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*In the name of Reuse:*

*An explorative study on how P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption and psychological rebound effects*

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***Abstract***

Drawing from the emerging literature on rebound effects within the Circular Economy (CE) and the dispersion of P2P second-hand platforms, this study aims to explore how P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption and create an environment for psychological rebound effects. As awareness on how rebound effects can undermine CE's ability to live up to the concept's promise, it becomes essential to examine the adverse consumption within the clothing industry. This industry aims to advocate for more sustainable consumption by expanding reuse markets - especially online, undermining the importance in addressing adverse behavior. This study aims to draw insight into how the elements in P2P second-hand consumption shape clothing consumption and create conditions for psychological rebound effects. A phenomenological research approach is used to generate new knowledge in this study, and the aim is to combine emerging research areas of consumption behavior. Based on 11 phenomenological interviews with frequent P2P second-hand platform users, findings demonstrate how the reconfiguration process created by the entrance of P2P second-hand platforms creates accessible facilitated second-hand markets, de-stigmatization of second-hand clothes and offers an environment of entertainment and the narrative of being an environmentally conscious consumer. Competence in navigating these P2P second-hand platforms creates continuous use and shifts the perception of value and consumption levels. Conclusively, this study generates new knowledge of the fragmented literature on rebound effects within CE and expands the understanding of P2P second-hand platforms.

*Keywords: Second-hand clothing consumption, P2P second-hand platforms, Rebound Effects, Self-licencing, Circular economy*

## ***Introduction***

This paper will explore the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) second-hand platform's ability to shape clothing consumption and create conditions for rebound effects. The Peer-to-Peer (P2P) exchanges have gained momentum with the rise of P2P second-hand platforms as they enable users through a digital marketplace to empower the reuse principle (Parguel, 2017; Fors et al., 2023; Borusiak et al., 2020). Whereas the definition of a P2P second-hand platform is still emerging in literature, it can be narrowed down to a platform that facilitates the transfer of ownership of a Peer-provided resource, where the platform itself takes on different levels of intermediation (Abbes et al., 2019; Wirtz et al., 2019; Costello & Reczek, 2020). Moreover, it enables the users to become both sellers and buyers (Ek Styvén & Mariani, 2020; Meshulam et al., 2024). The expressed aim of these Peer exchanges, which is to prolong a product's useful life, can be linked to the Circular Economy (CE) strategies, which are in many cases described as an avenue of more sustainable consumption and production - by decoupling economic activity from current consumption of finite resources (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, n.d). In this context, the P2P second-hand platforms can function as an intermediary which creates social links to provide access to markets and reduce the environmental footprint by resolving users' goal conflicts of consumption and sustainability (Mesulam et al., 2024; Parguel et al., 2017).

The clothing industry is tackling the challenge of prolonging garments life, and the second-hand clothing market is expected to reach \$64 billion by 2024 indicating growing demand for more sustainable fashion (ThreadUp, 2024). Within this notion, P2P second-hand clothing platforms play a pivotal role, aiming to cultivate an ecosystem that allows people to sell and swap items to make money and prolong products' lifespan (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2021). In the context of CE, these P2P second-hand platforms play strategic importance and advocate sustainable consumption through a second life. However, there needs to be more current understanding and research on user behavior on P2P second-hand platforms and verification of environmental impact (Centobelli et al., 2022; Parguel et al., 2017). With increased accessibility through P2P and second-hand platforms, reuse becomes more attractive. However, an enormously facilitated market also makes it possible for consumers to buy and sell second-hand clothes at high speeds and switch without reducing the quantity consumed and risk creating a hazard of impulsive choices and indulgent consumption (Parguel et al., 2017 Reimers et al., 2021; Cooper & Gutowski, 2017).

In much research, strategies within the CE are presented as a utopia; thus, reusing a product does not per se guarantee an environmental benefit as it relies heavily on consumer behavior (Reimers et al., 2021; Cooper & Gutowski, 2017). Within the CE research, it has been increasingly questioned what the actual environmental benefits of reuse are, as the potential rebound effects may hinder CE's ability to live up to the concept's promise of reducing environmental impacts (Makov & Font Vivanco, 2018; Zink & Geyer, 2017). Originally deriving from the energy domains, the concept of rebound effects has emerged as an understanding also in fields such as consumer research and psychology to explain adverse behavior (Miller & Effron, 2010; Mullen & Monin, 2016; Nilsson et al., 2017; Zink & Geyer,

2017). The original Rebound literature has found that rebound effects are derived from economic factors, i.e., low prices. In these cases, research demonstrates how rebound effects occur when an individual's actual savings in energy or other environmental impacts are lower than the potential efficiency/sufficiency-induced savings. Adverse behavioral responses create direct or indirect rebound effects - i.e. spending saved money in either the same consumption area or a new one (Reimers et al., 2021). However, as research concerning rebound effects within CE has only recently been developed, there is little application of this concept in the literature (Makov & Font Vivanco, 2018; Zink & Geyer, 2017).

Moreover, with emerging research in consumer studies, the psychological rebound effect, i.e. - self-licensing, has also been presented as an influence causing counterproductive consumption behavior. The concept of self-licensing has revealed that individuals are more likely to behave in ways that can be easily justified, especially when choosing indulgent consumption (Reimers et al., 2021; Parguel et al., 2017). In the context of CE and reused the self-licensing can be mirrored through the argument "it is second-hand", which can justify continuous consumption, feeling less guilty in the pursuit of constant newness and purchases (Parguel et al., 2017; Makov & Font Vivanco, 2018). However, more research is needed on this self-licensing process that drives psychological rebound effects within CE strategies and reuse markets (Parguel et al., 2017; Makov et al., 2018). With this research gap, this study aims to investigate how P2P second-hand clothing consumption deepens the understanding of this emerging phenomenon through the lens of Social Practice Theory (SPT). SPT is recurring in sustainable consumption studies and will be utilized to understand elements on P2P second-hand platforms (Shove et al., 2012; Holmberg et al., 2016; Spotswood et al., 2015;). Moreover, Fors et al. (2023) emphasize the multi-dimensional challenge in changes of - values, attitudes, behavioral routines and decisions to achieve a sufficiency-based consumption, i.e. only buying what we need and minimizing consumption. This underscores the theoretical outlook of SPT in exploring how P2P second-hand influences clothing consumption and creates conditions for rebound effects.

First of all, an SPT approach emphasizes the materiality of the P2P second-hand platforms, as the internet and P2P platforms lay the foundation for second-hand clothing to become a commercialized e-commerce market as increased accessibility can lead to more customers engaging in more sufficient oriented products - such as second-hand (Kjær et al., 2019; Xu et al., 2021; Frick et al., 2021). However, linking to the literature on rebound effects can be viewed as removing barriers that can create an environment for adverse consumption behaviors in terms of meaning within a P2P second-hand platform. Moreover, research on online environments emphasizes the internet's ability to create material aspiration levels and stimulate affective reactions such as enjoyment, surprise and the feeling of bargain hunting (Frick et al., 2021; Parguel et al., 2017). The previous research on second-hand clothing consumption related to motivations and barriers can be used as background to understand the meaning of second-hand clothing consumption. Research is demonstrating how the original motivation for low prices has been expanded with dominant drivers such as sustainability, altruism, personal image, fashionability, creativity and aesthetics (Jägel et al., 2012; Bly et al., 2015; Guiot & Roux, 2010; Ferraro et al., 2016). However, there is still a considerable

gap in the literature that includes a comprehensive understanding of how these meanings and experiences could create rebound effects within second-hand clothing consumption (Parguel et al., 2017; Zink & Geyer, 2017).

In previous research on P2P second-hand platforms, some findings emphasize the environmental value of participating. However, there is also an understanding of the risk that these platforms pose based on the characteristics of the platforms and the characteristics of second-hand clothing consumption, creating an interesting intersection of conditions that can trigger psychological rebound effects (Parguel et al., 2017; Fors et al., 2020). As the P2P second-hand clothing market reaches significant growth and is projected to do so, examining the potential psychological rebound effects within this context provides valuable insights into sustainable consumption. The emergence of critical views on CE underscores the importance of studying consumption beyond mere participation - i.e., how consumers participate and what they buy on these P2P second-hand platforms. Previous studies highlight the ability of rebound effects to undermine the environmental impacts of reuse. However, more research on the self-licensing process that drives psychological rebound effects within reuse markets is needed. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to provide knowledge on how P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption and create conditions for psychological rebound effects (Parguel et al., 2017; Makov et al., 2018; Reimers et al., 202).

Research Question: *How does P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption?*

### ***Theoretical framework***

To understand how P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption, first, we need to understand the links between sustainability and P2P second-hand platforms. Secondly, we need to understand the shaping dynamics inherent in the online setting, the practice of second-hand clothing consumption, and how they, through their interplay, affect consumption behavior.

#### ***Circular Economy and Peer-to-Peer (P2P) second-hand platforms***

Sustainable consumption and production is defined as "*A holistic approach to minimizing the negative environmental impacts from consumption and production systems while promoting quality of life for all*" (Borusiak et al., p.2, 2020). Within this understanding, Circular Economy (CE) becomes a tool for stopping the current take-make-wastes system through strategies such as reuse, repair, remanufacture and recycling (Centobelli et al., 2022; Ellen McArthur Foundation, 2021). Within the concept of CE, Collaborative Consumption (CC) emerges as a way to realize value from underutilized resources and can be seen as a new paradigm of production and consumption (Parguel et al 2017.; Botsman & Rogers, 2010; Ek et al., 2020). Moreover, Botsman and Rogers (2010) organize collaborative practices around three types of activities, where one is *redistribution markets* and includes activities of gifting, or selling pre-owned goods with an effective transfer of ownership.

Within this section of redistribution markets, the emergence of Peer-to-Peer (P2P) enables more efficient exchanges in the name of CC and enables users to become both sellers and buyers on one platform (Ek et al., 2020; Meshulam et al., 2024). However, the definition of what constitutes a P2P platform is still emerging within research as it is also a relatively new and fast-growing phenomenon. Costello & Reczek (2020) state that P2P platforms mediate goods and services flow between providers and consumers; when it is second-hand goods, it can be referred to as a P2P second-hand platform. Moreover, according to Abbes et al. (2020) and Philips et al. (2019), it can be understood as an efficient exchange where private individuals dispose and acquire items with peers via an online network. Costello & Reczek (2020) describe that in the P2P second-hand purchase, the consumers interact with two distinct entities; the first element is a typically for-profit firm that drives the online P2P platforms and works as an intermediary for exchange. The second element is the peer provider (Peer 1), which provides goods or services to the platform. This is also an essential notion in defining a P2P second-hand platform- the peer providing the good. P2P second-hand platforms can be characterized by high degrees of platform intermediation - i.e., the extent to which a platform is involved in an exchange, and consociality -i.e., copresence and interaction with a social other. The level of provider involvement in the P2P second-hand platform shapes the interaction with the buyer (Peer 2). In their research of business models, Wirtz et al. (2019) also distinguished this transfer of ownership and the Peer-provided resources as distinguishing a P2P second-hand platform. With the emerging literature, variations of the concept exist; however, this definition of "P2P" and P2P second-hand platforms refers to for-profit brands acting as intermediaries for social exchange. In this context, the goods are provided by a peer, and the platform takes on different levels of intermediation. Moreover, this paper explores what can be categorized as e-commerce P2P retail platforms, exemplified by Amazon and eBay, and distinguishes them from the proliferation of social networks such as Facebook Marketplace (Abbes et al., 2019; Wirtz et al., 2019).

P2P second-hand platforms have become the most widespread collaborative consumption practice (Parguel et al., 2017). This is also the case in the clothing industry, and the industry's aim is to transform the clothes' increasingly disposable nature and current throwaway trend, which has negative social and environmental effects (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017;2016). Based on P2P second-hand platforms described by Costello & Reczek (2020) and Wirtz et al. (2019), Vinted, Tradera and Sellpy are selected for investigation in this paper. Whereas Vinted and Tradera have clear, direct Peer-to-Peer exchange, Sellpy can be defined as a P2P platform with a robust intermediary role. However, they all provide peer goods and fit into the role of retail platforms, stating the sustainability aims of reuse.

P2P exchanges and P2P second-hand platforms have become more prevalent in the current societal state of the financial crisis and growing interest in sustainability and technology (Schor, 2020; Fors et al., 2023). In the context of CE, P2P second-hand platforms function as an intermediary to create social links, provide access to markets, reduce the environmental footprint and as resolving users' goal conflicts of consumption and sustainability (Mesulam et al., 2024; Parguel et al., 2017). In terms of sustainability, consumers' active involvement is

crucial as the concept of CE. Hence, P2P exchanges rely on consumers behaving differently from mainstream consumption practices (Greene, 2024). While some evidence supports the environmental benefits of CE supporting the end goal of sustainability, research also points out potential rebound effects that hinder CE's ability to live up to the concept's promise (Cooper & Gutowski, 2017; Makov & Font Vivanco, 2018; Zink & Geyer, 2017). Therefore, This reasoning can be applied in the context of P2P second-hand platforms as a CE strategy for re-use.

### ***Rebound Effect within The Circular Economy***

The rebound effect concept emerges from the literature regarding energy usage efficiency (Jevons, 1865). The concept can be understood by the phenomenon of *the "Jevons paradox"* where the observation is that energy and resource efficiency improvements are often connected with rising, not falling, consumption by consumers (Greene et al., 2024). The rebound effect itself stems from measures to decrease environmental burden through either efficiency improvements - i.e. technological improvements that reduce environmental impact - or sufficiency changes- i.e. consumption reduction of certain goods or services that reduce environmental impact. However, due to offsetting adverse behavioral responses, the individual's actual savings in energy or other environmental impacts are lower than the potential efficiency/sufficiency-induced savings (Reimers et al., 2021; Zink and Greyer, 2017). Deriving from efficiency improvements, direct rebound effects can be observed if savings are used in the same consumption area - exemplified by, e.g buying a more energy-efficient boiler, the heating cost might be lower, and a reaction can be to decide to maintain a higher room temperature and cancel out environmental savings. Hence, when spent in another consumption area, indirect rebound effects are observed - replacing a boiler with a more energy-efficient one and using savings on traveling by plane, which has a higher environmental impact. Originating from sufficiency changes, indirect rebound effects are observed through behaviors, e.g. maintaining a lower room temperature and using savings for spending on high-emission activities, such as frequent flying, ultimately increasing greenhouse gas emissions - whereas direct rebound effects of sufficiency changes is relatively unexplored (Reimers et al., 2021; Santarius & Soland, 2018).

Linking rebound effects to CE, Greene et al (2024) describe measures to decrease environmental through sufficiency - such as repair, reuse and sharing, and efficiency through using more resource-efficient technologies. In the focus on reuse, sufficiency can be understood by Sorrell et al. (2020), which describes sufficiency as aims to abandon or reduce the consumption of resources and goods whereby the burden on the environment is decreased. However, even in the field of sufficient consumer behavior, i.e. deliberate reduction of certain goods/services consumed, such as newly produced goods - rebound effects are still observed (Buhl & Acosta, 2016; Frick et al., 2021). From an economic rebound effect point of view, the re-spending effect is a risk as reuse often offers the consumers a lower price or by the failed effort of competing with the primary production, i.e. imperfect substitution (Zink & Greyer, 2017; Makov & Font Vivanco, 2018; Paraguel et al, 2017).

With emerging research on rebound effects, the phenomena have been transferred to consumer studies and researchers such as Reimers et al. (2021), and Parguel et al. (2017) acknowledge the psychological factor - i.e. moral licensing as playing an essential part in the rebound effect. These findings move rebound effects beyond rational choice and profitability maximization theories, and psychological rebound effects give insights into how consumer behavior is impacted by psychological rationalization processes (Santarius & Soland, 2018).

### ***Psychological Rebound Effects in P2P Second-hand Context***

In the emerging research on rebound effects on the consumer level, psychological rationalization processes of adverse behavior can also stimulate rebound effects, and moral licensing plays a significant role (Santarius & Soland, 2018; Monin & Miller, 2001). Within moral licensing, there are different acknowledgements of awareness of immoral behavior. From the *moral credential* perspective, previous behavior influences how individuals perceive their subsequent actions, and individuals with moral credentials do not need to worry about whether their subsequent behavior will be interpreted in a morally questionable manner (Monin & Miller, 2001). By contrast, from a *moral credit perspective*, individuals are aware of their immoral behavior. In this view, self-licensing arises; individuals whose prior choices establish them as ethical and reasonable spenders should be more likely to indulge in more inconsiderate consumption and purchases later on. Past deeds can liberate individuals from engaging in behavior that would otherwise be problematic - in this context, unethical and environmentally harmful. Moral licensing is viewed as a negative spillover effect in that previous pro-environmental or social behavior reduces the probability of other subsequent pro-environmental behaviors - i.e. selfishness in consumption choices (Nilsson et al., 2017; Bauer & Menrad, 2023). Behaviors that would otherwise be avoided for the fear of appearing immoral can be balanced. Within this field, the researchers add two psychological mechanisms, the first is the *"diffusion of responsibility effect"*, which describes how consumers feel about their responsibility towards the environment. Secondly, *"attenuated consequences"* aim to explain the re-evaluation of monetary, social, or emotional consequences after using a technology; this further causes an increase in consumption of the item chosen (Santarius & Soland, 2018; Monin & Miller, 2001).

This paper will build on the *moral credit* perspective and the self-licencing used to justify consumption, explaining psychological rebound effects. Miller and Effron (2010) describe the self-licensing theory in its aim to explain people's behavior by understanding how they feel psychologically licensed to act. Consequently, license arises from the justification individuals give their actions; in this sense, behavior is likely to be in ways that can be easily justified (Parguel et al., 2017). De Witt Huberts et al. (2012) use self-licensing in the context of consumption and discuss that the self-licensing theory contends that people are more likely to choose hedonic goods when the decision context allows them to justify the consumption. In their research, the researchers exemplify ex-smokers having a well-deserved cigarette after hard work or eating unhealthy whilst on vacation. The emphasis is that when a choice creates conflict, the individual seeks reasons to resolve the conflict and justify their choice. Moreover, in emerging research on consumer behavior, licensing effects are intricately connected to impulse buying, which typically arises when temptation is vital, particularly in

situations involving conflicting goals, such as the urge to purchase an unplanned product (Mukhopadhyay & Johar, 2009; De Witt Huberts et al., 2012).

Parguel et al. (2017) discuss that justifying actions becomes more difficult as a choice generates conflict, such as a "hedonically complex" choice of indulgent consumption. In the context of CE, psychological rebound effects can be observed where consumers are experiencing self-licencing to justify unethical or unsustainable purchases or actions to stabilize morale in the name of continuous consumption (Reimers et al., 2021; Parguel et al., 2017). P2P second-hand platforms are assumed to be virtuous in terms of savings and environmental benefits as opposed to buying new products - in this sense; the platform offers a justification and an argument for reuse and good action (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Parguel et al., 2017). P2P platforms provide an excellent opportunity to justify giving in to temptation - due to the mentioned perception of environmental benefits, as well as the stimulating environment and the saving of time and energy. Based on this, the P2P platform has the potential to be used in an exploitative manner where self-interest can potentially lead to more impulse buying behaviors and increased indulgent consumption. This is due to the cognitive dissonance between consumer attitude - i.e. negative consideration of impulse buying and counterattitudinal behavior - i.e. giving in to temptation (Mesulam et al., 2024; Parguel et al., 2017). Based on this notion of a created legitimizing context, a psychological rebound effect can occur, where increased consumption can be observed either in the same consumption area or another - causing direct or indirect rebound effects.

### ***Social Practice Approach On P2P Second-hand Consumption***

To understand how P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption, the Social Practice Theory (SPT) lens will be applied to investigate the intertwined elements of material, competence and meaning. Further, it is crucial to understand how these intertwined elements contribute to creating conditions for psychological rebound effects. The SPT lens has been widely applied to study consumption behavior and environmental impacts - such as recycling (Holmberg et al., 2016). Previous studies on sustainable consumption have expressed interest in the organization of practices as well as their constitutive elements (Spotswood et al., 2015; Shove et al., 2012).

The Practice Theory is not a unified theory, and there exist different variations; however, the common interest is in explaining how social action is undertaken and from these discussions, Social Practice Theory (SPT) emerges (Reckwitz, 2017; Schatzki et al., 2001; Halkier & Jensen, 2011). According to Reckwitz (2002), a practice can be understood as "*a routinized type of behavior which consists of several elements, interconnected to one other: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion, and motivational knowledge*" (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 249). Further, a critical understanding in this STP view is that individuals are the 'carriers' of practices of which consumption can be essential. Knowledge is exchanged between agents, and meaning is a social construct emerging in discourses. Therefore, individuals cannot be analyzed in isolation, but the focus is on understanding how people coordinate themselves to jointly develop and perform practice (Shove et al., 2012).

According to Shove et al. (2012), social actions and behaviors are embedded in and shaped by broader social and material contexts, and the "reductive scheme" for practices can be seen in the elements of material, competence and meaning (Shove & Pantzar, 2005; Shove et al., 2012). These practice elements are interconnected, and for the practice to be performed, there need to be connections between these three categories of elements (Shove, 2012; Reckwitz, 2002; Shove & Pantzar, 2005).

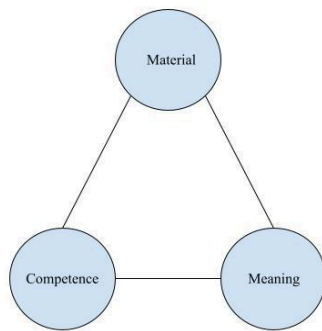


Figure 1, Made by the Author based on Shove et al. (2012) STP intertwined elements.

The first element is *material*: infrastructure, objects, tools and the human body. Secondly, *practical knowledge*: shared understanding, i.e. rules and norms, as well as skills and know-how. Lastly, *the meaning* is emotions, motivational knowledge, and mental activities. Moreover, these elements are connected through linkages, and practices are shaped by the active integration of practice elements (Shove, 2014). Moreover, in reaching sustainable consumer practices, all three elements must receive supporting conditions and focus for the practice to change (Shove et al., 2012). Fors et al. (2023) further emphasize the multi-dimensional challenge in changes of - values, attitudes, behavioral routines and decisions to achieve a more sufficiency-based consumption, i.e. only buying what we need and minimizing the amount of consumption. This underscores the insight the SPT lens can have in studying a practice with the aim of more sustainable consumption - as in the case of reuse.

Moreover, in light of a changing practice, Shove et al. (2014) discuss reconfiguration, which is a new constellation of material, meaning, and competence, which can be either a combination of already existing practice elements, integrating new elements or a combination of entirely new practice elements. This is possible when links between existing practice elements are either broken or loosened, which allows for the creation of new links between new or existing practice elements. Further, as people create combinations between existing and new elements, a change in elements can change the practice (Shove et al., 2012). Reconfiguration processes have been used as a framework for understanding how technology is changing practice. For example, Magaudda (2011) investigated how the iPod, when introduced, shifts how music is consumed and revolutionizes the music industry. In this sense, new meaning and competence are developed to adapt to the new material - which can create insight to the emergence of P2P second-hand platforms. Against this backdrop, the

Social Practice Theory (SPT) is commonly used in consumption studies and sustainable contexts and is also under investigation by technological changes, which makes the approach suitable for understanding the practice of P2P second-hand consumption and how it shapes clothing consumption.

### ***Material Elements in P2P Second-hand Consumption***

According to Shove (2012) material is consistent infrastructure, objects, tools and the human body itself. Philips et al. (2016) and Fors et al. (2023) discuss the materiality of the P2P platforms in both physical and digital forms, as the platforms cannot exist without ICT hardware and physical objects such as computers and smartphones, which in turn would be useless without digital applications. Fors et al. (2023) add to this understanding and distinguish *Intermediary Material* and *Object Material*. While both connect buyer and seller, the Object Material items sold on the platforms are interpreted by users in these different contexts based on the design of the platform - which highlights the role of the P2P second-hand platform as intermediary material and shaping experience (Fors et al., 2023).

Based on this notion, the key offering of P2P second-hand platforms is the materiality by taking the role of mediating websites that facilitate P2P exchanges. Moreover, the emergence of especially mobile platforms creates an opportunity for second-hand clothing to become a commercialized e-commerce market (Kjær et al., 2019; Xu et al., 2021; Frick et al., 2021). By creating the foundation of an online community, users can leave feedback and information that is publicly available, which further provides pivotal material to engage in the practice (Grinnell, 2009). In this sense, P2P second-hand platform users interact with traded objects and the platform itself (Fors et al., 2023). Moreover, Botsman (2017) emphasizes that trust must be established to encourage the use of P2P second-hand platforms, and here, the material element and logistics play an important role.

Shopping efficiency is achieved online as consumers need less effort, time and money to consume; in this sense, efficiency gains made by online shopping can be viewed beyond financial savings in psychological terms: reduction of individually perceived behavioral costs (Parguel et al., 2017; Friedrichsmaier & Matthies, 2015; Frick et al., 2021). Frick et al. (2021) further discuss this efficiency in the sense that making consumption easier can lead to more sufficiency-oriented goods - second-hand, being purchased as being less energy-demanding from the consumer perspective. In the online environment, efficiency gains and perceived savings in psychological terms may lead to a substitution effect if individuals consume the same amount of goods given online shopping possibilities as they did previously. However, the efficiency can also be used to maximize output, i.e., increasing consumption level at the same input level.

### ***Meanings and Emotions in P2P Second-hand Consumption***

Participating in practice requires and evokes mental activities, emotion and motivational knowledge (Reckwitz, 2002). In the framework developed by Shove et al. (2012), meaning refers to *the social and symbolic significance of participation in a practice*, and it highlights socially shared perceptions and views on a practice. In the context of P2P platforms, Shove et al. (2012) and Gram-Hanssen (2010) distinguish different "roles" that participants in the practice can enact - providers and takers where participants find different meanings depending on whether they sell or buy. However, for this study, the main focus is on the role of the buyer.

### ***Meaning and Emotions in Second-hand Clothing Consumption***

Perceived meaning plays an essential role in P2P second-hand consumption, and previous research on second-hand clothing consumption distinguishes both a product dimension and a sale dimension (Giot & Roux, 2010). Primary research on second-hand clothing consumption identifies primary motivations for purchasing second-hand clothing as *Economic, Critical and Recreational* and has later been complemented by *Fashionability* (Giot & Roux, 2010; Ferraro et al., 2016). Building on this rationale for second-hand clothing consumption, the meanings and values of second-hand consumption can be further understood. Firstly, *Economic value* is shown through an overall lower price, and second-hand products are associated initially with lower/limited-income consumers as they provide more affordable prices (Xu et al., 2014; Giot & Roux, 2010). This is also demonstrated in the P2P second-hand setting, where economic benefits are highlighted (Fors et al., 2021). *The critical value* is associated with distancing from the current state of the economic system's 'throwaway trend'. Where consumers can express a socially conscious self through second-hand consumption, research has revealed that this provides meaning for individuals with a strong need for uniqueness and non-traditional approaches to style and life (Giot & Roux, 2010; Roux & Korchia, 2006).

Moreover, second-hand consumption can express anti-corporate motivations by distancing itself from large corporate chains (Brace-Govan & Binay, 2010; Xu et al., 2014). Within critical meaning, young people especially show environmental concern, and consuming second-hand can contribute to a more sustainable world on financial constraints (Xu et al., 2014). On the other hand, research shows that environmental values are seldom a crucial factor for many consumers. However, they still play an essential role in second-hand clothing consumption in complementing other elements (Hur, 2020).

*Recreational value* firstly emphasizes the visual stimulation and unpredictable offerings that second-hand channels offer and mirrors through consumers experiencing a thrill and the "treasure hunt". In this sense, recreational motivation becomes interwoven with economic motivation, creating the thrill of finding great value at a low price (Giot & Roux, 2010). On a product level, recreational values are closely linked to nostalgia, authenticity, and striving to be perceived as unique through fulfilling hedonic aspirations (Roux & Korchia, 2006; Giot & Roux, 2010). This builds on research in the context of symbolic meanings to consuming clothes, where perceived symbolism associated with items reaches aesthetic ideals and

novelty-seeking (Niinimäki et al., 2010). Ferraro et al. (2016) add the notion of *fashionability* to this context. Fashionability becomes a more significant meaning as second-hand clothing has been redefined and social stigmas have faded and become an emerging trend. Moreover, fashionability relates to the need for authenticity and originality in expression as well as attempting to follow a fashion trend, create a personal style, or use it as a tool to avoid mainstream fashion.

### ***Meaning and Emotions in The Online Environment***

Emerging research from Parguel et al. (2017) demonstrates that online environments increase agency by fulfilling material aspirations and further stimulate affective reactions such as enjoyment, surprise and the feeling of bargain hunting. Moreover, in their research on online behavior, Sundström et al. (2019) show that impulse buying often stems from the combination of boredom and the individual's engagement with the item. As in the case of clothing, having a clothing interest increases the probability of feeling bored and engaging in impulsive shopping. Online shopping becomes a tool to escape boredom, distraction, and joy, whereas hunting and purchasing become rewards. Moreover, in this context, the scrolling users are easily affected by price and the easy access stimuli (Sundström et al., 2019). Firstly, clothing is a category that research reveals has a high risk of impulse buying in an offline context. Hence, when clothing-buying decisions are governed by strong emotions such as - boredom in the online environment, the decisions are usually more based on impulse than rational behavior. The online site's atmosphere of responsiveness and creation of engagement offers users a mechanism for avoiding boredom in an e-commerce context (Sundström et al., 2019; Hjelm-Lidholm et al., 2017). In the context of the online environment, there is also an acknowledgement of how online platforms are intertwined - which in turn affects meaning creation. In research on social media, peer content findings influence individual consumption levels in the same way as perceiving online advertising (Frick et al., 2021).

### ***Competence to Navigate the P2P Second-hand Platforms***

Competence is also referred to as practical knowledge, described by Shove et al. (2012) as shared understanding, i.e. rules and norms, as well as skills and know-how. Based on the nature of the P2P second-hand platform, it can be linked to autonomous co-creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Philips et al., 2016), where participants in the practice must actively collaborate to realize value in an exchange. P2P platforms create an environment with involvement and responsibilities by both the seller and the buyer, in which manner then relies on the intermediary role of the P2P platform. This emphasizes competence's role in navigating P2P second-hand platforms and purchasing clothing. To make the deal, buyers on the platforms must perform activities such as searching for information, monitoring processes and negotiation terms (Liang & Huang, 1998; Philips et al., 2019).

## ***Methodology***

### ***Research approach***

In order to capture the elements of P2P second-hand platforms, an interview study approach was used with an explorative approach through phenomenological in-depth interviews. This research technique is suitable for attaining this "first person" description of an experience (Thompson et al., 1989). This research approach is helpful for insight into phenomena where prior insights are few, offering an approach to exploring and generating new knowledge captured by different experiences (Eriksson & Kolovainen, 2008; Thompson et al., 1989). This is further motivated by the study's objectives as the dispersion of P2P second-hand platforms is relatively new, and the research on rebound effects - especially psychological rebound effects in the re-use market is emerging and still constitutes a small proportion. (Parguel, 2017; Makov & Font Vivanco). Moreover, the sense that P2P second-hand platforms in their user experience and their environmental impact lack research (Centobelli et al., 2022; Parguel et al., 2017; Shor, 2014).

The phenomenological approach enables the capturing of meaning structures, and within the field of phenomenology, acknowledgement is made of the influence of ideas and individual perception due to the social construction of reality, shared meaning and language (Thompson et al., 1989). A phenomenological methodology, therefore, becomes suitable for understanding how individuals interpret the world and their perception of meaning—this view on social construction further links to the study's research approach of SPT. By exploring participants' lived experiences, the phenomenology in-depth interviews can uncover how practices are enacted and experienced by individuals. Further, it allows insights into the complex interplay between social structures, individual agency, and lived experiences. To provide interviews with insight into the shaping of P2P second-hand material elements, a literature study was conducted to demonstrate the shift that P2P second-hand platforms create in the practice of second-hand clothing consumption. Firstly, the Swedish P2P consumption and P2P second-hand platforms were investigated, and information was collected from the selected P2P second-hand platforms: Tradera, Sellpy and Vinteds information page.

### ***The P2P Second-hand Platform Context***

The Swedish P2P second-hand market is relevant as these platforms have been presented as measures to become more CE-oriented and meet sustainability targets (Hagbert et al., 2018). In this context, Svensk Handel (2024) disclosed the continuous growth of the second-hand clothes market - reaching 4.8 billion SEK in the first quarter of 2024, where the e-commerce channels dominate. Moreover, Sweden has a high level of affluent consumption, where the average person consumes 14 kg of textiles yearly. (Environmental Protection Agency, 2023). In the context of affluent consumption and the emergence of P2P second-hand platforms infrastructure available in Sweden, this scope becomes essential to fulfill the purpose of the study and collect respondents who can provide insights. Based on the description of Costello & Reczek (2020) of the P2P platforms as an intermediary in P2P exchanges and to fulfill the purpose of this study, the limitations on P2P second-hand platforms were made to Tradera,

Sellpy and Vinted. The selection of P2P platforms enables insight into how different characteristics and business models and the intermediary role of P2P second-hand platforms play a part in shaping the clothing consumption patterns. Moreover, their price range is relatively similar, they offer low/middle prices in their price segment, limiting this study from the distinction between second-hand and vintage clothing. Moreover, they were selected based on their market share and dominance within the second-hand segment. Materiality is crucial in capturing P2P second-hand platforms, shaping effects, and using SPT as a lens. Therefore, this study conducts a materiality analysis based on the platforms chosen, as demonstrated below, collected from the web pages.

**Tradera:** Firstly, Tradera is highly recognized in the Swedish re-use context, and in 2023, they recognized 314 million visits on the platform, where clothing was the most prominent category (Tradera, 2023a). Tradera fits the definition of a P2P platform as described by Costello & Reczek (2020) and Wirtz et al. (2019) as a transfer of ownership of a peer-provided resource through a platform. Tradera items are sold either by bidding at auction or a fixed price via Buy Now. In an auction, it is about having the highest bid when time runs out, and a feature is the "Auto Bid" that sets your maximum price, then Tradera handles the bidding for you automatically up to that amount. Tradera offers Monitoring, which aims to help to keep track of new listings on Tradera. When the user monitors a search, the user receives an email notification with a summary of all new listings that have come out. If the user wants to save a specific listing, it can be added to the Watchlist. As payment is made through the platform and shipment details are shared with the seller to fulfill the shipment at this stage, there is an offer to include Tradera's buyer protection, and after receiving the purchase, there is the possibility of leaving reviews and feedback on the seller.

**Sellpy:** Sellpy is a significant player focused on clothing, and in 2021, Sellpy was the most extensive online shop and sales service for second-hand items in Sweden (HM Group, 2021). Sellpy fits the definition of a P2P platform as described by Costello and Reczek (2020) and Wirtz et al. (2019), with a high degree of platform intermediation. Although Sellpy manages much of the sales process, the core P2P element remains because the goods are sourced from individuals (peers), and the platform facilitates their sale to other individuals. Thus, Sellpy can be defined as a P2P platform with a robust intermediary role. Sellpy offers both a website and app format, and on the platform, the user can browse through categories and brands or search for something specific. It also offers filtering on specific demands. Sellpy also focuses on offering styles to the season as well as influencer wardrobes being sold. Items can be added to the shopping bag and reserved for an hour. The user can "favorite" items on the platform and in terms of price reductions and republishing of items notifications will be sent via email. Sellpy describes their aim to offer second-hand as any other e-commerce platform and secure payment solutions, such as credit cards, Klarna, Paypal and Swish or "Sellpy credits" based on previously sold items. In the purchase process, Sellpy also offers a 30-day return policy (Sellpy, n.d).

**Vinted:** Vinted is a P2P second-hand platform with over 65 million users in over 15 markets and has become highly successful in Sweden after its launch in 2022 (Vinted, n.d). The platform fit into the definition through Costello & Reczek (2020) and Wirtz et al. (2019) as a transfer of ownership of a peer-provided resource through a platform. According to Vinted's website, it is a digital marketplace where peers can purchase and sell items among each other, which ensures a safe and smooth user experience. Vinted in every purchase includes buyer protection; when a user presses "buy now", Vinted protects you in the sense of return policy, customer service and safe payment through the integrated payment system (Vinted, n.d). Moreover, Vinted takes on the role of Conflict Resolving; if an issue between the parties arises, Vinted, in the majority of the cases, steps in. Vinted offers multiple payments and credit cards. When users have made a sale, they can also create a "Vinted balance," which can be used directly for a new purchase. After each transaction, both parties in the exchange can give feedback - both sellers and buyers.

### ***Selection of Respondents***

To fulfill the purpose of this study, purposive sampling, a non-probability method, was applied (Bell et al., 2019). As the study design is based on phenomenological methodology, experience becomes the criteria for selecting respondents, and in order to capture a first-person description this phenomenon must be described as lived by the interview participants (Thompson et al., 1989). Hence, respondents had knowledge and experience of frequent P2P second-hand consumption in the context of Tradera, Sellpy, and Vinted.

Firstly, previous studies of online clothing consumption show that women purchase more clothes online than men (Statista, 2022). Moreover, the dispersion of P2P second-hand platform usage is mainly concentrated among younger people, as the typical user profile of P2P second-hand platforms is mainly women 20-35 (Ellen MacArthur, 2021, a,b). With this knowledge of users, this profile becomes important for studying P2P second-hand platforms in terms of experience and frequent use to investigate psychological rebound effects.

The consumption level of P2P second-hand platforms was controlled before the interview. Firstly, as the respondents are all inhabitants of Sweden and are inherently used to affluent consumption, it can be assumed that most live up to these standards. Moreover, by selecting respondents within the range of 20-35, they fit into the criteria of frequent P2P second-hand platforms in terms of clothing purchases. However, In order to make this distinction, the respondents enclosed which platforms they used and approximately how many P2P second-hand purchases they made during the last month. In order to establish what a high/low consumption rate is, data from the Environmental Protection Agency (2023) describes the average Swedish clothing consumption as approximately 50 items each year, which makes the monthly consumption rate four items per month. Based on the previously enclosed consumption behavior in combination with the interview material, a distinction of moderately low, moderately and moderately high was made among the respondents to analyze their consumption patterns further.

Table 1, Distribution of respondents. \*All names are replaced by pseudonyms

| Name*    | Age | Occupation                               | P2P consumption level | Interview time |
|----------|-----|------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Sara     | 23  | Economy Student/Economy Assistant        | Moderate              | 50 min         |
| Johanna  | 25  | Digital Marketing Associate              | Moderate high         | 45 min         |
| Sofia    | 24  | Digital Marketing Associate              | Moderate low          | 35 min         |
| Kajsa    | 27  | Economy Student/Economy Assistant        | Moderate low          | 45 min         |
| Hanna    | 25  | Student engineering design               | Moderate              | 42 min         |
| Elin     | 23  | Textile Economy Student/Retail Associate | Moderate high         | 35 min         |
| Jennifer | 25  | Textile Economy Student                  | Moderate              | 35 min         |
| Angelica | 26  | Management Consultant                    | Moderate              | 40 min         |
| Isabelle | 25  | Management Consultant                    | Moderate high         | 45 min         |
| Evelina  | 21  | Sociology Student                        | Moderate high         | 53 min         |
| Linn     | 25  | Management Student                       | Moderate high         | 36 min         |

### ***The Interview Process***

The aim of this study is to investigate how P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption. It is of great interest to understand users' perception of these platforms and re-use consumption. Therefore, qualitative interviews using a phenomenological approach were used to understand user experiences and meanings. Based on this notion, the research follows Thompson et al. (1989) aim of the phenomenological interview to obtain a first-person description of some specified domain of experience - in this case, P2P second-hand clothing platforms. Following the phenomenological nature, the respondent's experience is in focus. Therefore, the interview guide structure was set after the thematic and dynamic dimensions without steering it too strictly. This enabled a foundation suitable for the research topic's exploratory nature (Bell et al., 2019; Thompson et al., 1989).

Thompson et al. (1989) further emphasize the importance of an open dialogue where the role of the interviewer is to provide a context in which respondents freely describe their experience in detail. With this outlook, the first question in the interview is crucial as it should open up to a descriptive answer of an experience and create a flowing dialogue. On this notion, the opening question plays a vital role in setting the scene. Therefore, by asking *How would you describe how you have used P2P second-hand platforms in the last weeks?* It

opens up the understanding of how and what role P2P second-hand platforms play in shaping clothing consumption. In alignment with Thompson et al. (1989), the openness allows different angles to capture the goal of phenomenological interviews - first person descriptions of lived experiences. The follow-up questions in the dialogue focus on lived experiences and are emphasized through "how" and "what" questions to capture description and encourage respondents to reflect on their lived experiences. A focus was especially on asking respondents to exemplify their experiences to create more insightful meanings of P2P second-hand consumption.

In total, 11 interviews were conducted, ranging from 35 to 55 minutes. This aligns with Duke's (1984) recommendation on phenomenological interview selection. A mix of physical and digital video interviews was conducted through the Microsoft Teams video communication program. The video format enables a more trust-established and relaxed environment like face-to-face interviews (Bell et al., 2019).

With the goal of creating an open dialogue with the respondents' perceptions in focus, the respondents must feel safe and willing to express their experiences, and the interview should be open to personal interaction (Thompson et al., 1989; Kvale, 2006). In order to create this environment, ethics must be taken into account, and the scene for equality must be set further, both in terms of power balance and knowledge. Moreover, the structure was coloured, setting the scene for trust, which is an essential tool for efficiently obtaining a view of the interview respondents' world (Kvale, 2016; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). This was facilitated by respondents prior to the interview being briefed on the purpose of the interview, and ethical concerns were addressed by respondents accepting the terms of voluntary participation, recording, and offering anonymity and confidentiality by creating a pseudonym (Thompson et al., 1989; Collis & Hussey, 2013; Bell et al., 2019).

### ***Data Analysis***

In alignment with the research approach, the understanding of this study is that social reality is a continuous process that does not have one definition. This motivates a hermeneutic phenomenological research approach. This is demonstrated by the empirically conducted phenomenological in-depth interviews to capture respondents' experiences of P2P second-hand platforms regarding clothing consumption and later analyze their meaning (Thompson et al., 1989).

Firstly, a complete transcription of each interview constituted the basis for the analysis (Sandberg, 1994; Sandberg, 2000). This transcription was made in the AI-generated program "My Good Tape" and further controlled by the researcher. The following analysis was conducted through an intentional method that emphasizes both the *what* and *how* in the phenomenological sense to understand the meaning structure of lived experience - in the objectives of this paper of P2P how second-hand platforms are experienced and clothing shape consumption (Sandberg, 2000; Thompson et al., 1989).

The transcription was read multiple times to develop an understanding of its content and a grasp of underlying themes (Sandberg, 2000). After that, there was a search for meaning structures within every individual interview. Subsequently, the researcher identified respondents' greater conceptions by analyzing how each individual perceived and used the P2P second-hand platforms based on the identified meanings and to organize the meaning structure of these conceptions into different overarching themes (Sandberg, 2000; Solér, 1997). The phenomenological method is an iterative process that orients on the *what* and *how* of P2P second-hand consumption, and based on these identified findings, different subgroups were created based on similarities in meanings and conceptions (Sandberg, 2000; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Based on the understanding of Thomson et al. (1994), the so-called hermeneutic circle was used to understand the methodological process of interpreting the collected data. The process consists of puzzling and re-interpreting the qualitative data in relation to the "whole", which is the experience of how P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption. In this sense, the researcher's interpretation is an inevitable aspect of scientific understanding based on one's preconceptions. Once each identified conception was cross-checked for alternative interpretation and exhaustivity was ensured, these themes were identified and linked to answer the research question: *How does P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption?* Subsequently, the findings of the interviews and the iterative process of matching the data to the theoretical framework were carried out (Sandberg, 2000). As this study takes a SPT approach the author found underlying meaning structures in the empirical material and linked to material, meaning and competence in presenting the results and analyzing.

### ***Methodological Discussion***

The criteria used to assess the research's trustworthiness and quality were based on the dependability, credibility, transferability and conformability criteria established by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Firstly, dependability enables readers to follow the process and verify findings through logic links. This was ensured by, first of all, motivation in the methodology choices and the research process. Secondly, previous research in the theoretical framework enables the researcher to draw logical links to the empirical material with the aim of the research to explore how P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In terms of transferability, Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe the criteria as the ability to find links between previous research within the field. The criteria is arguably fulfilled in this paper first by the theoretical framework that combines emerging research to set up an understanding of the P2P second-hand consumption from a Social Practice Theory (SPT) approach. Secondly, by interpreting the results of previous research in the analysis and discussion.

In terms of credibility, critique of the phenomenological approach and the nature of qualitative research is how decisions in the research process will shape the process and the findings. When analyzing phenomenological interviews, the respondent interprets their lived experience of a specific phenomenon, and the researcher interprets the respondent's narratives (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Thompson, 1989). Firstly, regarding the respondents, different individuals possess different abilities to articulate their lived experiences through

words, which could prevent the building of credible narratives of the experienced phenomenon (Soler, 1997). However, by guiding the respondent in the interview in doubt, this issue is avoided. Further, in relation to credibility, the author is taking a more passive role and only steers the interview with thematic topics to ensure a more credible perception of the respondent's experiences on how P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption (Sanghera & Björket, 2008;Thompson et al., 1989). To ensure credibility and conformability the research in the data analysis the author is clearly demonstrating quotes throughout the analysis the reader can make interpretations. Subjectivity can be a critique against the findings of phenomenological interviews; however, within an emerging research field, the capturing of first-person experiences and individual variation is embraced and essential to generate new knowledge. In order to understand how P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption, the interpreted meanings by users need to be extracted and become possible through phenomenological research, which seeks respondents' experience in *what* and *how* questions, which entails experiences and details (Thomson et al., 1994;Thompson et al., 1989).

### ***Results and Analysis of P2P Second-hand Platform Experiences***

Based on the Research Question, *How do P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption?* This section explains from an SPT view how material, meaning and competence are intertwined in shaping the practice of P2P second-hand and clothing consumption. Moreover, with the notion of a reconfiguration process based on research by Shove et al. (2014) and Magaudda (2011), the P2P second-hand platform is assumed to be a new element that changes the practice of second-hand clothing consumption.

#### ***The material elements of P2P Second-hand Consumption***

In capturing the experience of materiality, themes have been identified as the facilitation of logistic flows, access to information, financial flows, and intertwined networks between social media and the P2P second-hand platforms. All in all, P2P second-hand clothing platforms, through their intermediary role, facilitated exchanges and financial flows, which affected purchasing decisions. According to Shove et al. (2012) and Fors et al. (2023), within P2P second-hand platforms, materiality can be viewed of both objects exchanged on the platforms and technology that facilitates the purchasing process through infrastructure. The findings reveal that the P2P platform's role is mainly to be an intermediary material that shapes clothing consumption. Moreover, adding the notion from Shove et al. (2014) on reconfiguration, a new constellation of material, meaning, and competence, P2P second-hand platforms can be viewed as integrating a new element in the practice of second-hand clothing consumption, creating a reconfiguration.

#### ***Facilitation of Logistics and Flow of Goods***

Facilitation of flows of goods is about P2P second-hand platforms through the removal of logistics barriers that increase the probability of a second-hand purchase. Firstly, The respondents highlight that P2P second-hand platforms can provide a more effortless shopping experience by overcoming physical second-hand stores' geographical and time obstacles. This

aligns with Fors et al. (2021), where digitalization has made it easier for people to participate in the P2P economy, making the barriers to entry low. Moreover, the logistics systems offering reverse logistics and characteristics shift of taking on more traditional e-commerce attributes affect the customers' P2P second-hand consumption experience.

When asked how she perceived P2P platforms, Angelica described the platform Sellpy's logistics system as follows: *"With Sellpy, it is very good that you can send back. It is like an open purchase, and it actually contributes a lot to why I place orders there. That you dare to take a chance on a garment."*

This quote reveals how Angelia perceives the logistics of available returns as significantly influencing the decision to place orders. Moreover, offering flexibility in returns enhances the overall shopping experience, encouraging more frequent and adventurous buying decisions - hence may lead to a higher level of second-hand clothing consumption. This ties to the research of Frick et al. (2021) that the logistic systems allow the opportunities for users to engage in more purchases. However, the removal of logistics otherwise associated with second-hand consumption as behavioral costs can lead to more second-hand consumption by the notion that saved time and energy can be used for maximizing output. The P2P Second-hand platforms of this study possess different logistics features. However, the commonality among the respondents is that established logistics systems and efficient flow of goods facilitate a previously doubtful area of second-hand and P2P exchanges. This is strengthened by previous research by Botsman (2017) that emphasizes that trust must be established towards more use of P2P second-hand platforms, and here, the material element and logistics play an important role.

Finally, the inherent characteristics of P2P second-hand platforms allow the users to become both buyers and sellers. All respondents have also participated as sellers in at least one of the platforms, demonstrating that consumption on P2P second-hand platforms is often intertwined with selling and providing garments. Different platforms are used for selling due to their characteristics. Most respondents prefer Tradera for its established position in resale. At the same time, Sellpy is favored for decluttering and selling large quantities of clothes, thanks to its intermediary role that reduces the effort of selling second-hand items. However, many respondents are shifting to Vinted due to its efficient logistics system. This demonstrates that in the P2P second-hand market, platforms that facilitate both buying and selling enhance ease of consumption, enabling quick decisions and continuous clothes swapping, where users can seamlessly transition between buyers and sellers.

### ***Access to Information and User-design***

The P2P second-hand platform's role as an efficient intermediary relies on creating a good user experience, making information available, and offering features, which in turn shapes clothing consumption. Compared to traditional second-hand practices, the online environment removes the physical experience of the garment. In this context, information plays a vital role in advocating the purchase.

First of all, the respondents highlight that precise information on the P2P second-hand platforms helps establish trust, which is crucial to making a purchase. This ties in with Botsman's (2017) and Grinnell's (2009) theory that information and availability provide crucial material and foundation for trust, which people need to engage in the P2P practice. In this study, the P2P second-hand platforms vary in the available information and user design. However, they share prominent information disclosure on the platform itself and product levels. Some respondents find the information better on clear pictures of Sellpy - taking a more substantial intermediary role over the advertisement. In contrast, others appreciate the more personal information exchange on Vinted, where buyers can chat with the seller and view personal pictures or Tradera, where the seller steers the advertisement.

Sara describes this as follows: *"Often on Vinted, you can also see things like this: if I click in the box for quality, is it good quality? Is it a new one with a price tag? So there is information under the garments that are in condition. You can both read and look at pictures"*.

When further asked to describe her experience of P2P second-hand platforms, Sara explains that she mainly uses Vinted and how the platform's buildup facilitates her second-hand consumption through features. *"The features make it much easier to make purchases compared to in a store. You can more easily sort out everything and sort by color and other criteria you may be looking for. I have come to prefer the platforms to physical second-hand stores as you can filter out very specifically. Now I have been looking for many specific things and garments. If you see something you like, you can click on the seller's profile and see similar items or all the items they sell in their 'wardrobe' and then it is often very similar in style. It makes it easy to find something you like; it is just a tap away. I think it is fascinating and good with Vinted and in some ways Sellpy for the part that you can continue your search in this way."*

This description demonstrates how Sara enjoys access to information and the user experience of Vinted and Sellpy. By offering features and a design that facilitate ongoing searches the shopping experience is enhanced. This is a common theme amongst the respondents that describe how the shopping experience is enhanced by features of the P2P second-hand platforms, such as: "filtering", saving brands, following sellers or receiving emails and notifications of newly added items or the purchasing process this ties to the research of Friedrichsmaier and Matthies (2015) and Frick et al. (2021), where the P2P second-hand platforms, by implementing user-friendly characteristics create a reduction of individually perceived behavioral costs. On this notion, Johanna describes how she perceives second-hand differently in an online setting and how P2P second-hand platforms might shift the perception through their offering.

Johanna says *"People may have been a little scared of purchasing second-hand clothes before, as maybe you enter a store and it is a special scent as it can be in a second-hand shop with a lot of stuff."* and continues with *"but I think that you do not really get the same feeling on these platforms as it feels more like you are shopping in a regular online store, even though it is like private sellers goods"*

This description reveals how Johanna has become more open to purchasing second-hand in the context of P2P second-hand platforms. The P2P second-hand platforms have leveraged visual elements that allow users to browse easily and further break down the stigma of second-hand consumption as being complicated, time-demanding, and unfresh. This links to research by Fors et al. (2023) where the object material - second-hand clothing in this context, is interpreted by the user based on the design of the Intermediation material - the P2P second-hand platform. This also takes place by the P2P second-hand platforms mediating information on other users' preferences and interest in items. On Vinted and Sellpy, the functions of "liking" a garment show the visibility of this interest as well as the number of bids on Tradera that affect purchasing decisions.

Isabelle describes this on Sellpy as *"If I see that this is really something I want and then I can think - No, I have to buy it now because I see there are more than a hundred likes."* and Linn describes this phenomenon on Sellpy as *"It becomes a bit like a competition because it is a garment and you can see who is interested and the number of favorites marked goes up. It will be a little stressful as well. So it is absolutely certain that you get a little stressed."* In the context of Tradera, Hanna describes this access to information as *"You will probably be nudged. If you have thought about it before, then you want it even more in other words. It is a bargain when others have bid on it too"*.

These quotes underpin the significantly influencing perception of a bargain on the P2P second-hand platforms. The visibility of other users interested in information can also act as a form of social proof, reinforcing the desirability of the garment. It can create a sense of scarcity, which is further fueled by the fact that it is second-hand. It is more "unique" than in traditional e-commerce, which may influence purchasing decisions. Finally, most respondents describe that the availability of garments and their associated prices on the P2P platforms indicate potential resale opportunities of garments in their own wardrobes - reinforcing participation on the P2P second-hand platform.

### ***Facilitation of Payment and Financial flows***

Facilitation of payment refers to the ease of payment and financial features on P2P second-hand platforms, which influence the perception of the platforms and willingness to purchase. All platforms offer extensive payment offers and different ways to affect the final price, which plays a crucial role in shaping the landscape of P2P second-hand clothing consumption.

In the case of Vinted, Linn explains, *"With Apple Pay, you can make a purchase by pressing a simple button" and that "this function makes it hard to have a perception of how much you actually buy and to what sum"*. Klara\* explains, *"When you are online, it also feels quite special. You can get a little carried away, I think, that it does not feel like you are buying something for real."*

This passage entails acknowledging how Linn experiences second-hand purchases becoming increasingly accessible and how payment features make financial perception easier online. The detachment from the physicality of shopping and the nature of online platforms can contribute to impulse buying. This ties in with Parguel et al.'s (2017) research on online environments and the facilitation of online consumption, where behavioral costs are reduced and shopping efficiency is achieved. Moreover, these experiences are further amplified by financial features that the respondents highlight, such as Vinted's feature to bid on prices and purchasing "bundle prices"- making multiple purchases from the same seller more attractive. Moreover, as noted by the respondents in the involvement of these P2P second-hand platforms, an essential financial feature is offering a "balance" for payment that changes the perception of purchases. The Vinted and Sellpy balances are connected to the user's sold items that can be used to pay to buy something new on the platform. The respondents engaged in selling describe that the money they make is small, often leading to the money they reinvest in buying new clothes - either from the platform or externally.

Johanna describes how she uses the P2P second-hand platform she describes the balance function as” , *"One time I had sold for like this a few hundred SEK and then I used that as a balance when I bought three new things, so that was great, it is a bit like 'Girl math' because it feels as the purchase was free."*

This statement entails Johannas's reasoning on how clothing consumption can be justified and a view that earnings can be spent on continuous consumption. As Johanna describes, there is a distortion based on the fact that there is no traditional monetary transaction.

### ***P2P second-hand platforms as bridged with social media platforms***

Another important finding regarding the P2P second-hand platforms is the platform's role as Intermediary material in bridging activity with social media platforms. This is further a shift in the reconfiguration process of P2P second-hand platforms, as both rely on advanced digital infrastructure and technology that enable seamless interaction, communication, and transactions. Materiality bridges the gap between inspiration and transaction, and users can easily transition from seeing an item in a social media post to purchasing it on a second-hand P2P platform. As a result, a facilitated and accessible second-hand market is promoted, and with this shift in materiality, second-hand clothing consumption has been more commercialized.

When asked how she uses the P2P second-hand platforms, Kajsa explains, *"The use of these platforms has now become more incorporated into my daily "app rotation" and that "I go in and check Vinted, especially Tradera. I would say that I check on Instagram or other apps daily and get continuous inspiration. Then, I enter Vinted or Tradera to find something similar."*

This description entails how P2P second-hand platforms have become an outlet for daily online usage and by being integrated into a routine where the usage pattern blurs the lines between social interaction and shopping and the external collection of inspiration can quickly

become a purchase on the P2P second-hand platforms, it also shows the commercialization of the P2P second-hand platforms. Moreover, both social media and P2P platforms thrive on user-generated content where aspects such as reviews, ratings, and social media posts about purchases create a feedback loop that enhances the credibility and attractiveness of items listed on P2P platforms. Further, the external collection of inspiration on social media is highlighted as extra necessary in the second-hand sphere compared to commercial brands due to marketing and availability of seeing clothes on or styled. The bridging between social media and P2P second-hand platforms hence plays a crucial part in shaping second-hand clothing consumption.

### ***Meanings of P2P Second-hand Clothing Consumption***

In line with Shove et al. (2014) and Magaudda's (2011) understanding of reconfiguration, the integration of the P2P second-hand platforms also changed the meanings associated with the use of second-hand clothing consumption. This means that in the context of P2P, second-hand clothing consumption concerns both second-hand clothes and the platforms themselves in terms of experiences and emotional responses. Building on Shove's (2012) meaning can be seen as what drives users to participate in the practice and findings demonstrate that P2P second-hand platforms entail meanings from the online environment offering inspiration and entertainment, access to unique styles, and a perception of more sustainable consumption and value for money. Even if some themes tagine with traditional second-hand clothing consumption there is a shift in the meaning of the practice due to reconfiguration. With the emergence of P2P second-hand platforms, second-hand clothing consumption has become more socially accepted, and the previous stigma has diminished. Instead, the respondents demonstrated a sense of pride by buying reusable clothing and contributing to more sustainable clothing consumption.

### ***The Meaning and Emotional Experience of Inspiration and Entertainment***

The majority of the respondents explain that beyond the essential utility of being an online marketplace, the P2P second-hand platform can function as a crucial source of inspiration for exploring fashion and clothing preferences. The P2P second-hand platform offers meaning by creating an experience of inspiration and entertainment by encouraging style preferences and community, which relates highly.

When asked how she uses P2P second-hand platforms, Evelina describes how she often uses it as a source of inspiration: *"I: use Vinted, kind of like Instagram. I am in more and checking on there than like on Instagram because it feels like you work a little more on yourself. I can look for garments and visualize - this could be nice with this garment. I don't think scrolling on that app makes me feel bad; maybe social media can sometimes. In that sense, you sort of 'work on yourself' by looking at clothes, so I think I use it a lot for like this, browsing."*

This statement clearly demonstrates how Evelina finds both enjoyment and leisure associated with browsing on these P2P second-hand platforms. Moreover, Evelina is very interested in fashion perceives, self-improvement, and emotional well-being when engaging with the platform and performing her hobby. This aligns with what Giot and Roux (2010) describe in

terms of recreational aspects, where the enjoyment of visual experiences of viewing and comparing different second-hand garments is highlighted.

Sara describes her use of these platforms in this sense: *"I often feel that you live a rather busy life, so I always think it is fun when it comes to the evening to get some inspiration, maybe, bring out a more creative side, visualize how a certain outfit would look for specific events or occasions. I think it is quite peaceful, it is a stress-free moment, it is very much like that - you are looking for what you want. You do not get overwhelmed by any number of options, but you can specify what you are looking for, and I think it is quite nice to check through."*

From this excerpt, it is interpretable that the P2P platform in Sara's experience can function as an outlet for creativity and that the person values the P2P platform's potential to encourage fashion exploration and foster a sense of community among other users who share an interest in fashion. Moreover, this indicates how Sara winds down after a busy day and reflects the idea that some users of P2P second-hand platforms can decompress by using the platforms and get distracted from reality. This theme is recurring among all respondents who describe using the P2P second-hand platforms in terms of in-between moments and mainly evenings when bored. This ties to the research of both Sundström et al. (2019) and Hjelm-Lidholm et al. (2017), which demonstrates that the online site's atmosphere of responsiveness and creation of engagement offers users a mechanism for avoiding boredom in an e-commerce context. As the individual is interested in fashion and second-hand clothing, there is an increased probability of impulsive shopping, which is the case for all the respondents. Building on the characteristics of inspiration hunting on P2P second-hand platforms such as creativity, entertainment and leisure, there is much time spent on the platforms, and the respondents confirm that addictions can be triggered.

Elin describes her habits of using P2P second-hand platforms and a usage session as *"it ranges anywhere from 10 minutes to about an hour. If I really start digging, and then I notice that I have been sitting for a long while and feel like—wow, now I have to stop."* and *"It can start from that you get a purchase urge, and then you go into the platforms and scroll a little."*

When asked how and when she uses P2P second-hand Angelica describes *"Because somehow. It dampens the need to consume, the feeling that you just want to consume" and the fact that it is second-hand, it becomes much more interesting, it is fun. It is an interest, and I lie there and sort of scroll through, and then it becomes a purchase."*

These statements highlight Elin and Angelica's feeling of urge to consume steamed from restlessness and boredom, and the P2P second-hand platforms can function as a tool to create inspirational satisfaction; however, it may lead to purchases. Linking to previous research on the nature of second-hand shopping by Giot and Roux (2010), the recreational value through visual stimulation and unpredictable offerings is mirrored. The tangnation between the online environment and the nature of uniqueness in second-hand clothing creates P2P second-hand platforms that facilitate the endless pursuit of inspiration. It also ties to the research of

Sundström et al. (2019) that online shopping can function as a tool to escape boredom and instead experience the hunt and an eventual purchase as a reward.

### ***The Meaning and Emotional Experience of Consuming Second-hand Clothes***

P2P second-hand platforms can create access to second-hand clothing, providing meaning in style and wardrobe renewal. Style functions as a form of symbolic communication, hence conveying messages about identity and values (Niinimäki et al., 2010). Therefore, obtaining second-hand clothing provides meaning to P2P second-hand clothing consumption. Firstly, there is a perception that P2P second-hand platforms allow consumers to explore unique styles unavailable within traditional clothing markets. This is demonstrated by the majority of the respondents, who emphasize how style and expression play a significant role in the respondent's lives.

Linn describes her feelings about wearing second-hand as *"When wearing these garments, I feel like a person who is good at fashion"* and further explains that *"Style is somewhat related to one's personality"*. and *"I actually got a compliment this weekend that I had such a unique style, which made me happy"*.

Linn describes that she enjoys a unique style and that fashion and clothes are essential in her creative expression. Hence, the perception that second-hand and its element of uniqueness plays a vital role in her style, expression and sense of self. Based on the research of Giot and Roux (2010) and Xu et al. (2014), these expressions of uniqueness and distinct style are associated with recreational values. The respondents further highlight that there is social acknowledgement of second-hand as offering unique and cool style, and there is the perception that P2P second-hand platforms can offer this meaning.

Hanna describes her favorite purchase on Sellpy: *"It was something special, so it felt very fun, and I became anticipative, and it felt as if I had done a bargain, and the fact that it is second-hand gives the experience of added value and elevates the experience"* and *"Second-hand does not feel as standardized or mass produced. Although maybe it is, But because it is from another time or it is a special garment. That way, it feels more fun."*

From this excerpt, it is interpretable that Hanna values the unique garment and distinguishes her style from the mainstream, valuing clothes that she perceives as more special. This taps into Ferraro et al. (2016) research that fashionability in second-hand consumption relates to the need for a personal fashion style or as a tool to avoid mainstream fashion. This description of the P2P second-hand experience of finding something unique also entails the recreational aspects Giot and Roux (2010) highlighted on the "treasure hunt" in the sales channel and a product level by unique clothing. While describing their style, some respondents highlighted a more classic style coloured by simplicity and comfortability. There is also an acknowledgement of trends and how second-hand clothes can be used to follow these swiftly changing trends. Linked to Ferraro et al.'s (2016) research on fashionability, second-hand clothing consumption can be used as an attempt to follow a fashion trend.

### ***The Meaning of Being a Conscious Consumer***

In the context of the emergence of P2P second-hand platforms, rising environmental consciousness is a significant meaning attached to buying re-used. P2P second-hand consumption can, in terms of prolonging a garment's life, speak to conscious consumers who prioritize sustainability, ethical practices, and mindful consumption. The previous stigma of second-hand platforms is replaced by a sense of pride in participating in re-using and participating in the narrative of contributing to a more circular economy.

First, findings reveal that self-perception is affected by consuming re-used clothes based on distance from commercialized chains and being more environmentally and socially sustainable. All the respondents highlight that second-hand clothing consumption is a growing trend, and environmental impact is considered in clothes purchases. The majority of the respondents explained that second-hand is a more responsible way to consume and renew the wardrobe.

Angelica describes her experience of shopping second-hand as *"With second-hand, I get some, a little uplifting self-image that—yes, but now I buy second-hand. I do not need to be ashamed of this purchase. And to also be good, I have contributed to something good."*

For Angelica, the fact that what she buys is second-hand creates a positive meaning and improves her sense of doing something good. This statement declares how second-hand, hence the use of P2P second-hand platforms, creates a moral acknowledgement of buying re-used. This aligns with previous research by Mesulam et al. (2024) and Parguel et al., 2017, that in terms of sustainability, P2P second-hand platforms reduce the environmental footprint and resolve users' goal-conflicts of consumption and sustainability. Moreover, it ties to critical values by Giot and Roux (2010) that the consumer wants to distance from the "throw-away trend". Among all the respondents, there is an acknowledgement of fast-fashion consequences, environmental impact, and workers' rights. It has been detected that second-hand clothing consumption has become a way of taking distance from the current fashion system, and with this continuous decision, environmental interest and concern have grown.

Linn explains that she perceives being in a regular store as *"uninspiring, unmotivating and an experience of unfresh mass production"*. Moreover, Elin describes how she *"For example, Zara I just think, like I do not want to support their company."* *"And I try to avoid, like fast fashion. I only shop on Weekday if I shop somewhere fast-fashion"*.

By these statements in this group of respondents, environmental awareness and critical values are presented, and they express a continued strive to shop more second-hand and distance themselves from the current fashion system. However, it also entails the feeling of doing "the right thing" by buying clothes second-hand and minimizing fast fashion while still consuming new clothes. This ties to critical values within the research of Giot and Roux (2010) and Brace-Govan and Binay (2010), where second-hand consumption can express anti-corporate

motivations by distancing itself from large corporate chains and is more likely to have a strong need for uniqueness. However, among the majority of the respondents, environmental values are not the primary motivation for shopping second-hand, but a nice benefit in addition to specific styles; this ties to Hurr's (2020) previous findings on environmental benefits being a benefit of re-used but not a main priority in purchasing decisions. No matter how high environmental motivation is for second-hand consumption, the recurring second argument among all respondents - is that buying second-hand is something good as it would otherwise be thrown away and turned into waste.

Johanna describes *"If you buy second-hand, at least then it is a garment that has already been bought and that it is then sort of circular that it gets to live on. Nevertheless, to say this, if you had not gone into Vinted and looked around, you might not have bought an extra garment"*.

In the context of P2P second-hand platforms, it further highlights how easy it is to get trapped in a continuous search that leads to multiple purchases or a bigger order. A theme detected among a smaller group of respondents is how second-hand consumption legitimates fur and leather consumption. Jennifer and Evelina describe how second-hand enables them to buy these kinds of products.

Jennifer: *"I think that many people buy real second-hand leather. And kind of thinks it is okay - because it is not produced new. But maybe I would not buy a new leather jacket that is newly produced. However, then you can sort of get that quality and to feel better - because it is second-hand as well. Same with a fur jacket, which I also recently bought second hand"*. Evelina also exemplifies this kind of purchase as an environmental choice by describing her view on reused as *"buying a second-hand leather jacket, it feels better than it is being thrown away, where it might end up in nature."*

These statements reveal how the respondents feel better buying re-used goods, as the nature of re-use can legitimize the purchase of otherwise morally and ethically sensitive goods such as fur and leather. This central meaning can link to critical meaning from Giot and Roux (2010), where sustainability is seen as an important value. It can also be linked to recreational value in the sense that they strive for unique garments.

### ***The Meaning of Value for Money***

Value for money has historically been an important concept in consuming second-hand clothes. However, with the emergence of P2P second-hand platforms, price and value has continued to promote an accessible low-price clothing culture, as demonstrated by the respondents' views on willingness to pay and how to justify purchases.

Firstly, all of the respondents mentioned price when purchasing second-hand clothes, especially on the P2P second-hand platforms, where the price range of re-used garments is around 300-200 on Tradera and Sellpy and 100 on Vinted. This Demonstrates the perceived value of re-used and what they expect to find.

Angelica describes her view on money on the P2P second-hand platforms: "*Although I have spent more money on second-hand products a month, I can excuse it—because it is second-hand. And it is a find, and it can sometimes be enough to say to myself or to someone else that—no, but good, it is second-hand. And that way, it could be a very good excuse.*"

Interpretable from this quote is the fact that second-hand clothes are being consumed, which can justify consumption and spending on clothing. Because of the nature of uniqueness intertwined with a cheap price, the garment becomes a bargain - and the financial loss is not that big. This ties to economic and recreational value in the research of Giot and Roux (2010), which can be seen as intertwined with the feeling of finding a unique second-hand garment at a low price.

### ***Competence in Navigating the P2P Second-hand Platforms***

Within the context of P2P second-hand platforms, there is a shared acknowledgement among all respondents that second-hand hunting relies on competence. The respondents describe finding second-hand clothes as an art form; it takes an eye for detail, patience and knowledge of what garments you are out after and how you can find them. However, in the reconfiguration process, the element of competence in navigating a P2P second-hand platform differs a bit from traditional second-hand clothing consumption. The user of P2P second-hand platforms must be competent in online browsing, evaluating the condition and fit of items through photos and descriptions, and navigating digital transactions. Users of the P2P second-hand platforms are 'carriers' of the practice, and knowledge is exchanged between agents. This view acknowledges that people coordinate themselves to develop and perform practices jointly - and in the case of P2P second-hand consumption, this is, to a broad extent, done through friends and social media communities (Shove et al., 2012). As demonstrated by the respondent's competence in a P2P second-hand context is intertwined between finding specific styles but also finding value for money.

Firstly, when discussing how to navigate the P2P second-hand platforms, all respondents entail that they often have a "specific inspiration" for certain styles, which is emphasized as crucial when finding something in the broad second-hand context. This acknowledgement highlights the importance of competence within fashion, navigating the scene of style and inspiration, and finally, transferring this knowledge to P2P second-hand clothing platforms. Within this context, there is a recurring theme of respondents highlighting friends that are "good at navigating P2P second-hand platforms", which strengthens the understanding that navigating these P2P second-hand platforms is a competence; moreover, how it has shifted in the reconfiguration process (Shove et al., 2014; Magaudda, 2011). This aligns with the research of Liang & Huang (1998) and Philips et al. (2019) on the P2P platforms where buyers need skills to perform activities such as searching for information, monitoring processes and negotiating terms in order to make a deal. This competence development relies on friends recommending certain brands or features when navigating. Moreover, online communities are highlighted as a crucial source of inspiration and information on navigating

the P2P second-hand platforms. Firstly, due to the common interest in fashion and clothes, many respondents say that they see a lot of fashion content on social media and in their online communities. In relation to the P2P, second-hand platforms, especially TikTok and its link to Vinted, have been brought to light.

Johanna describes how she interacts with the kind of content she sees and gets information on TikTok: *"For example, if you are on TikTok, you encounter content like 'If you are looking for this type of garment, search these words: '90's core' or similar. Because products usually appear that you might never have thought of yourself. So I think the more you get into the platforms, the more you might pick up other tips."*

Evelina explains her learning on how to navigate on the P2P second-hand platforms: *"Due to algorithms on Tiktok, I almost only get content like this 'Here are stylish garments, cute tops under 50 SEK- and 'Here are brands that you can search for.' and yes this is also what content I myself post on Vinted. So that is what comes from very specific brands. There are some girls who post so much on TikTok like good brands. And it helps a lot. It is a lot with all the girls who also use those apps."*

From these excerpts, it is interpretable that both Johanna and Evelina collect information on what and how to navigate on Vinted to find bargains; hence, competence development on navigating P2P second-hand platforms is intertwined with social media and transferring external information. It is also clear that inspiration and information in social media are intertwined at times as the content contains both specific garments or styles, as well as inspiration to use specific P2P second-hand platforms and information on how to use keywords and filter functions. Evelina also describes that this kind of content is something she deeply values and also produces herself, emphasizing the online community that exists for navigating second-hand clothing consumption.

Evelina explains this as *"I know that many people look up the Polish word like a garment and search for it. And that it works great, and I have also done that a few times,"*

This quote underpinned the competence in the P2P platform's different markets - as cheaper in Poland and adapting language and keywords to make the best finds. Moreover, the respondents highlight that as more brands are available on these P2P second-hand platforms, you can transfer more 'commercial styles' by being good at navigating these platforms, and you can make bargains of styles but at a lower price and re-used. Moreover, there is a notion that the respondents find the P2P second-hand platforms more valuable and fun when they learn how to navigate.

Elin describes this navigation on P2P second-hand platforms as *"You sort of learn what to look for. So now it has become a bit more of a hobby to go in and look to see what you can find, I think you kind of learn what to look for over time and use keywords"*.

From this excerpt, it is interpretable that the Elin believes that due to developing competence in terms of keywords for searches, she becomes capable of making bargains on the P2P second-hand platforms. In this sense, competence development can lead to the creation of more recreational values, as demonstrated by Giot and Roux (2010). The experience of finding something unique is deeply intertwined with a good price, creating the experience of making a bargain. However, with higher competence in navigating the P2P second-hand platforms, the experience will be shifted, and more of these experiences can be created. Further, based on competence, knowledge of deals, and how to navigate P2P second-hand platforms, there is a shift in what clothes are consumed and how they are consumed.

When asked how she perceives the P2P platforms. Linn expresses *"I have gone blind on prices from Vinted because it is so cheap there."*

This statement indicates how the commercialization of second-hand platforms both shapes the perception of price in regular stores and a reasonable amount of second-hand and how Linns' competence in finding bargains within this environment creates a skewness in value perception and frequency of purchases.

### ***Discussion of Implications for Psychological Rebound Effects***

In this section, the findings on how the elements of P2P second-hand consumption are intertwined and create an environment for psychological rebound effects are discussed. As this study aims to investigate how P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption, the notion of adverse consumption behavior and the impact of reuse becomes relevant. Through an SPT approach, the entrance of P2P second-hand platforms into the practice of second-hand clothing consumption can be viewed as a reconfiguration process (Magaudda, 2011; Shove, 2014). With this notion, the concept of psychological rebound effect will be discussed in relation to the elements of material, meaning and competence. However, as the practice elements are deeply intertwined and for the practice to be performed, there need to be connections between these three categories of elements (Shove, 2012; Reckwitz, 2002; Shove & Pantzar, 2005).

### ***Material Elements in P2P second-hand consumption***

Firstly, with material, the interviews reveal that the P2P second-hand platform plays a vital role as an intermediary material and the objects material - the second-hand are shaped by how they are presented on the platforms. This ties in with research by Fors et al. (2023) on the shaping aspects of P2P second-hand platforms. In this sense, the facilitation of flow in terms of logistics and financials, as well as intertwined infrastructure with social media P2P second-hand platforms, creates an environment where second-hand clothes are accessible. Moreover, by merging into more social media platforms like display, the P2P second-hand platforms create an online environment coloured by entertainment, inspiration, and accessibility. Connecting these findings to the research of Parguel et al. (2017), indulgent consumption can emerge from the cognitive dissonance between consumer attitude -i.e. negative consideration of impulse buying, and counterattitudinal behavior- i.e. giving in to

temptation. Moreover, as the intermediary role of the P2P second-hand platforms becomes more efficient, an environment suited for adverse consumer behavior and rebound effects is created. It is easier to give in to a purchase in this facilitated environment and tied to the research by De Witt Huberts et al. (2012), self-licensing within consumption increases when the decision context allows them to justify the consumption. Moreover, the characteristics of offering users to be both seller and buyer create a context for continuous justification; by participating in the re-use circle, participants disclose that they are more likely to use platforms for purchases as well. Consequently, the role of the P2P second-hand platform as an intermediary material creates an environment suitable for impulse purchases while offering reuse, creating a foundation for justification, and creating the conditions for psychological rebound effects.

### ***Meaning and Emotions in the P2P second-hand consumption***

Secondly, meaning in the experience and emotional aspect plays a vital role in the usage of P2P second-hand platforms. As mentioned, meaning can be viewed from the inherent meaning of the second-hand clothes, the platform itself and their interplay. In the reconfiguration process, we can first observe how the respondents have found value in the online environment through entertainment, access to style, value for money and the narrative of contributing to more sustainable clothing consumption. Firstly, psychological rebound effects can be observed when justifications for consumption can be made, and the savings are less than the intended effect. In the context of P2P, second-hand platforms are perceived as a way of consuming re-used and more sustainable. Hence, it aligns with Parguel et al. (2017) research, as P2P second-hand platforms are assumed to be virtuous in terms of savings and environmental benefits, as opposed to buying new products. A narrative is created that allows consumers to distance themselves from excessive consumption due to the environmentally positive effect. This aligns with the findings of this paper, where all the respondents describe feeling good about their less environmentally damaging consumption decisions and become less critical. This is also exemplified by specific product purchases - such as fur and leather, where the act of purchasing a second-hand leather jacket is justified by the belief that it prevents waste and environmental harm. This reflects the concept of self-licensing where individuals need to justify unethical or unsustainable purchases or actions to stabilize morale (Reimers et al., 2021; Parguel et al., 2017). Moreover, aligned with Parguel et al. (2017), engaging in a perceived positive action - such as buying second-hand allows individuals to feel good about their choices and potentially indulge in other less sustainable behaviors moving forward without guilt.

Building on this context for justification, P2P second-hand clothing platforms offer online experiences which shape the emotional experience and capability of bargain hunting, so when combined with the uniqueness of second-hand clothes an extreme environment for temptation is created (Paraguel et al, 2017). When users are confronted with this environment of temptation, a situation of conflicting goals occurs when there is the urge to purchase an unplanned product (Mukhopadhyay & Johar, 2009; De Witt Huberts et al., 2012; Reimers et al., 2021). However, the user can, based on the perception of the positive environmental impact and the enjoyable experience of browsing and finding unique items, reduce feelings of

guilt associated with purchasing which can lead to overconsumption (Santarius & Soland, 2018; Monin & Miller, 2001). The users can reconcile the conflict between their consumption desires and their sustainability values, and psychological rebound effects are created when giving in to excess purchases. Consequently, the perception and the meanings created in P2P second-hand platform clothing consumption help reduce cognitive dissonance for consumers who are environmentally conscious but still want to enjoy fashionable clothing.

### ***Competence in the P2P Second-hand Consumption***

In the reconfiguration process, the P2P second-hand platforms are becoming more accessible and easier to navigate due to, e.g. algorithmic logistics. However, the frequent users of P2P second-hand platforms have created competence based on keywords and feature techniques to find a second-hand bargain that differs from competence in a physical second-hand store. In this sense, competence is developed in order to find 'value for money' and 'uniqueness', meanings which are often, according to Giot and Roux (2010), intertwined in a second-hand clothing bargain. Hence, with becoming frequent users, there is continuous engagement in an environment coloured by accessibility and enjoyment, which triggers impulse purchase decisions and exists within the justification of consuming re-used. Building on the of Parguel (2017) that, a psychological rebound effect occurs when the excess consumption does not contribute to the sufficiency savings, since consumers are buying more clothing items than they need. This can be applied to competence in the sense that more competence and skills to navigate the P2P second-hand platforms leads to spending more time and valuing the treasure hunt element, hence increasing the probability of purchases.

Competence in navigating the P2P second-hand platform is based on friends as well as social media online communities and by sharing inspiration and information on what and how users can make bargains. Linked to research on self-licensing by Santarius and Soland (2018) and Monin Miller (2001), this can be viewed as an attenuated consequence where the social environment - in terms of friends and social media community can attenuate the negative social consequences of buying too much, as it becomes a norm within the group, creating a risk for psychological rebound effects. Moreover, linking to Sundström et al. (2019) research on online behavior shows that impulse buying often stems from the combination of boredom and the individual's engagement with the item - in this study, the interest in fashion and second-hand clothing. People with a considerable fashion interest are more interested in developing competence on the P2P second-hand platforms. Hence these users spend more time on P2P second-hand platforms and, in that legitimizing environment, risk making excessive purchases. This relates to Mukhopadhyay and Johar (2009) and De Witt Huberts et al. (2012) research where licensing effects are intricately connected to impulse buying, which typically arises when temptation is strong, particularly in situations involving conflicting goals, such as the urge to purchase an unplanned product. The P2P platform distracts from the initially expressed aim of sufficiency - decreasing environmental impact in clothing consumption when users find pride in developing competence for finding unique clothes at a low price. Competence on the P2P second-hand platforms creates a skewness of what is reasonable to pay for a second-hand garment and how frequent purchases should be made.

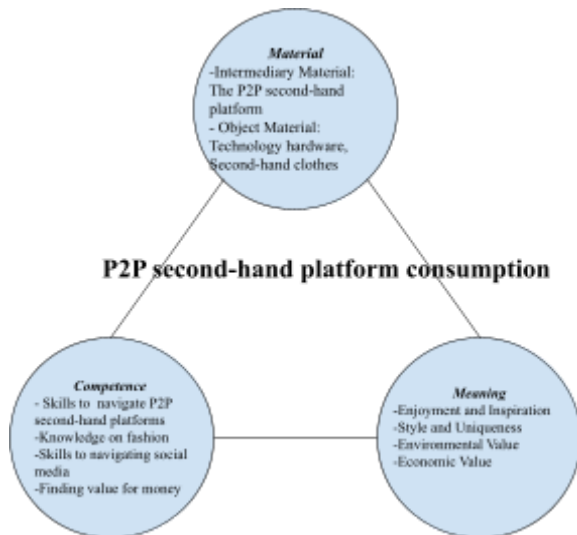


Figure 2, The intertwined elements of P2P second-hand clothing consumption

### **Conclusion and Contributions**

This study explores the effects of introducing P2P second-hand platforms through the research question: *How do P2P second-hand platforms shape clothing consumption?* Where the findings aim to advance the field of research on psychological rebound effects and understanding of consumption impacts of P2P second-hand platforms (Parguel et al., 2017; Makov et al., 2018; Frick et al., 2021). Emerging in the lack of research on psychological rebound effects within CE strategies, this study generates new knowledge of adverse consumer behavior related to reuse (Parguel et al., 2017; Makov et al., 2018). First, the research identifies P2P second-hand platforms as a novel context for self-licensing, which expands the theory beyond previously studied areas of psychological rebound effects (Parguel et al., 2017; Reimers et al., 2017). The findings show how material, meaning and competence elements are deeply intertwined and distinguish the entrance of P2P second-hand platforms as a reconfiguration process which changes clothing and how clothing is being consumed (Shove et al., 2014; Magaudda, 2011).

A key finding is how the P2P second-hand platforms, through being an efficient Intermediary Material, shape the interpretation of second-hand clothes (Fors et al., 2023). This study demonstrates how the P2P second-hand platforms make P2P exchange possible on a bigger scale through logistic flows and monetary transactions, improving interactivity and creating trust. The findings reveal how the material role of the P2P second-hand platform shapes clothing consumption by replacing or supplementing traditional retail channels. This is possible through facilitated transactions and digital interfaces and bridging activity between P2P second-hand and social media platforms, closing the gap between inspiration and purchase. The findings contribute to the view on how the removal of logistic barriers and increased shopping efficiency may lead to more second-hand consumption (Parguel et al., 2017; Friedrichsmaier & Matthies, 2015; Frick et al., 2021). As a result, a facilitated and accessible online second-hand market creates an environment where psychological rebound effects are more likely to occur (Parguel et al., 2017; Fors et al., 2023). These findings

provide insight into the previously unexplored area of user behavior and environmental impacts of P2P second-hand platforms (Fors et al., 2023; Frick et al., 2021; Parguel et al., 2017; Shor, 2014).

Secondly, a key finding in this study is how P2P second-hand platforms contribute to a meaning shift where second-hand clothing is perceived as more accessible, socially approved and a sustainable choice. This meaning contributes to the relatively sparse literature on second-hand clothing consumption and broadens the understanding of an online environment and the P2P second-hand context (Ferraro et al., 2016; Xu et al., 2014; Giot & Roux, 2010). When P2P second-hand platforms are assumed to be virtuous in terms of environmental impact, the perceived sustainability may paradoxically lead to increased consumption. Moreover, expanding on the research demonstrates how online environments offer meaning in terms of entertainment and inspiration, which increase the possibility of impulse decisions - especially within the clothing domain (Sundström et al., 2019; Hjelm-Lidholm et al., 2017). This study generates new insight into the self-licencing processes and psychological rebound effects, where a key finding is that perception of P2P second-hand platforms and its offerings to reduce cognitive dissonance for consumers who are environmentally conscious but still want to enjoy fashionable clothing - where the self-licencing can be used for legitimizing giving in to impulse buying (Parguel et al., 2017; De Witt Huberts et al., 2012). Due to the characteristics and meanings intertwined in the P2P second-hand clothing consumption a narrative is created that allows consumers to distance themselves from excessive consumption due to the environmentally positive effect. By displaying empirical material where respondents describe feeling good about their less environmentally damaging consumption decisions and become less critical, this research contributes to translating self-licencing and psychological rebound effects to the field of consumer research (Reimers et al., 2021; Parguel et al., 2017).

Finally, the findings concerning competence demonstrate how the respondents navigate the platforms, assessing the value and condition of second-hand items, which adds to previous scarcity research on competence within P2P second-hand platforms (Liang & Huang, 1998; Philips et al., 2019). Findings reveal new knowledge on how respondents integrate social media and P2P second-hand platforms and the importance of competence in transferring this knowledge. This engagement and community can be seen as an attenuated consequence which shifts norms on how and what to consume which attenuate the negative consequences of buying too much (Santarius & Soland, 2018; Monin Miller, 2001). Further, findings reveal that with higher competence, there is a greater tendency to use the P2P second-hand platforms more, which may create a distorted view of price and quantity and can amplify psychological rebound effects. Consequently, the enjoyment and making P2P second-hand clothing consumption into a hobby shapes clothing consumption.

### ***Managerial Contributions***

The findings of this research present the ambivalent effect of P2P second-hand platforms as a tool for sustainable clothing consumption. This study acknowledges a certain understanding amongst consumers of sufficiency in consuming clothes and P2P second-hand platforms,

which are viewed as virtuous regarding environmental impact. However, the study disclosed how P2P second-hand platforms could function as a way to "resolve" goal conflicts with sustainability and sufficiency in consuming clothes and, through psychological rebound effects, instead lead to more consumption. This has practical implications for sustainable marketing practices and policy making within the clothing industry. With a significantly growing reused market, especially in the e-commerce channels where the narrative is to decrease environmental impact, the perceived sustainability may paradoxically lead to increased consumption if not addressed correctly.

As the environmental benefits of reuse rely on consumer behavior, the findings of psychological rebound effects have managerial implications for the efficiency of reuse strategies and sustainable consumption. The findings of this study suggest that P2P second-hand platforms can minimize clothes in landfills; thus, in the long term, its increased accessibility and the environment created can represent a risk of additional consumption (Reimers et al., 2021; Cooper & Gutowski, 2017). This research discloses how the psychological rebound effects emerge from the intertwined elements of material, meaning and competence in P2P second-hand clothing consumption. Significantly, the materiality and the role of P2P second-hand platforms as intermediary material - facilitating exchange is increasing the possibility of creating a context of the psychological rebound effect (Fors et al., 2012; Parguel, 2017). By exploring three different P2P second-hand platforms, the findings also disclose that the platforms offering the most efficient and good experience will dominate the online second-hand clothing market, creating an environment coloured by accessibility. Therefore, the practical implications of this study are, first of all, concerning the companies moderating these platforms. To decrease environmental impact, there must be acknowledgement and accountability for creating the condition for psychological rebound effects. The risk of overconsumption must be implemented in the design of business strategy and marketing initiatives. By implementing transparency and education, the P2P second-hand platforms can provide information regarding the actual environmental impact of second-hand clothing consumption, not only in a positive sense compared to new purchases but also in educating consumers about the potential rebound effect and emphasizing the sufficiency principle. Conclusively, there is also a broader societal implication for policymakers in the narrative of circular economy and reused to set guidelines for more sufficiency.

### ***Future Research***

Both the phenomena of P2P second-hand platforms and psychological rebound effects are emerging research fields that need more attention in light of circular economy strategies to create more sustainable consumption. Given that P2P second-hand platforms are growing on a global scale, future research could extend this geographical scope to create insight into countries with other consumerist cultures than Sweden. Moreover, this study is limited to three dominating platforms in Sweden, there are P2P second-hand platforms with different characteristics that might give other implications. Further, as the intermediary role of the P2P platform is especially highlighted and its interconnectedness with social media platforms the bridging of inspiration and purchases in the light of rebound effects could be examined further.

## ***Acknowledgment***

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## Appendix A

### *Interview guide for a phenomenological interview*

#### *Purchases behavior and use*

1. Describe your latest P2P second-hand platform purchase, how did it go about?
2. How do you view the functions on the P2P second-hand platforms?
3. What role does P2P second-hand platforms have in your clothing consumption?

#### *Usage and perception of features*

1. When are you using P2P second-hand platforms and how can a session look like?
2. How do you navigate on the P2P second-hand platforms?
3. How did you find out about the P2P second-hand platforms?

*Second-hand clothing perception and style*

1. *What do you like about second-hand clothes?*
2. *What role does style have in your life?*
3. *How do you decide how to dress and what to buy?*
4. *What is important in making a second-hand bargain?*

*Social norms and environmentalty*

1. *How do you think about sustainability and reuse?*
2. *Do you share your interest in second-hand with people in your surrounding?*
3. *How has your interest in second-hand and second-hand clothes looked over time?*