. 23).

“That I live outside of city center is an obstacle, it’s not that common with these kind of stores in smaller cities, to get nice second hand clothing I need to go into bigger cities.” (Int. 3)

Clothing Rental

Six interviewees (Int. 8; Int. 11; Int. 12; Int. 15; Int. 17; Int. 24) mention the inconvenience and the logistics behind picking up and returning rented clothing regardless of the service being either online or in a physical store, and view this as a potential negative side to the concept.

“From my perspective, it sounds like more logistics and hassle than what it is worth. You forget to pick up the clothes and things come up so you don’t have any time I guess.” (Int. 11)

4.3.3.3 Accessibility of the product

Second-Hand Clothing

Numerous participants say the accessibility of products when it comes to second-hand clothing is poor. They mostly mention how it is difficult to find clothing according to their specific needs and wants (Int. 8; Int. 13; Int. 14; Int. 15; Int. 17; Int. 21; Int. 23; Int. 24) and that there are limited alternatives for different sizes (Int. 7; Int. 11; Int. 16; Int. 17).

“Second hand is easier if I want to shop spontaneously and happen to find a fun shirt, but when I need something specific like a winter jacket, it’s much harder to find something as the assortment is small.” (Int. 13)

Clothing Rental

For seven participants (Int. 1; Int. 5; Int. 6; Int. 8; Int. 9; Int. 16; Int. 21) an important factor is the assortment offered by a service provider. They prefer there to be a wide assortment of brands that fit their style and size in order to have a greater chance of finding something they like. Related to accessibility is also the spatial proximity to the product. Ten interviewees (Int. 3; Int. 4; Int. 6; Int. 7; Int. 10; Int. 12; Int. 13; Int. 18; Int. 19; Int. 22) compare the rental of clothing to traditional clothing ownership and prefer the latter. Some like knowing that they have certain garments hanging in the closet at home, out of convenience (Int. 3; Int. 4; Int. 10; Int. 12; Int. 22) or as a safe bet when and if an occasion arises (Int. 13). Others wish to wear a garment many times and not only use it temporarily (Int. 6; Int. 7; Int. 19). Furthermore, several interviewees (Int. 2; Int. 10; Int. 13; Int. 15; Int. 18; Int. 19; Int. 21; Int. 22; Int. 24) also expressed a risk of becoming emotionally attached to a rented garment and not wanting to part with it.

“I get so attached to things. Let’s say you have something you think looks really good, then you want to keep it.” (Int. 18)

4.3.3.4 Price model flexibility

Clothing Rental

Two participants (Int. 13; Int. 23) are not keen on signing up for a subscription service and suggest it might get in the way of everyday life. Three additional participants (Int. 1; Int. 10; Int. 24) are also concerned about the rights and obligations linked to the rental service.

“In general, these services for which you have to sign up, they entail so many new habits, such as Linas Matkasse; I almost get a bit stressed out by it.” (Int. 13)

4.3.3.5 Time and cost savings

Clothing Rental

Eight interviewees (Int. 1; Int. 2; Int. 5; Int. 8; Int. 9; Int. 10; Int. 19; Int. 20) believe that savings can be achieved with the help of clothing rental. One of these participants (Int. 8) has previously

used a rental service and was very happy with the fact that it was both price-worthy and saved her/him a lot of time otherwise spent on looking for new clothes. The participants who have yet to try the concept of rental ascribe many of the perceived time and cost savings to special-occasion rental. Emphasis is placed on the lack of economic sense in spending a lot of money and time on clothing that will only be worn once.

“Then you don’t have to waste unnecessary time on walking around in stores if you do it just to look nice one night...” (Int. 10)

5. Analysis

In the following sections the empirical results will be analyzed through the lens of the study's theoretical framework. The section will start off by presenting an analysis of the consumer-product relationship, followed by the consumer-consumer relationship and lastly the consumer-business relationship.

5.1 Consumer-Product Relationship

This section presents the analysis of the relevant dimensions (price; quality; health; visibility of consumption; uniqueness; need for newness) for specific factors (product characteristics) within the consumer-product relationship.

5.1.1 Product Characteristics

5.1.1.1 Price

Empirical findings for second-hand clothing identify price consciousness as important which comes as no surprise since previous literature has found economic motivators such as affordability among second-hand shoppers (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Yan et al., 2015). As for rental, the study's participants display price consciousness as anticipated by Park and Armstrong (2017). They perceive a financial benefit in the form of greater freedom to experiment with clothes without investing too much money, which is supported by prior literature (Armstrong et al. 2016). Moreover, they find a greater economic incentive to rent expensive clothing instead of readily available cheap clothing. This resembles previous research findings as well (Armstrong et al., 2016; Mont, 2002; Rexfelt & Hiort af Ornäs, 2009) and highlights the importance of taking the price of a product, if owned, into account since this has an impact on consumer decisions (Baumeister, 2014). In conclusion, findings with regard to price confirm Park and Armstrong's (2017, p. 470) proposition that *"price consciousness is positively associated with consumers' motivations for collaborative apparel consumption"*.

5.1.1.2 Quality

In accordance with what Park and Armstrong (2017) propose, empirics demonstrate that rental clothing is associated with designer clothing and higher quality. However, empirics regarding second-hand clothing is divided. For some quality is less of a concern which is in accordance with Park and Armstrong (2017). For others quality is rather a criteria for shopping second-hand clothing, which has been proved in the second-hand stream of literature (O'Reilly et al., 1984), but not in the collaborative consumption stream of literature (Park & Armstrong, 2017). As there is almost no empirical evidence of quality concerns for rental clothing in this study, it can be assumed that there is less concern for quality.

5.1.1.3 Health Impact

What is not regarded in the FMC adopted from Park and Armstrong (2017), and therefore a contribution to the FMC, is the perceived effect of the clothing product on consumer health. Empirical findings show that some consumers try to avoid chemicals from newly produced clothing by buying clothing through second-hand markets. It has been found that consumers buy

organic fashion due to health impact (Cervellon et al., 2010). Both second-hand and organic clothing can be thought of as sustainable fashion (McNeill & Moore, 2015), and thus be assumed to share similar characteristics. Taking this into consideration, one can understand that health concerns is a motivator for buying second-hand clothing, however, there is no empirical evidence regarding health concerns as motivational factors to rent clothing.

5.1.1.4 Visibility of consumption

As existing literature points out, the high social visibility of apparel appears to have an impact on consumer consumption behavior (Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Baumeister, 2014; Park & Armstrong, 2017). The empirical findings suggest that the impact is greater for second-hand clothing which participants are apprehensive about wearing due to it being untrendy and “*out-of-date*” (Int. 22). Furthermore, the participants exhibit an awareness of negative symbolic meanings and social stigma tied to second-hand clothing (Yan et al., 2015) that seems to cause a feeling of not looking “*nice*” (Int. 3) as well as a reluctance and unwillingness to be seen by other people wearing this type of clothing. In the case of rental, however, there are no findings that suggest that a broader group of people have an affect on consumer behavior in above mentioned way (Bearden & Etzel, 1982; Baumeister, 2014; Park & Armstrong, 2017). Hence, being seen by others in rental clothing was not a top concern among the study’s participants.

5.1.1.5 Uniqueness

In line with previous research (Thompson & Haytko, 1997; Guiot & Roux, 2010), the empirical findings demonstrate that some consumers buy second-hand clothing to acquire an unique style by wearing something others cannot buy. This could be considered as positive symbolic meaning for second-hand clothing, whilst social stigma (section 5.1.1.4) in contrast might be considered as a negative symbolic meaning associated with second-hand clothing. Neither theory nor empirical findings regarding clothing rental show evidence for consumers associating the clothing with uniqueness per se, but some consumers feel a need for variance in their clothing (section 5.1.1.6) which may be an aspect of uniqueness.

5.1.1.6 Need for newness

The empirical findings contribute to Park and Armstrong’s (2017) FMC by highlighting a need for variation and newness among consumers as well as the potential ability of clothing rental to meet this perpetual need. This is in accordance with Armstrong et al. (2015) who predict that satisfying this particular need to be critical if the concept is ever to win future acceptance. The data shows consumers who both do and do not experience the need, suggesting a varying degree of importance placed on newness among consumers. As for the ones who are more inclined to feel such a need, these consumers tend to appreciate the concept of rental for this precise reason. However, the same cannot be said for second-hand clothing, for which neither theoretical nor empirical support for the dimension of newness is found.

5.2 Consumer-Consumer Relationship

This section presents the analysis of relevant dimensions (anonymity vs. communality; perceived hygiene risk perceived risk of damage; personal liability) for specific factors (sociality; tragedy of the commons) within the consumer-consumer relationship.

5.2.1 Sociality

5.2.1.1 Anonymity vs. Communality

As the literature intuitively explains, anonymity is increased when consumers do not have to connect with each other (Binninger et al., 2015; Park & Armstrong, 2017), a notion picked up by the participants in this study. Interestingly enough the empirical data suggests that consumers are opposed to the anonymity aspect for both second hand and rental, and thus some sense of communality appears to be important for both alternative consumption modes. The data highlights a feeling of uneasiness among consumers regarding not knowing the identity of previous users who have worn a piece of garment before them, and points toward appreciation of a service more transparent in this regard. This is in accordance with Albinsson and Perera (2012) who argue that communality is important for alternative consumption modes and may lead to a sharing of meaning and values. As for second hand, Park and Armstrong (2017) argue that there is more potential for communality, but anonymity may increase due to online mechanisms. It is possible that this study's focus on consumer-to-business models, and not peer-to-peer, has an effect on level of anonymity perceived among participants. These findings thus add to prior literature that proposes a higher potential for communality when it comes to redistributed apparel such as second hand (Park & Armstrong, 2017) and extend this potential to include renting as well.

5.2.2 Tragedy of the commons

5.2.2.1 Perceived hygiene risk

As a theoretical contribution to the FMC adopted by Park and Armstrong (2017), there is a perceived hygiene risk among consumers in both rental and second-hand models. The findings for second-hand and rental clothing are quite similar, where the kind of garment is what is influencing the perceived hygiene risk. Some consumers are not fond of the idea of wearing clothing which has been close to the body. This is in line with previous research, both regarding rental and second-hand clothing (Armstrong et al., 2016). In accordance to what Roux (2006) found, some consumers have a negative perception of the clothing due to other people wearing it, thus developing a rejection behavior towards it. However, this is not always the case. Some consumers perceive a risk but that does not translate into a rejection behavior. Findings highlight consumers who perceive a hygiene risk with previously worn clothing, but who are still frequent second-hand consumers.

A difference in findings for second-hand and rental models concerns the number of people wearing the garment. For second hand, there is no evidence that the number of owners before would impact the perceived hygiene risk, whilst for rental clothing the number of users in fact would impact consumer's willingness to rent clothing. This may be because of the tragedy of the commons (Baumeister, 2014) where consumers in access-based consumption might perceive it more difficult to assess the potential risk of another's use.

What is further discussed in sections 5.1 and 5.3 show that not only does the consumer-consumer relationship influence wearing and purchasing previously worn clothing, simply a nice shopping experience, a cheap price or environmental consciousness could be a motivator stronger than the perceived hygiene risk. This hints towards a notion that the process of engaging in rental or second-hand models is complex.

5.2.2.2 Perceived risk of damage

Further strengthening what Baumeister (2014) found about the tragedy of the commons, the empirical findings in this study show that consumers perceive a risk of damage for rental clothing based on the number of previous users. However, the empirical findings do not show any evidence that consumers fear the number of how many consumer have been wearing a second-hand clothing item before them. Instead some consumers associate second-hand clothing with lower quality as a product characteristic in general.

5.2.2.3 Personal Liability

Empirical findings also point toward a fear of oneself being the one to damage the clothing in a rental scheme and a concern for the resulting penalty. This is congruent with previous findings from Armstrong et al. (2016) who found consumers' liability for rental items to be a negative evaluation of the concept. Considering the potential risk of this fear turning into a barrier to engage in clothing rental, these findings contribute to the FMC and propose that the issue should be given attention when developing the rental business model further. However, as the literature review suggested, no empirical evidence was found for fear of personal liability with regards to second hand.

5.3 Consumer-Business Relationship

This section presents the analysis of the relevant dimensions (B2C or peer-to-peer; perceived risk; sign value of brands; political consumerism; sense of sharing; innovativeness; required time, effort, responsibility; convenience; accessibility of the product; price model flexibility; time and cost savings) for specific factors (formality/institutionalization; position; convenience) within the consumer-business relationship.

5.3.1 Formality/Institutionalization

5.3.1.1 Business-Consumer or Peer-Peer

According to the empirical findings, consumers perceive a higher level of formality with a formal company overseeing the business in both second-hand and rental models. As for second hand, a formal actor is viewed as better equipped to provide a sufficient shopping experience similar to traditional stores, including store environment, professional personnel, and trendy high-quality clothing in good condition. Similar findings emerged for rental, for which consumers emphasized the ability of a business to provide a more secure and reliable service. Pure peer-to-peer rental business models were rejected and would thus demand some level of mediation by a formal actor. These findings are supported by Jaeger-Erben et al. (2015) who state that formalization has an impact on the risks a consumer perceives related to engaging with a rental service.

5.3.1.2 Perceived risk

Despite a preference to engage with more formalized business models due to fewer associated risks, findings indicate that consumers still have reservations. In the case of second hand, these reservations are strongly linked to non-profit organizations such as the Swedish "Stadsmissionen" or "Myrornas". Some consumers lack a trust in this type of second-hand actor and express a scepticism concerning their non-curated handling of clothes. This is in line with previous findings

that whether an organization is for profit or not has an impact on the formality of the consumption mode (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012) and thus the risks incurred (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2015). Here hygiene once more becomes a prioritized issue and perceived risk, supported by prior research (Roux, 2006) that identifies contamination as important in influencing rejection behavior. As for rental, findings point towards a concern regarding both the service provider's performance in terms of providing adequate clothing that are to the consumer's liking, and standard of cleanliness and presentation. This is backed by Armstrong et al. (2016) who found similar consumer concerns.

5.3.1.3 Sign value of brands

As an addition to the FMC, brands may have an impact on how consumers perceive second-hand consumption alternatives (Pedersen & Netter, 2015). Empirical findings indicate that some consumers would be more prone to shop second hand from a brand they already like. What is added to research is that consumers perceive second hand to be more accessible and convenient to shop if it is offered directly in the store of a brand. As required time and effort to shop second-hand clothing is an issue for many consumers, it may not come as a surprise that consumers see this as a more convenient option.

It is further found that consumers perceive a brand in a more positive light if it would offer its own clothing through a second-hand initiative as this would be considered an environmentally-friendly action. According to Ginsberg & Bloom (2004), a brand could improve the emotional connection with its audience, and therein improve customer loyalty with a green brand image. Thus, if a brand sells second-hand clothing through its brand, the brand image can be positively affected. However, research has also shown that there is an attitude-behavior gap in purchase behavior concerning sustainability due to the discrepancy between what consumers state is important for them and how they consume (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000). It is therefore difficult to confirm how strong positive effects an initiative like this could have for a brand. In contrast to what is found regarding a more positive brand image, the findings also show that some consumers are sceptical to brand's second-hand initiatives, as it may be considered as greenwashing if it does not resonate as authentic. What kind of claims that are made in green messages are important as they may cause scepticism among consumers (Cason & Gangadharan, 2002; Phau & Ong, 2007). The more credible a brand is, the more favorably will consumers respond to the claims and messages that are made (Phau & Ong, 2007; Goldsmith et al., 2000). This is somewhat demonstrated in the empirical findings where consumers emphasize that a brand's marketing activities surrounding a second-hand initiative are important because it will affect how sincere it is perceived and whether or not they will consider it as greenwashing. In this study, no particular brand was tested, findings concerning brands emerged successively during the process, thus it can not be concluded how the results would differ depending on the brand.

What has been found in previous research about brands regarding rental clothing is not confirmed in this study, but neither discarded. It was found that consumers were neutral to which brands are offered by the service, however, the business offering the service had higher importance (section 5.3.1.1).

5.3.2 Position

5.3.2.1 Political consumerism

Signs of political consumerism were found in the empirical data for both rental and second hand. In the case of the latter, some consumers attested to engaging in this alternative consumption for explicit ideological reasons much in line with prior literature (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Roux, 2006) and attributed a positive feeling of relieved conscience to this ideological act. Second hand is considered as a sustainable consumption alternative with environmental benefits as a positive side effect, albeit not sufficient enough as a sole motivator to give up traditional clothing consumption. This rings similar to the attitude-behavior gap (Han et al., 2017), which is not accounted for in the FMC. Evidence in this research area points towards an increase in sustainability concern among consumers, but a poor translation of this concern into purchase behavior (Chan & Wong, 2012; Joy et al., 2012; McNeill & Moore, 2015). Consumers in this study comment that clothing appearance outweigh environmental sustainability in purchase decisions, and thus clothing must also appeal to aesthetic needs.

In the case of rental, the one participant who had previously engaged in this consumption mode enjoyed the service for the sustainable and guilt free consumption it provided. As for the remaining participants, all were positive to finding more environmentally sustainable alternatives to consumption. This is supported by Park and Armstrong (2017) who suggest political consumerism as an encouraging motive for collaborative consumption. However, there was a divide between consumers who perceived environmental benefits with clothing rental and those who were skeptical of the consumption mode due to a mistrust in its actual sustainability impact. According to Baumeister (2014), positioning of collaborative consumption modes in the marketplace can either bolster or hamper the relationship between consumer and organization. The findings in this study propose that a rental service's value proposition, if unclear in its sustainability contribution and adherent processes involved, may discourage engagement in clothing rental.

5.3.2.2 Sense of sharing

Although empirical findings here are sparse, some participants did pick up on the notion of sharing. In the case of second hand, a few consumers enjoy the feeling of sharing and thinking about who the previous owner could be. However, for rental, one participant dislikes this aspect of the service and would appreciate less transparency as to the number of previous users. This compared to no participant liking a sense of sharing for rental. As such, it is possible to make the interpretation that elements similar to sharing affect consumer perceptions (Hellwig et al., 2015) and that some consumers may find business models less attractive if they appear to involve sharing (Park & Armstrong, 2017). Perhaps a greater sense of sharing is thus allowed for second hand compared to rental, for which consumers prefer to experience less sharing.

5.3.2.3 Innovativeness

As for innovativeness, it comes as no surprise that empirical findings in this regard are salient for rental and not second hand, since the latter is a much more established concept. As Jaeger-Erben et al. (2015) argue, redistributed ownership shares similarities with traditional clothing consumption and has a lower perceived level of innovativeness. This was reflected in the findings where no participant raised concerns about the innovativeness of redistributed ownership. On the other

hand, findings regarding rental suggest a higher level of innovativeness than what Jaeger-Erben et al. (2015) propose. A majority of consumers appear unfamiliar with the concept of renting everyday clothing and have a hard time perceiving a relative advantage with it. Moreover, they find the concept quite complex to grasp and integrate with existing needs and values. These innovation attributes can have an effect on the rate of adoption (Rogers, 1995) and may explain why so many participating consumers exhibit such a low level of interest in adopting clothing rental themselves. However, renting outerwear clothes and formal wear appeared more acceptable to consumers. In these instances, the level of interest was much higher. It is possible that the consumers' familiarity with formal wear rental results in a greater perceived relative advantage and compatibility as well as lower associated complexity, increasing rate of adoption (Rogers, 1995). The same goes for outerwear rental, for which consumers seem to perceive a greater relative advantage and compatibility, believing it to be a good way to complement their existing clothing consumption and ownership.

5.3.3 Convenience

5.3.3.1 Required time, effort, responsibility

According to previous research, a consumption mode is more difficult to adopt when it requires consumers to change their habits (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2015). What empirical findings show is that consumers find it troublesome to shop second-hand clothing because of many alternatives but limited sizes. Compared to cheap and accessible fashion, shopping second hand does not force consumers to change their consumption behavior per se, but rather the purchase process which is perceived as more cumbersome. However, in line with what Guiot and Roux (2010) found for French consumers, this study shows that these channels are indeed more than venues for shopping, as some participants find that the required time and effort as a positive aspect of shopping second-hand clothing. It appears consumers find stimulation from the reward of looking for clothing for a certain time and finding something unexpected.

Regarding rental, consumers find it to be a burden as it entails a need to adjust their habits. Some consumers associate the rental with additional activities such as picking the clothing up and sending it back, and additional extra care for the clothing which they are not used to. This is considered to be an extra personal cost, which is a barrier for consumers to adopt a new idea as the personal effort becomes too high (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2015). However, as fast fashion has become the new norm in the fashion industry, and enables consumers to shop new styles each week (McNeill & Moore, 2015), one can presume that renting clothing could fulfill the same demand for newness for consumers as fast fashion does, but according to this study, it seems that clothing rental would require consumers to change habits which takes too much time and effort.

5.3.3.2 Convenience

In line with what is proposed by Park and Armstrong (2017) the limited availability of second-hand clothing stores is causing inconvenience for consuming clothing through second hand, even though consumers express a want to increase their engagement with it. Additionally, the high availability and ease of consuming clothing both offline and online from 'regular' stores create a relative inconvenience for shopping second hand, thus increasing the barrier of adoption. Regarding rental, consumers consider an online aspect of this consumption mode in a positive light as this would be

increase the convenience. According to Park and Armstrong (2017), convenience is an important aspect of adoption of a consumption mode, thus it can be concluded that an online solution for renting clothing is necessary. However, the perceived logistics and additional activities necessary to engage in this consumption mode still acts a great barrier according to the empirical findings.

5.3.3.3 Accessibility of the product

Concerning the accessibility of products, consumers find redistributed ownership to be a less reliable consumption mode than traditional clothing consumption. Much in line with previous literature, the uncertain product assortment (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2015; Park & Armstrong, 2017) places constraints on the time and costs saved (Chou et al., 2015). This explains why many participants avoid second hand when looking for something specific. In the case of rental, the study's participants were adamant on the rental service's need to provide accessibility to a broad selection of clothing. This has, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, not been found in previous studies. Additionally, in accordance with previous literature, the non-ownership aspect of renting results in less accessible clothing alternatives (Park and Armstrong, 2017; Jaeger-Erben et al., 2015). This appeared to be a concern among consumers in this study who are accustomed to the convenience of having constant access to their clothing. It was not uncommon among participating consumers to experience an emotional attachment to their clothes and a strong wish to not part with them. These findings are in line with literature highlighting resistance towards new consumption modes as a possible outcome (Hirschl et al., 2003) from the perceived sacrifice of accessibility (Armstrong et al., 2016; Catulli, 2012; Tukker & Tischner, 2006).

5.3.3.4 Price model flexibility

Although data is limited, two consumers did in fact raise concerns about the price model flexibility of clothing rental, and were not in favor of a subscription-based fee, which they found too inhibiting. As the literature states, pricing can thus affect the convenience experienced by consumers (Baumeister, 2014; Tukker, 2004). Furthermore, as stated in the literature review, findings support the provision of a clear outline of rights and obligations in advance (Reim et al., 2015) since consumers conveyed an uncertainty regarding possible risks linked to engaging with a clothing rental service.

5.3.3.5 Time and cost savings

The time and cost savings linked to second-hand clothing consumption are constrained by an uncertain product assortment and inconvenience (Jaeger-Erben et al., 2015; Park & Armstrong, 2017). As for rental, however, consumers are positive regarding the time and cost savings that can be incurred. Most participating consumers were unfamiliar with the concept, but emphasized perceived time and cost savings related to formal wear that is expensive and often only worn once. For these situations, consumers found it convenient to save time and money with a rental service. This is an addition to the FMC and resembles Armstrong et al.'s (2016) findings in which a frequent theme was consumers' familiarity with renting clothing for special occasions and its potential to cut back on consumption.

6. Discussion

This section will present a discussion and further elaboration of the empirical findings and analysis previously presented. The discussion follows the theoretical framework and start by discussing consumer perceptions and the comparison of the two different consumption modes and potential implications for business models within these modes. This section will finish off with a suggestion to the FMC proposed by Park and Armstrong (2017).

6.1 Consumer-Product Relationship

Considering consumer perceptions in this dimension, it becomes apparent that price consciousness is and would be a strong motivator for engaging in both consumption modes. However, price consciousness stems from different sources in the two cases. Considering redistributed ownership, the price is mainly important because consumers perceive that the value they obtain is lower than if they would buy the clothing newly produced, mainly because of the lower quality they associate second-hand clothing with. In utility-based nonownership, quality concerns regarding the clothing itself are not apparent. It appears consumers evaluate the mode itself rather than the products and it is important for them to get value for money spent when the garment cannot be owned. Therefore, they look for an economic advantage such as the access to expensive clothing or clothing which they are otherwise not keen on investing too much money on (e.g. formal wear and outerwear). This difference could be explained by the different degrees of perceived innovativeness of the consumption modes, which concerns the consumer-business relationship. What could be said here is that utility-based nonownership models have not yet established in consumers' minds as an alternative to traditional consumption modes in the same way as redistributed ownership has. Perhaps consumers see clothing rental in its entirety and may need time to fully understand and get used to the idea before going into evaluating the details of it.

As clothing is loaded with symbolic meaning, the visibility of the consumption mode and the symbolic meaning attached to the products in each mode becomes of significance. In redistributed ownership, it is evident that there still is a stigma surrounding clothing which has been previously owned by someone else. Utility-based nonownership, on the other hand, is not associated with the same stigma. It appears that second-hand clothing is associated with clothing having low quality and being trashy or untrendy, whereas there is little concern for these kind of attributes for rental clothing, even though it is typically the same type of clothing. Clothing rental is instead associated with expensive clothing and a way to vary the wardrobe and again, this could be a due to the perceived novelty of utility-based nonownership models.

There is a positive aspect of uniqueness associated with redistributed ownership, which is not the case for utility-based nonownership. According to theory, consumers have a need for variation and newness when it comes to clothing (Park and Armstrong, 2017; Armstrong et al. 2015), which may align with a feeling of being unique. Based on this, the study begun with presuming that the ability to vary the wardrobe would be a comparative advantage of clothing rental business models, and that renting clothes could fulfill this need for newness. Interestingly, the results of this study points to consumers not having as high need for newness as one could expect, considering the growth of fast fashion.

From a consumer-product relationship, in the case of utility-based nonownership it may be important for commercial actors to emphasize the value for money compared to owning as consumers appear to place a value on the activity of renting rather than the clothing per se. Additionally, what could benefit rental models is the perceived innovativeness; even though it can inhibit adoption, it could potentially be portrayed as a positive aspect instead. For commercial actors within redistributed ownership, it is instead important to emphasize the value for money in terms of quality. The perceptions are in many cases connected to the venue for shopping and therefore investing in the shopping environment and formality aspects may decrease the stigma of shopping second hand.

6.2 Consumer-Consumer Relationship

The consumer perceptions are similar in terms of hygiene for the two consumption modes, which is not surprising as people do not want to wear something if they perceive a hygiene risk with it. Rejection behaviors do not always appear (Roux, 2006), in our study many consumers do not perceive a hygiene risk when borrowing clothing from friends or family, but not knowing the previous owner or user of the clothing increase uncertainty which translates into a perceived hygiene risk. The anonymity which is related to the two consumption modes are similar, and it appears that the anonymity aspect is an issue as it increases the uncertainty and acts as a barrier for consumers to engage in these consumption modes. What seems to be important is an aspect of transparency rather than communality, as it is the uncertainty of the previous owner that is important rather than the meaning and values shared among the consumers. Considering redistributed ownership, it could potentially benefit from a communality aspect as some consumers express that the history of the garment is an exciting factor influencing their motivation to engage in the consumption mode. Similar to the perceived hygiene risk, there is a perceived risk of damage due to previous owners or users. It appears to exist some differences between the consumption modes, as consumers in general associate second-hand clothing with lower quality whereas rental clothing may correlate somewhat with the perceived number of users. What is only an issue of utility-based nonownership is the perceived personal liability of consumers which cause them to avoid engage in rental business models.

In general, the findings from a consumer-consumer relationship level are somewhat inconclusive as this study rather focuses on business-to-consumer models than peer-to-peer models. It can, however, be said that transparency is important for commercial models in both consumption modes, as it may reduce the uncertainty that inhibits the adoption of the consumption modes. Still it may prove difficult for companies, in particular as consumers seek transparency, because disclosing exactly how many times an item has been used may lead to consumers being weary of its condition. Perhaps then clearly communicating the businesses role in making sure every item sent out is in pristine condition as well as being clear on the user agreements, this may give customers some peace of mind.

6.3 Consumer-Business Relationship

An important finding in this study is the role of a formal actor or mediator in both consumption modes. Generally, it can be said that consumers appreciate a high formality as it entails trustworthiness and would increase the resemblance with the traditional consumption mode. As these consumption modes are different in nature, the risks perceived to be accompanying second hand and rental business models differ, but in both cases formality plays a significant role to mitigate these risks.

Considering second hand, higher formality implies a signal value in terms of quality of the products as well as a reassurance that the products are hygienic and trendy. In rental business models, higher formality attracts consumers mainly because the service then appears to be more reliable. This could be explained by the degree of innovativeness. Perhaps people's unfamiliarity with utility-based nonownership leads them to perceive more risks, as there is a lack of existing examples in the market today. The innovativeness indeed hinders the adoption of the clothing rental models, especially when it comes to everyday wear. This is an important consideration, however the reluctance associated with high innovativeness has mainly to do with an unfamiliarity with this way of consuming (i.e. accessing instead of owning). If more examples were introduced to the market, consumer preferences and perceptions may change in line with the growing familiarity, but actors must gain users to succeed, and therefore it is important to find ways to overcome the barrier of innovativeness. Of course, in time it could evolve naturally, but for now, actors may benefit from focusing on offering items such as formal and outerwear as it is more familiar to consumers.

A significant difference found concerns the importance of clothing brands offered in the consumption modes. In redistributed ownership, it can be concluded that brands have high importance whereas for utility-based nonownership it is rather the number of brands available that is important. The importance of brands for second-hand business models could be explained by the formality that accompanies them (i.e. consumers appear to trust commercial actors more than non-profit organizations). It also links to brand liking, where consumers who already like a brand, would also accept this clothing in a redistributed ownership as the negative perceptions are overcome by their liking of the brand. For brands, it could be an opportunity to invest in a second-hand initiative not only to obtain the full value of their products, but also to leverage the opportunity to improve the brand image. However, brands must be aware of skepticism from consumers when the efforts do not appear genuinely sustainable as it could be perceived as greenwashing.

The sustainability aspects of the consumption modes are important to bring forth. Redistributed ownership is in general associated with sustainability, and a majority shop second-hand clothing due to this particular reason, however not everyone is driven solely by ideological reasons when shopping second hand. The sustainability aspect is rather perceived as an obvious attribute and valued highly, but not enough to always motivate purchasing. There is a too high sacrifice for engaging in second-hand clothing consumption in relation to what is gained. Considering this attitude-behavior gap and the increased perceived shopping experience when the formality is high, one would argue that companies ought to focus on establishing their business model in line with this; meaning that the formality should be high and the sustainability aspect communicated as value

added. Comparing with utility-based nonownership, a sustainability aspect is not obviously perceived by consumers. In some cases, clothing rental was perceived more negatively than traditional consumption in terms of sustainability due to transport, dry-cleaning and the fact that it does not truly tackle the problem of over-consumption. This was surprising, as rental models are presumed to potentially offer consumers what they lack in second-hand consumption (e.g. higher quality of clothing, wider assortment of clothing, less hygiene risk etc.) and therefore be a good option to achieve sustainable clothing consumption.

What is mainly the issue in redistributed ownership, is the time consumers must spend in order to engage in this mode. The required time is however a significant aspect of second-hand clothing consumption, as the reward that may come from investing time into engaging in the consumption is acting as a motivator, however it is inhibiting the possibility of second-hand consumption becoming more than a complementary activity to traditional clothing consumption. In utility-based nonownership, the main convenience barrier is the need to change the consumption habits as well as the logistics associated with the consumption mode. What is interesting is that even though consumers see it as a burden to adjust their own habits, they are all positive to the concept in general but “for others”. This could be considered a positive finding, as it may imply that consumers in time will engage in this consumption mode, but perhaps the familiarity must first increase.

What commercial actors within these consumption modes need to consider is providing trust and simple communication to overcome barriers of inconvenience and skepticism. An opportunity for second-hand business models is to develop online features of the business, to overcome the perceived inconvenience and at the same time increase formality. Actors in clothing rental, need to build loyalty among a smaller group of customers who can become advocates for this way of consuming and persuade friends and family to do the same.

6.4 Completion of theoretical framework

In summary, following the three key relationships (consumer-product, consumer-consumer, and consumer-business), six primary factors could be identified as relevant for both consumption modes. A total of 17 adhering dimensions emerged for both second-hand and rental clothing consumption separately. Compared to the initial theoretical framework, the factor “time” was not supported by empirical findings in this study and thus attachment constrained by duration with product and one-time or recurring transactions was not perceived as an issue among consumers. Furthermore, findings highlighted “health impact” as a relevant dimension for second hand, which was considered as important by consumers. The new dimension was thus added to the theoretical framework. Figure 4 depicts the completed final theoretical framework, illustrating consumers’ relationships with products, peers, and businesses when engaging in these two consumption modes.

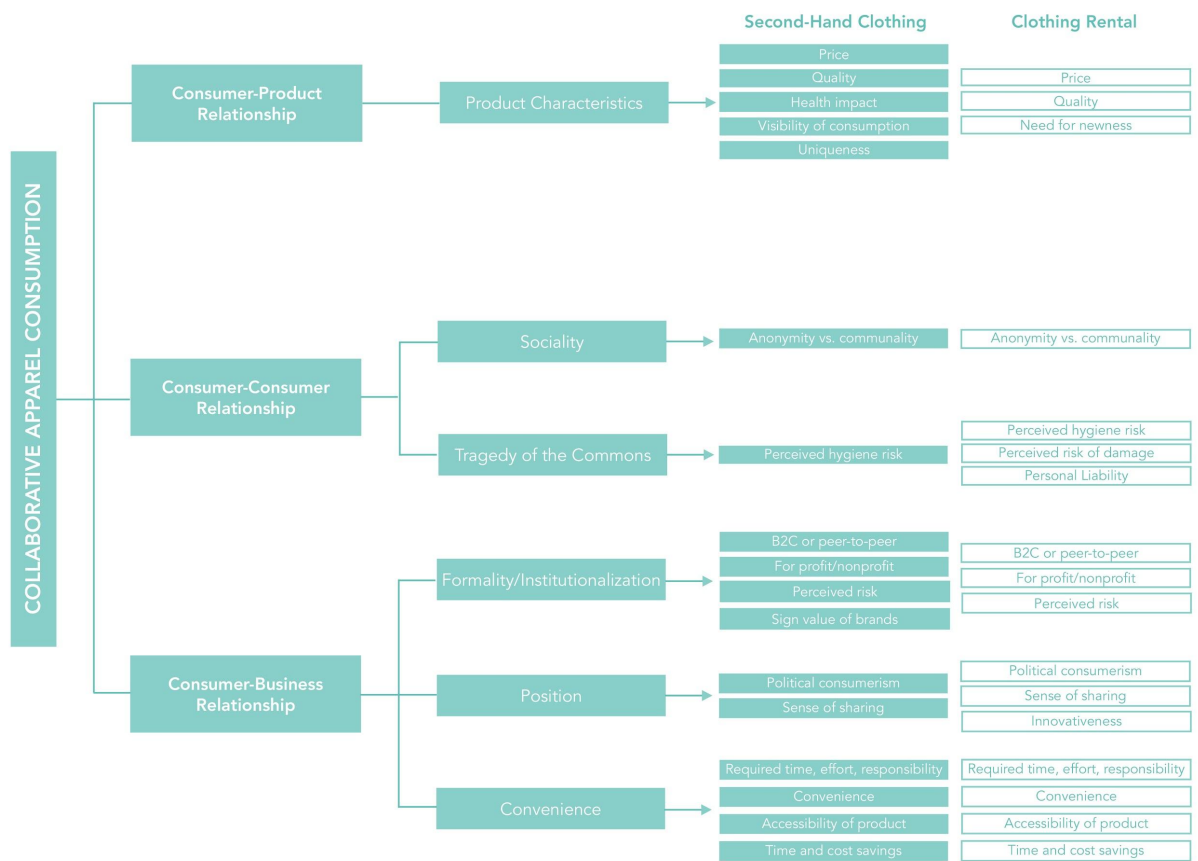


Figure 4: Completion of theoretical framework

7. Concluding remarks

This section concludes the study by answering the research question and presenting the theoretical and practical contribution, as well as describing the limitations of the study and proposing opportunities for future research.

7.1 Addressing the research question

The purpose of this study was to investigate and compare consumers' perceptions of the two different consumption modes access and ownership in the pre-used clothing market, particularly second-hand and rental business models. To fulfill this purpose, the following research question was put forth to guide the study:

How do consumer perceptions of the two different consumption modes 'redistributed ownership' and 'utility-based nonownership' differ and what implications does this have for commercial pre-used business models?

By using a theoretical lens built upon Park and Armstrong's (2017) conceptual framework for collaborative apparel consumption modes to analyze empirical findings collected through semi-structured interviews, the research question can be considered answered. What data showed was that second hand is mainly thought of as a complementary activity to traditional clothing consumption and rental is considered very new and innovative. These two key findings regarding consumer perceptions act as barriers to a broader adoption of redistributed ownership and utility-based nonownership. However, findings also point towards several relevant dimensions, which if leveraged correctly by industry actors, have the potential to inspire more consumers to engage in collaborative consumption.

7.2 Theoretical Contribution

The findings in this study make a theoretical contribution by addressing a current research gap concerning the "sharing" consumption for apparel, which to this day is very limited. By using the FMC developed by Park and Armstrong's (2017) as a springboard, light could be cast on the two primary consumption modes redistributed ownership and utility-based nonownership within an apparel context. The researchers of this study used the framework as a basis from which to explore the pointed area of clothing rental and second-hand clothing consumption, something which has previously not been done within the scientific community. In doing so, the research showed that the framework could be adapted and tailored to shed new light on second-hand and rental clothing consumption. These two areas of research have been given separate attention in research, but not studied together with a focus on key relationships which hold important consumer behavior insights that pave way for future research.

7.3 Practical Contribution

The goal of this study was to gain a better understanding for how consumers think about redistributed ownership and utility-based nonownership as alternatives to traditional clothing consumption and ultimately how these insights can aid in making these business models more

commercially viable. As brought to light at the beginning of the thesis, there is indication that these alternative ways of apparel consumption are on the rise and predicted to only grow in popularity. Empirical findings can thus be considered useful for practitioners and offers them guidance as well as inspiration when designing a service offering that can win support from consumers and gain traction in the market. The insights gained from this study can also be thought of as serving a larger purpose, if viewed from a societal perspective, since current throw-away culture within apparel is placing enormous strains on the environment. What this study has found is thus adding to the knowledge required to accelerate the adoption of new and more sustainable ways of consuming.

7.4 Limitations

Major limitations of this study concern the research scope. The purpose was to compare two different consumption modes as this comparison is missing within current research field. Further exploration of the subject is thus welcomed since more consumers and commercial actors are engaging with the phenomenon of collaborative consumption and a shift towards more sustainable ways of consuming is critical. However, concerning the resource limitation of a master thesis, the scope of including both consumption modes may have been a too broad of a scope as a truly exhaustive comparison could not be made. Examples of this is the aspect of brands, which is an important and interesting finding, but could not be fully examined for both consumption modes. Additionally, peer-to-peer models and the divergence between online and offline was not examined enough. The difference between the two modes may be too comprehensive to fit within the scope of this study, thus making the study somewhat divided. Although this is an exploratory study, and therefore may provide divided results by nature, a tighter scope would have been likely to benefit the contribution of this study. However, the nascent state of this research area requires a broad scope, thus this study could be considered as a starting point for future research. Furthermore, the FMC by Park and Armstrong (2017) adopted in this study has not been applied previously, and once applied some of its shortcomings appear which further impact the results of this study.

7.5 Future Research

Seeing as how the research on “sharing” consumption within an apparel context is limited there is plenty of potential for future research to explore the topic further. To begin with, a quantitative adaptation of this study can be carried out at a larger scale, covering a broader geographical area and demographic span of consumers. This would help to establish differences in consumer perceptions across generations and geographic locations. Secondly, it is of interest to investigate not only second-hand, but other forms of redistributed ownerships as well such as for example auctions and swapping in order to have a full picture of the consumption mode and how the alternatives therein differ. Thirdly, since this thesis focuses more on business-to-consumer models it is also important to investigate the potential of peer-to-peer models. Finally, studying the phenomenon of “sharing” within the context of apparel, but from the sole perspective of the business models would provide additional insights helpful to aid these businesses walking the tightrope between sustainability and commercial success. Conducting case studies on existing business actors active in the clothing resale and rental markets would be one way to achieve this.

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Appendix 1: Focus Group Survey & Guide

Vänligen fyll i nedan information. All information förblir konfidentiell och kommer endast användas som förberedande material till huvudstudien.

Namn:

Ålder:

Högsta avslutad utbildning:

Sysselsättning:

Kryssa för det alternativ som du anser passar in bäst på dig:

Hur ofta handlar du kläder?

- ☐ Flera gånger i veckan
- ☐ En gång i veckan
- ☐ Varannan vecka
- ☐ En gång i månaden
- ☐ Varannan månad
- ☐ En gång i halvåret
- ☐ En gång om året

Hur mycket pengar spenderar du på kläder under en månad (i SEK)?

- ☐ Under 500
- ☐ 500-1000
- ☐ 1000-1500
- ☐ 1500-2000
- ☐ Mer än 2000

A. Introduktion

1. Uppsatsskrivare berättar om studien och dess syfte, samt förklarar hur fokusgruppen kommer gå till och ber alla deltagare att presentera sig för gruppen.
2. Uppsatsskrivare ber deltagarna fylla i enkät med basinformation.

B. Diskussion

1. Konsumtion

- a. Hur går ni tillväga om ni ska handla kläder?
- b. Hur uppstår behovet av att handla kläder?
- c. Hur ofta upplever ni att det uppstår nya klädbehov?
- d. Vad har kläder för betydelse för er?
- e. Hur viktiga är trender för er klädkonsumtion?
- f. Gör ni er av med kläder? Varför, varför inte?

2. Hållbarhet

- a. Hur mycket tänker ni på miljöfrågor i er vardag?
- b. På vilket sätt speglas miljöfrågor i era handlingar?
- c. Vad tänker ni om kläder och hållbarhet - är begreppen förenliga?
- d. Hur lätt eller svårt upplever ni att det är att handla kläder hållbart?
- e. Funderar ni över hur länge ni kommer använda kläder som ni köper?

3. Secondhand

- a. Vad använder ni för ord för att beskriva kläder som tidigare ägts av en annan person?
- b. Vad tänker ni om secondhand?
- c. Handlar ni secondhand-kläder? Varför, varför inte?
- d. Hur upplever ni attityden till att köpa secondhand-kläder i er omgivning?
- e. Öppen diskussion kring aktuella affärskoncept på marknaden:
 - i. Online (Vestiaire Collective, Sellpy, Tradera, Patagonia, Usedby)
 - ii. Offline (Myrorna, Arkivet, Herr Judit, Beyond Retro, Filippa K, Houdini, Bloppis)

Appendix 2: Semi-Structured Interview Guide

A. Inledning

1. Uppsatsskrivare ger en kort introduktion om studien och dess syfte
2. Uppsatsskrivare ber intervjupersonen att fylla i en samtyckesblankett

B. Konsumtionsbeteende

1. Hur går du tillväga när du ska köpa kläder?
2. Hur uppstår behovet av att handla kläder?
3. Varför uppstår behovet av att handla kläder?
4. Hur viktigt är det för dig att vara först med modetrender?
5. Vad har kläder för betydelse för dig?
6. Upplever du ett emotionellt band till dina individuella plagg?
7. Upplever du att det är svårt att göra dig av med plagg? Varför, varför inte?

C. Generell hållbarhet

1. Upplever du att din konsumtion påverkas av miljöfrågor? Om ja, hur mycket och på vilket sätt?

D. Hållbarhet gällande kläder

1. Vad tänker du om kläder och hållbarhet - är begreppen förenliga?
2. Tänker du att man kan handla kläder på ett hållbart sätt? Om ja, på vilket/vilka sätt?
3. Upplever du att det finns hinder när det kommer till att handla kläder hållbart?
4. Funderar du över hur länge du kommer använda kläder som du köper?

E. Uppfattning om sätt att förlänga livet på kläder

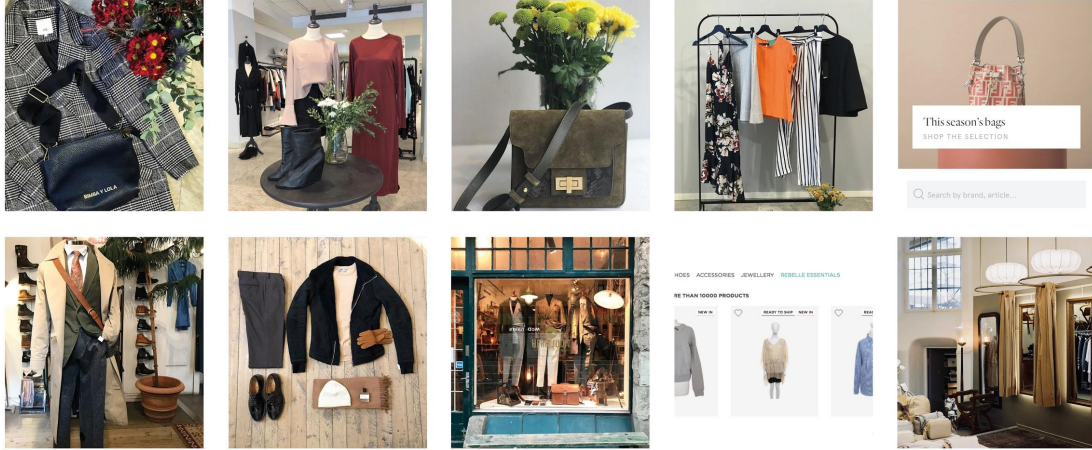
1. Vilka begrepp brukar du använda för att beskriva just kläder som tidigare ägts av en annan person?
2. Vad tänker du om secondhand/kläder som har ägts av någon annan tidigare?
3. Vad tänker du om att hyra kläder?

F. Koncepttest

1. *General Collection & Resale Second Hand (Visa exempel)*
 - Har du använt dig av detta eller liknande koncept? Vilket?
 - Om ja, hur hittade du det och hur länge har du använt dig av det?
 - Vad tycker du om detta konceptet? Bra, dåligt? Varför?
2. *Own Product Take-Back and Resale Second Hand (Visa exempel)*
 - Har du använt dig av detta eller liknande koncept? Vilket?
 - Om ja, hur hittade du det och hur länge har du använt dig av det?
 - Vad tycker du om detta konceptet? Bra, dåligt? Varför?
3. *Sharing with Other Users (Visa exempel)*
 - Har du använt dig av detta eller liknande koncept? Vilket?
 - Om ja, hur hittade du det och hur länge har du använt dig av det?
 - Vad tycker du om detta konceptet? Bra, dåligt? Varför?

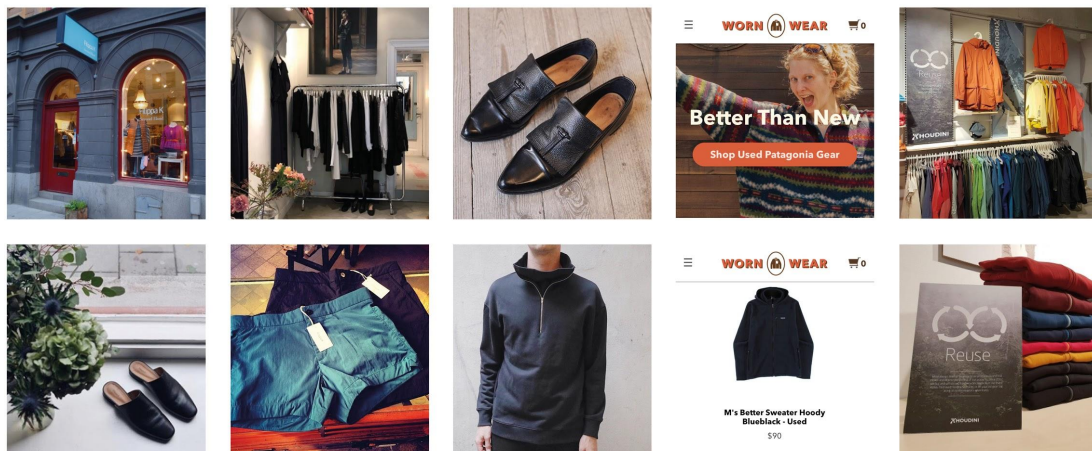
General Collection & Resale Second Hand

This is a concept in which a company collects carefully curated pre-owned clothing to sell either in-store or online. The clothing is handpicked based on quality and in some cases contemporary trends, and may range from budget to premium to luxury brands. For this concept, the clothing is primarily supplied by consumers who turn in their garments for a share of the second hand retail price.

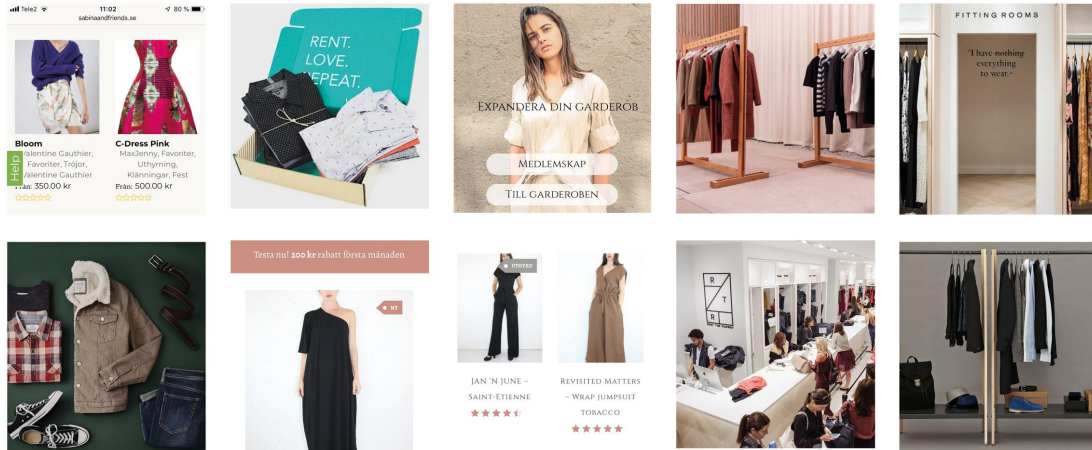


Own Product Take-Back and Resale Second Hand

This is a concept in which a brand collects its own pre-owned clothing to recycle or to sell either in-store or online. The clothes chosen for resale have been quality-approved and considered to be in good condition. For this concept, the clothing is supplied by customers who turn in their garments for a share of the second hand retail price or a voucher to use at a later purchase from the brand.



This is a concept in which the same piece of clothing is shared among multiple users through leasing or clothing libraries run by a business, or wardrobe sharing where a private citizen lends or swaps their clothing with other citizens. The access period can range from short such as for wardrobe sharing and costume hire, to long such as for leasing. In some cases a brand itself organizes leasing of its own product.



G. Sammanfattande frågor

- Finns det något du tycker vi har missat att fråga om, eller som du skulle vilja ta upp?
- Uppsatsskrivare tackar för att personen ställt upp och berättar att de gärna skickar det färdiga arbetet efter inlämning om så önskas av intervjupersonen.

Appendix 3: Participant Sampling

Main study sample					
Interviewee	Gender	Age	Location	Type	Date
1	Male	26	Stockholm	Face-to-face	23/10/18
2	Male	37	Stockholm	Face-to-face	29/10/18
3	Female	34	Uppsala	Telephone	23/10/18
4	Female	41	Stockholm	Face-to-face	24/10/18
5	Male	25	Stockholm	Face-to-face	30/10/18
6	Male	27	Stockholm	Face-to-face	31/10/18
7	Female	36	Stockholm	Face-to-face	23/10/18
8	Female	43	Stockholm	Face-to-face	24/10/18
9	Male	29	Stockholm	Face-to-face	23/10/18
10	Female	27	Stockholm	Face-to-face	25/10/18
11	Male	25	Stockholm	Face-to-face	26/10/18
12	Male	25	Stockholm	Face-to-face	29/10/18
13	Male	24	Stockholm	Face-to-face	24/10/18
14	Female	22	Stockholm	Face-to-face	31/10/18
15	Female	34	Stockholm	Telephone	31/10/18
16	Female	41	Gothenburg	Telephone	25/10/18
17	Female	22	Stockholm	Telephone	22/10/18
18	Male	33	Stockholm	Face-to-face	25/10/18

19	Male	24	Stockholm	Face-to-face	01/11/18
20	Female	24	Stockholm	Face-to-face	22/10/18
21	Male	29	Stockholm	Face-to-face	30/10/18
22	Female	27	Stockholm	Face-to-face	23/10/18
23	Female	28	Stockholm	Face-to-face	31/10/18
24	Female	24	Stockholm	Face-to-face	30/10/18

Appendix 4: Consent Form

Syfte

Du är inbjuden att delta i en **studie** till en masteruppsats inom programmet **Business & Management vid Handelshögskolan i Stockholm**. Syfte med studien är att förstå hur man kan uppmuntra konsumenter att i större utsträckning konsumera kläder på ett hållbart sätt. Vi vill förstå konsumenters tankar och handlingar när det gäller att konsumera kläder på ett hållbart sätt och vad som krävs för att det ska vara möjligt att göra det.

Förfarande (vid fokusgrupp):

Förstudien är utformad som en **fokusgrupp** för att kunna ta del av konsumenters olika perspektiv som uppkommer i en diskussion. Gruppen består av 5 individer. Moderatoren kommer ställa frågor och visa bilder för att underlätta diskussionen.

Förfarande (vid individuell intervju):

Studien är utformad som en **individuell semi-strukturerad intervju** för att kunna hålla en öppen diskussion och ta del av ditt perspektiv som konsument.

Ljudupptagning kommer ske under hela fokusgruppen/intervjun. Allt du säger förblir **konfidentiellt** och inga namn kommer inkluderas i uppsatsen. Ansvariga forskare kommer använda materialet som samlas in till huvudstudien och du får godkänna alla citat innan de inkluderas i studiens slutgiltiga rapport.

Du har rätt att när som helst under fokusgruppen/intervjun avbryta ditt deltagande. Du har också rätt att välja vilka frågor du vill svara på. Observera att det inte finns några rätt eller felaktiga svar på frågorna som ställs. Vi vill höra just dina synpunkter och hoppas att du vill bidra med dina tankar.

Kontaktuppgifter:

Om du har några frågor angående intervjun eller uppsatsen, vänligen kontakta ansvariga

Julia Larsdotter

0707609411

22875@student.bhs.se

Vivianne Yance

0739403606

23252@student.bhs.se

Jag förstår ovanstående information och accepterar att delta fullt ut enligt ovanstående villkor

Signatur: _____ Datum: _____

Namnförtydligande: _____

Appendix 5: Summary of Empirical Results

Related Dimensions		Illustrative Comments: Second Hand	Illustrative Comments: Rental
C2P	<p>Product Characteristics</p> <p>Price</p> <p>Quality</p> <p>Health impact</p> <p>Visibility of consumption</p> <p>Uniqueness</p> <p>Need for newness</p>	<p>“...I’m not the customer who shops to get an exclusive experience. I want efficiency and to save money.” [Int. 12]</p> <p>“If I buy new clothing I almost feel ashamed...I try to see money’s true value, I can’t buy a shirt for 2000 SEK when I can live 2 weeks on the same amount.” [Int. 3]</p> <p>“I gladly buy clothing from Tradera, but only if it’s relatively new. Often it is only used 2-3 times or the price-tag is still left.” [Int. 20]</p> <p>“If I would go to a second hand store, I would look at the clothing to see if I find something that have the same quality as new clothing.” [Int. 22]</p> <p>“If I buy shoes second hand, I know that they won’t last that long but it’s almost a rule for second-hand clothing.” [Int. 18]</p> <p>“I bought this jacket for 1500 SEK through second hand instead of 4000 SEK from the brand, so it doesn’t matter too much it breaks.” [Int. 6]</p> <p>“I buy second-hand clothing due to environmental concerns and economic constraints, but also due to chemicals. I don’t want strange chemicals on my skin.” [Int. 14]</p> <p>“There’s a health aspect as well... When I think about chemicals in clothing, I don’t want to buy new clothing and buy second hand instead.” [Int. 8]</p> <p>“Clothing is visible to others, and I buy clothing I see in social media and know they’re unsustainable, but it’s hard to find clothing I like in second-hand stores.” [Int. 17]</p> <p>“There’s of course a social stigma, I don’t tell others that I wear second hand-clothing.” [Int. 5]</p> <p>“I associate second hand with fun clothing that stands out, and something I know others don’t wear. It’s more personal, I think that’s good.” [Int. 13]</p> <p>“I feel more joy (when buying second hand) because then I feel that no one else in my circle of friends that have this jacket.” [Int. 10]</p>	<p>“I like the opportunity to try different styles without feeling like I have invested in some way.” [Int. 15]</p> <p>“I can’t imagine it being economic.” [Int. 5]</p> <p>“...it has to be quite expensive clothing with very good quality in order to not be given a piece of clothing that is burlled or worn out. [Int. 21]</p> <p>“It feels spontaneously like a market for special expensive garments that are really nice” [Int. 18]</p> <p>“Especially for specific occasions...you don’t very well want to wear the same dress again around the same people.”...you don’t very well want to wear the same dress again around the same people.” [Int. 24]</p> <p>“It meets the need one often feels...no matter how much you have there is always some kind of need for newness...” [Int. 8]</p> <p>“...it is very boring to have the same clothes week after week...” [Int. 22]</p> <p>“I use such a small fraction of my closet at the moment...When I like something I use it all the time” [Int. 5]</p> <p>“It is not so important [to update one’s wardrobe].” [Int. 12]</p>
C2C	<p>Sociality</p> <p>Anonymity vs. communality</p> <p>Tragedy of the commons</p> <p>Perceived hygiene risk</p> <p>Perceived risk of damage</p>	<p>“If feels much better to buy from someone in my age, because I could buy from my friends buy...it creates a feeling of being friends.” [Int. 20]</p> <p>“My favourite way of buying second hand is when you can meet the person in real life, because then you get a feeling of the person and you know who get the money.” [Int. 14]</p> <p>“I think it’s the feeling of wearing something someone else has worn, you can feel a bit shabby.” [Int. 3]</p> <p>“It doesn’t feel fresh when you feel that someone else has worn the clothing. It’s a special feeling when you put on new, unworn clothing...putting on worn clothing that has been close to the body doesn’t feel nice.” [Int. 21]</p>	<p>“That a business anonymizes who has been wearing a garment is not so nice, in that case I would want to see a little picture of who wore it before me...” [Int. 20]</p> <p>“If you could do it in such a way that you sign up with friends or people you trust...” [Int. 13]</p> <p>“That the garment is worn by several people makes it even more second hand...So here hygiene is more important [than second hand]...” [Int. 9]</p> <p>“They [the clothes] can come back and smell like sweat. They can come back and smell like someone else.” [Int. 21]</p> <p>“I think you are more careful with your own clothes than you are with others’, so how do you then keep the [rental] clothes as fresh-looking...” [Int. 1]</p> <p>“It feels like there are big risks with it, that when someone else has the garment for their period of time, then perhaps there is a risk that they damage it...” [Int. 13]</p>

	Personal Liability		<p>“...I would probably be a little scared that I would damage or get stains on the clothes.” [Int. 3]</p> <p>“A little stress that it isn't one's own clothes if you get a stain or if it gets ruined.” [Int. 14]</p>
C2B	<p>Formality/Institutionalization Business–Consumer or Peer-Peer</p> <p>Perceived risk</p> <p>Sign value of brands Accessibility</p> <p>Positive brand image</p> <p>Greenwashing</p> <p>Position Political consumerism</p> <p>Sense of sharing</p> <p>Innovativeness</p> <p>Convenience Required time, effort, responsibility</p> <p>Positive effort</p>	<p>“I think it's good as Filippa K has done, it makes it easier for me to buy second hand. In this way, second-hand shopping is really good, because you get a quality by the responsible brand.” [Int. 1]</p> <p>“It's better when they're better at branding and creating a context of a normal store. I'm more attracted to shop there even if the clothing is used.” [Int. 21]</p> <p>“The stores I've been to in Stockholm aren't nice.. On Tradera there's nice pictures, I know it doesn't have to be fresh just because the picture is good, but i feels better.” [Int. 20]</p> <p>“In many second-hand stores I go to I can see that the clothing isn't nice...but I think it's starting to change.” [Int. 24]</p> <p>“You often associate brands with different things. If I like a brand, I would probably also have a positive image of their secondhand, then it might be easier to shop secondhand.” [Int. 17]</p> <p>“It's good for expensive brands because if I can buy them second hand, then I can afford them.” [Int. 13]</p> <p>“I think it's good because you know the brand produce good quality if they aim to sell the same clothing again through second hand.” [Int. 15]</p> <p>“I think it's amazing that a brand take responsibility, if everyone did this it the world would look completely different. I would support a brand more if I know they made an effort to sell second hand.” [Int. 3]</p> <p>“It's important that its not only marketing for their own purpose, but that it's actually a good purpose behind it (reselling customer clothing).” [Int. 2]</p> <p>“I know Filippa K and A Place does it, but I don't think they do it very well. For me it feels like they do it to make the brand look good (reselling customer clothing).” [Int. 4]</p> <p>“I buy second hand due to the sustainability aspect. I tell myself that if I buy second-hand clothing from a store in Stockholm, it probably haven't been freighted around too much.” [Int. 11]</p> <p>“There's an economical aspect, but more and more the sustainability aspect have become important. I try to go away from the consumption stress and see my own behavior.” [Int. 3]</p> <p>“I feel good and much happier if I find something I like second hand rather than new. It feels good in the environmental heart... I don't have to think about if it's unnecessary to buy it.” [Int. 24]</p> <p>“The way I control my consumption urge is through second hand, because then I feel I can continue to consume and it's still sustainable.” [Int. 13]</p> <p>“It's fun that the clothing has a spirit because of its history. You can become crazy when you think too much about who has been wearing it.” [Int. 19]</p> <p>“I think it's nice that the clothing has history, that someone else has had it before.” [Int. 10]</p> <p>“It's almost impossible to find pant and shirts at a second-hand store, I need to look for many hours to find something that fits and looks good.” [Int. 6]</p> <p>“It's very time consuming as clothing in a second-hand store is never presented in a coherent way as in a store with new clothing.” [Int. 7]</p> <p>“I think it's fun to not know what's in the store, it's quite exciting because when you find something you like you get really happy instead because it's unpredictable.” [Int. 18]</p>	<p>“Peer-to-peer sounds like an utopia. Perhaps I think too low of other people, but I would never dare to trust that it would work.” [Int. 7]</p> <p>“...if a business is running this [rental] then they have guarantees and you can trust that they won't send you something with holes in it...” [Int. 8]</p> <p>“I don't know if it would work, if I would be satisfied...that it is not the clothing I specifically like.” [Int. 3]</p> <p>“The risk is with online [rental] is that you get something you don't want to wear at all...” [Int. 24]</p> <p>“How are the clothes washed? ...You never really know what happens in between uses...” [Int. 10]</p> <p>“I really believe that this is a part of the future for a sustainable consumption.” [Int. 13]</p> <p>“I believe that this [rental] ultimately increases consumption.” [Int. 19]</p> <p>“...with this [rental] I can have three new garments every month without a bad conscience, I like that.” [Int. 8]</p> <p>Of course a garment could be rented numerous times, but that I am happily unaware of.” [Int. 20]</p> <p>“Rent everyday clothing? Can you even do that? Crazy. Never heard of that” [Int. 21]</p> <p>“I like the idea more and more as I sit here...” [Int. 19]</p> <p>“I would say a big no no, I won't do it [rent clothes].” [Int. 12]</p> <p>“...if I adopted the trend of renting clothes it would probably not be the only thing I do. It would be a complement...” [Int. 16]</p> <p>“It needs to be administered and taken care of, who will do this for me? It is another thing to think about. I don't have the energy.” [Int. 4]</p> <p>“It feels like an extra burden to need to think about clothes in my wardrobe that aren't mine...” [Int. 14]</p>

	<p>Convenience</p> <p>Accessibility of the product</p> <p>Price model flexibility</p> <p>Time and cost savings</p>	<p><i>"It's not every time to find something in a second-hand store, but it's the charm with it. It's a challenge to shop and I think that's fun."</i> [Int. 10]</p> <p><i>"I feel that many stores lies a bit off. It's not like regular store, because you need to search for them and know where they are."</i> [Int. 23]</p> <p><i>"I usually go around in Vasastan or Östermalm, so It's too bad there is no good store there... I would probably go more often if there was a store on Odenplan."</i> [Int. 21]</p> <p><i>"There are so many colors and sizes of the same clothing in a normal store, but when you shop secondhand it's almost like a lottery."</i> [Int. 17]</p> <p><i>"If I want something specific, the assortment is not enough. I wanted a grey jacket this fall, but I didn't find it second hand. If the assortment was bigger, it might have been easier to find."</i> [Int. 24]</p>	<p><i>"The logistics seem like an unnecessary complication"</i> [Int. 11]</p> <p><i>"As long as it is convenient. It should be easy and smooth."</i> [Int. 17]</p> <p><i>"I think in order for me to use it [rental service], it would require a wide assortment."</i> [Int. 6]</p> <p><i>"...if I could pick and choose from any brand I wanted to, if there was an enormous selection...then I could consider it."</i> [Int. 9]</p> <p><i>"It is more nice to have options, to have the assurance that there are garments there [in the closet]."</i> [Int. 12]</p> <p><i>"I want to know that this is a nice garment that I can wear when I need it to certain events when you want to look extra good...then it is fun to know that you have that safe card..."</i> [Int. 13]</p> <p><i>"Sometimes you fell in love with garments that you didn't want to return..."</i> [Int. 15]</p> <p><i>I think the risk is that if I get attached to one of the shirts it will be difficult to return it."</i> [Int. 19]</p> <p><i>"...I wonder if I would want to have a subscription for clothing that comes every month."</i> [Int. 23]</p> <p><i>"In general, these services for which you have to sign up, they entail so many new habits such as Linas Matkasse; I almost get a bit stressed out by it."</i> [Int. 13]</p> <p><i>"...then you don't have to waste unnecessary time on walking around in stores if you do it just to look nice one night..."</i> [Int. 10]</p> <p><i>"There is no use in buying an expensive suit if I don't use it. Then it is better to rent for that occasion."</i> [Int. 19]</p>
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