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Towards an understanding of consumer's behavior of buying secondhand products on social media

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Abstract

Due to the research scarcity in consumers' secondhand shopping behaviors and consumer-to-consumer (C2C) businesses on social media platforms, this thesis decided to concentrate on both secondhand products and social media.

The aim of this thesis is to explore the consumers' behaviors of buying secondhand products on social media – a new channel of doing C2C businesses. To achieve the research aim, I conducted a combined method consisting of 106 questionnaires and ten semi-structured interviews to collect empirical data in this study.

After an analysis of empirical data including both qualitative and quantitative data, three main findings were concluded. (1) The thesis firstly explored the social media as an open online marketplace for individual consumers doing secondhand transactions. Consumers exchange secondhand products on social media in an 'informal' way. (2) The finding highlighted that, when consumers buy secondhand products on social media platforms, they are involved either in a 'passive shopping' process or an 'active shopping' process, and it is highly possible for them to experience hedonic factors (e.g. excitement, fun) due to the occasional and unexpected shopping results. This finding provides two new angles (passive shopping and active shopping) for researchers to analyze consumer behaviors in the future. (3) By extending the study of secondhand shopping motivation from Guiot & Roux (2009, 2010) in an online trading environment, the findings showed that utilitarian aspects of shopping such as price, convenience, product information, and trust mainly drive consumers' behavior of buying secondhand products on social media. Environmental consideration and recreational motivation are less important than those utilitarian aspects.

Key words: consumer behavior, secondhand products, social media, consumer-to-consumer (C2C) business, passive shopping, active shopping, utilitarian and hedonic shopping.

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1 Introduction

This chapter firstly gives an introduction about the research background of secondhand shopping. In tandem with a holistic review of relevant academic research, the research problem is narrowed down, and the research gap is addressed. Strong personal interests, practical implications, together with the academic research gap contribute to the worth of doing this thesis. After that, three research questions are developed to achieve the research aim, i.e. to understand consumers' behavior of buying secondhand products on social media.

1.1 Research background

Secondhand shopping is not a new phenomenon especially in western countries, like France (Guiot & Roux, 2010) and the United States (Christiansen & Snepenger, 2005; Bauk, 2012; Xu et al. 2014). It is becoming fashionable since consumers are not solely satisfied with traditional retail department stores (Chu & Liao; 2007; Guiot & Roux, 2010). Secondhand product shopping has been gradually developing to a new system in completion with the retail industry.

Conventionally, flea markets (Guiot & Roux, 2009), secondhand stores (Darley & Lim, 1999), thrift stores (Mitchell et al., 2009), and charity shops (Parsons L., 2000) have been the main formal platforms of trading secondhand goods in the past decades (Bardhi, 2003). However, these physical markets have already met various difficulties in their developments, such as lacking promotional market budgets, strongly depending on word-of-mouth communication, and lacking convenient logistics (Norman, 2006; Mitchell et al., 2009). Then the booming developments of Internet and information technology changed the status quo. Consumers began buying and selling secondhand products through online resale channels such as eBay and Amazon. These sites appeared to be the main secondary markets for doing consumer-to-consumer (C2C) businesses (Chu & Liao, 2007; Brough & Lewis, 2011; Isaac, 2012; Liao & Chu, 2013). Developed further, the emergence of social media, e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Weibo (the micro-blogging in China, akin to a hybrid Twitter and Facebook), forums, online communities etc., opened another new

channel for doing C2C secondhand business: an trading or exchanging goods for individual consumers, including individual sellers and buyers (Hajli, 2014). (Figure 1)

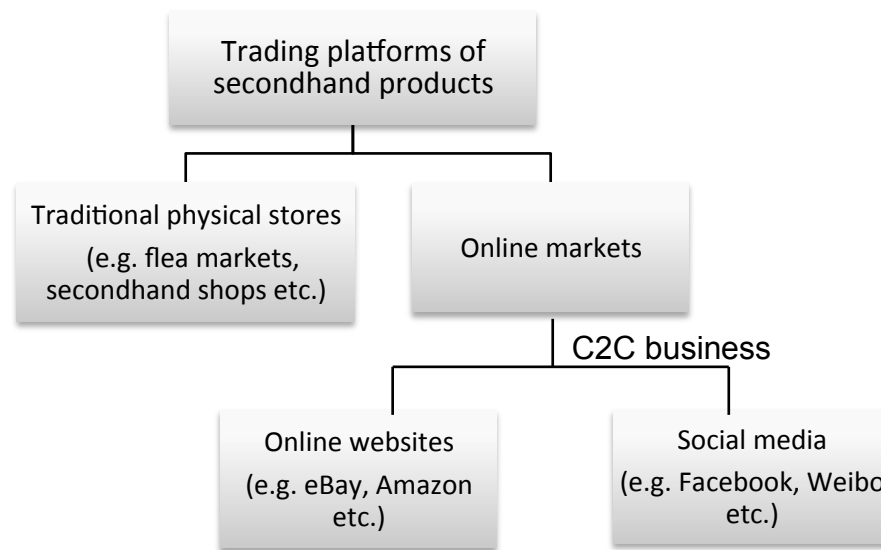


Figure 1. Research background of this thesis (Source: my own)

The recent arrival of the social media as an alternative Internet based retail platform offering consumers unparalleled convenience. Compared to those physical secondhand stores, vibrant and active trades are made on social media. For example for followers, notices from the group “Sell/Buy stuff in Lund, Sweden” pop up on their Facebook news page. Social media users post information for selling secondhand clothes, furniture, books, and electronic products within the group. Buyers just leave messages under the post, agree on the price, time or place of picking up with the seller, and then the deal is done. Many examples like this can be found in different social media platforms. Undoubtedly, those social media platforms are becoming effective tools that give individuals opportunities to interact with other people, generate content, easily share and access information online (Hajli, 2014). In this way, people share information about selling used products in a very easy way through social media while reaching plenty of customers at the same time. Hence using social media as a platform for exchanging information facilitates the trade of secondhand products among individual consumers (Chu & Liao, 2007).

What's more, Liao & Chu (2013, p.1577) suggest that the differences in sale channels might cause different consumer behaviors towards secondhand shopping. Bronner & Hoog (2014, p.51) also indicate further that the phenomenon of social media is motivating deep changes in consumer behaviors. Based on these arguments, I think it will be interesting to investigate the new trading channel – social media, in order to see the differences between the secondhand shopping behavior in physical/formal channels (e.g. secondhand shops etc.), and shopping behavior on social media platforms.

In addition to the strong personal interest, understanding consumers' behavior of buying secondhand products on social media also contributes to some social and practical implications in retail. On the one hand, since trading secondhand products increases the possibilities of products being reused by consumers, it indirectly contributes to protecting the environment in some way because of the landfilling reduction (Baker, 2011; Evans, 2011; Xu et al., 2014). Thus, secondhand shopping should be encouraged and applied widely in public. On the other hand, understanding consumers' shopping behavior of secondhand products through social media can help secondhand retailers understand today's consumers and develop their marketing strategies in order to cater customers' acquisition of social media. It also provides practical implications for e-retailers who do online secondhand trading. Therefore, it will be interesting to develop a thesis project combining the secondhand products with the popular social media, in order to understand consumers' behaviors of buying secondhand products on social media.

1.2 Research problem

Understanding customer behaviors of buying secondhand products becomes important for retailers to expand their marketing strategies in the future (Auer, 2000; Ghose et al., 2005; Guiot & Roux, 2010). In recent years, plenty of researchers had begun focusing on secondhand products and consumer's secondhand shopping behaviors, especially in the retail sector.

There are two main streams of research that have been done on secondhand products shopping behaviors. One of the main research areas is to understand why consumers buy secondhand products in physical secondhand stores, e.g. flea market, secondhand stores. Rational, economic, recreational, ethical and ecological reasons are mentioned in those

studies (Auer, 2000; Guiot & Roux 2008, 2009, 2010; Bauk, 2012; Xu et al., 2014). The other research area is to analyze customer behaviors of buying secondhand products from a socio-cultural perspective. It is believed that the consuming/shopping process is a process of constructing, producing or reproducing people's identities and expressing meanings, ethnicity, experiences and ideologies, values and beliefs, especially in purchasing secondhand clothing (Roux & Korchia, 2006; Woodruffe-Burton & Wakenshaw, 2011; Na'amneh & Al Husban, 2012; Sunhilde & Simona, 2014; Xu et al., 2014).

Except these main studies on secondhand shopping behavior, other researchers narrow down their topics either through putting their focus on the customer behavior in different formats of secondhand store, such as thrift stores (Bardhi 2003; Mitchell et al., 2009; Brough & Isaac, 2012), charity shops (Parsons, 2000) and garage shops (Herrmann, 1995); or through narrowing down the topic in specific secondhand products such as clothing (Roux & Korchia, 2006; Woodruffe-Burton & Wakenshaw, 2011; Na'amneh & Al Husban, 2012; Sunhilde & Simona, 2014; Xu et al., 2014), books (Lloyd-Jones & Beynon, 2007), and electronic products (Ghose et al., 2005; Lee & Sang Jun, 2005).

Moreover, different from those studies of understanding consumers' shopping motivations of buying secondhand products from consumer's perspective, a relatively small number of studies are developed from the seller's point of view. Mitchell et al., (2009), Bauk (2012), Jönsson & Wätthammar (2013), and Liao & Chu (2013) discuss the consumer's disposal or resale behavior in secondhand shops, and also online Customer-to-Customer (C2C) auction sites (Chu & Liao, 2007), like eBay. They suggest that periodical housecleaning, generating cash or profit, frequently socializing motivate consumers to resell the used goods.

However, almost all of these studies mentioned above, are only applied to physical stores with face-to-face trading (selling and buying) environments, such as in secondhand stores, community flea markets and so on. Few studies focus on social media, which provide consumers new platforms of trading secondhand products. Therefore, understanding consumers' behavior on internet-based social media platforms is in a low-focused position among relevant studies, and it is a relatively unstudied research area in the field of retail, which also gives a good reason for why to do this research except the personal interests.

Additionally, in terms of the research area related to social media, there are many studies addressing the positive role of social media in marketing strategies in business-to-business

(B2B) or business-to-customer (B2C) businesses (Chung & Austria, 2010; Stephen & Toubia, 2010; Andzulis et al., 2012; Miller & Washington, 2012; Marshall et al., 2012; Liu et al., 2013; Rishika et al., 2013; Hajli, 2014; Vogel et al., 2014; Bronner & de Hoog, 2014). Besides, there are also some studies that mainly discuss online word-of-mouth marketing on social media (Goodrich & de Mooij, 2014; Pfeffer et al., 2014). However, still few studies concentrate on the trading of secondhand products on social media, namely the customer-to-customer (C2C) level of trading on social media.

To summarize, despite the personal curiosity of knowing the connection between the popular social media and secondhand products, analyzing the consumer behaviors of buying secondhand products on social media is worth doing because of the research scarcity. The research problem in this thesis is narrowed down from analyzing the general consumer shopping behavior, to focusing on exploring the consumer's behavior of buying secondhand products specifically on social media platforms, which is a new channel of doing C2C businesses. Therefore, it is believed that the result of this study will enrich the knowledge of understanding both consumers' secondhand shopping behaviors and C2C business on social media.

1.3 Overall research aim and research questions

The overall aim of the research is to interpret and to understand the consumer behaviors of buying secondhand products on social media platforms. In order to achieve the aim, three research questions are expected to answer at the end of the thesis:

RQ1: What are characteristics of a C2C secondhand transaction on social media platforms?

RQ2: How do buyers behave in a C2C secondhand shopping process on social media?

RQ3: Why do consumers buy secondhand products on social media, and what factors can influence their purchase decisions?

The first research question (RQ1) is going to explore the characteristics of the social media – a new channel/market of doing C2C businesses, through answering how the trading channel/market look like, and what are the features of a secondhand transaction in the market. The second research question (RQ2) is to describe how buyers behave when

buying a secondhand product on social media, through investigating and interpreting different patterns of buying behaviors. The third research question (RQ3) focuses on explaining the reason why people choose to buy secondhand products on social media platforms and what factors can influence their purchase decision. All these three research questions contribute to a good interpretation and a deep understanding of consumers' behavior of buying secondhand products on social media.

2 Theoretical frameworks

Based on the reviewed academic literature, this chapter is to give a theoretical background related to the research problem. To give an overview of this chapter, three main pillars: consumers' shopping behavior, social media, and consumer-to-consumer (C2C) business, are outlined as the major constructing parts of the theoretical framework in this research (Figure 2). Each pillar will be described in detail by following the structure as shown below.

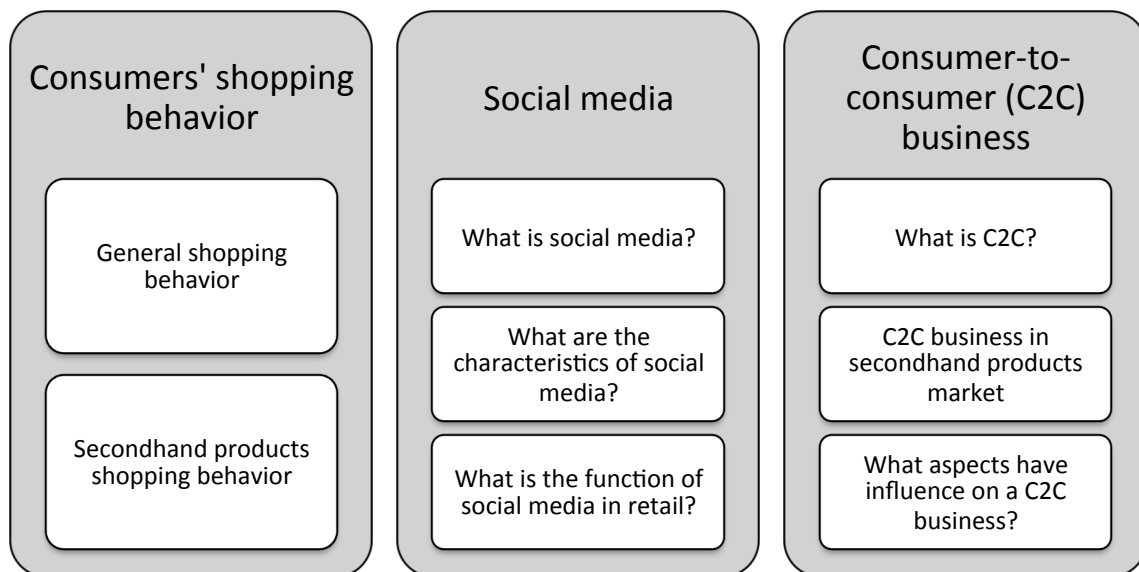


Figure 2. The structure of theoretical framework of this thesis (Source: my own).

2.1 Consumers' shopping behavior

According to the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), an individual's performance of a certain behavior is determined by his or her motives or intents to perform that behavior. In addition, Mikalef et al. (2013, p.19) argue that a "shopping process is conceptualized as a sequential series of behaviors, along with the underlying motivations, which lead to the purchase of an item". Thus, understanding consumers' buying behaviors is to understand the decision-making process of buyers, which include exploring why consumer do the purchase and what factors can influence their purchase (Pride & Ferrell, 2012). In this thesis, to understand consumers' buying behavior of secondhand products on social media platforms is, firstly to understand how consumers behave in the purchasing process,

secondly to understand what factors motivating consumers to buy a secondhand product on social media. Thus, it is necessary to start from understanding the general shopping behavior, and then move forwards to interpreting the specific secondhand shopping behavior.

2.1.1 Shopping behavior in general

Except the demographic differences in age, gender, occupation, which can have impacts on the consumer's shopping behaviors, including shopping motivations and intentions (Bakirtas et al., 2015), generally speaking, utilitarian motivations and hedonic motivations are two main categories, dimensions or themes used to explain consumer's purchasing/shopping behaviors (Babin et al., 1994; Childers et al., 2001; Bardhi, 2003; Bardhi & Arnould, 2005; Kang & Park-Poaps, 2010; Bauk, 2012; Mikalef et al., 2013; Bakirtas et al., 2015;). Both of these terms have been applied in many studies as theoretical background for analyzing consumers' shopping behavior in both physical stores (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Ahtola, 1985; Babin et al., 1994) and online e-commerce stores (Childers et al., 2001; Overby & Lee, 2006; To et al, 2007).

Utilitarian shopping

Shopping studies have been focusing on utilitarian aspects of shopping experience for a long time (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982 ; Ahtola, 1985). Conventionally, many researchers suggest that shopping is a function of the nature of the product, location, product assortment and store image (Tauber, 1972, p.46).

Utilitarian shopping behavior can be measured by using scales such as 'rational/irrational' and 'valuable/worthless' (Ahtola, 1985, p.9). From the utilitarian perspective, shopping is related to the "work mentality" (Babin et al., 1994, p.646). It implies that shopping as a rational or task-related process (Babin et al., 1994; Kang & Park-Poaps, 2010; Bakirtas et al., 2015), in which the product is "purchased in a deliberant and efficient manner" (Babin et al., 1994, p.646). Thus, perceived value of utilitarian shopping depends on whether the shopping task or consumption is accomplished (Babin et al., 1994).

In addition, the decision to buy in a utilitarian shopping will occur "when a person's need for particular goods becomes sufficiently strong for him to allocate time, money, and effort to visit a store" (Tauber, 1972, p.48). Therefore, a utilitarian shopping happens after an

overall assessment (i.e. judgment) of functional benefits and sacrifices (Overby & Lee, 2006, p.1161). The assessment is driven by rational aspects, for example, price, time saving, quality, location, transportation, and weather (Babin et al., 1994; Overby & Lee, 2006; To et al, 2007). For example, consumers purchase products because of the cheap price so that to gain economic benefits. Furthermore, Bridges & Florsheim (2008, p.310) find that online shoppers obtain utilitarian experiences through convenience, accessibility, selection, and availability of information. Moreover, a study from Overby & Lee (2006) not only appears that online consumers turn to Internet preliminary for utilitarian reasons, such as price saving and convenience, but also indicates that utilitarian value is important for both frequent or infrequent internet shopper, however, the hedonic value plays more important role for infrequent shopper.

However, since consumers were not only satisfied with traditional product acquisition, then consumers' shopping experience cannot be totally explained by utilitarian aspects (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003). Researchers recognize the potential values of entertainment, recreation and emotion in the shopping process, and there are plenty of studies trend towards analyzing these hedonic shopping aspects.

Hedonic shopping

Consumers have begun to focus on entertainment aspects while shopping, and to perceive shopping as a process with fun, leisure, and recreation. For example, consumers shop to discover fashion trend (Shen, 2012), to socialize with other customers, to merely having fun, to have an adventure in store, and to enjoy the feeling of hunting for treasures in a secondhand store (Bardhi, 2003; Bauk, 2012). Thus, it is no longer enough for retailers to satisfy consumers by offering low price, broad assortment and extending opening hours (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003, p.77). Retailers have to consider those hedonic aspects of shopping in their retailing strategies.

Hirschman & Holbrook (1982, p.92) define the hedonic shopping/consumption as “consumer behavior that relate to the multisensory, fantasy and emotive aspects of one’s experience with products”. They suggest that the hedonic consumption process is driven by fantasies, feelings, and fun that a consumer has in using products (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Simply speaking, the reason that hedonic consumers love to shop is because they enjoy the shopping process. Therefore, hedonic shopping is

usually measured with scales like ‘pleasing/annoying’, ‘happy/sad’ and so on (Ahtola, 1985, p.9).

Different from utilitarian shopping, hedonic aspects (Ahtola, 1985) of shopping are “directed towards the satisfaction of particular individual desires, and is regarded as an extravagance that lies outside the constraints of necessity” (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005, p.224). Hedonic shopping reflects shopping’s potential entertainment and emotional worth (Babin et al., 1994, p.646). It is more subjective and personal than its utilitarian shopping and results more from fun and playfulness than from the task completion (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). It is also reasonable to say that hedonic shopping motivation is also task-related (Babin et al., 1994). However, the only difference with utilitarian shopping is this task is related to those hedonic aspects, such having fun, making friends, fantasy, stimulation, and excitement (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003, p.80).

In terms of different hedonic shoppers, six categories of hedonic shopping emerged from the study of Arnold and Reynolds (2003): adventure shopping, social shopping, gratification shopping, idea shopping, role shopping and value shopping.

Adventure shopping	Shopping for stimulating, adventure, excitement, and feeling of being in another world.
Social shopping	Shopping for spending time to attain enjoyments with friends, families, for socializing with others while shopping.
Gratification shopping	Shopping for stress relief and alleviating negative mood.
Idea shopping	Shopping for keeping up with the fashion trends.
Role shopping	Shopping for others. People are enjoyable from shopping for their friends and families.
Value shopping	Shopping for sales, looking for discounts and hunting for bargains.

Table 1. Six categories of hedonic shopping (Source: figure based on Arnold & Reynolds, 2003)

For shoppers driven by utilitarian shopping aspects, the shopping occurs when people’s need for a particular good is sufficient for allocating time and money to travel to a store to go shopping. However, for hedonic shoppers, shopping occurs when they “needs attention, wants to be with peers, desires to meet people with similar interests, feels a need to exercise, or simply has leisure time” (Tauber, 1972, p.48). For hedonic shoppers, the “seeking of such experiences is often far more significant than the mere acquisition of products” (Babin et al., 1994, p.27), and they are more likely expect high levels of hedonic value (Babin et al., 1994).

2.1.2 Understand shopping behavior from a socio-cultural perspective

Besides the utilitarian and hedonic perspectives, some researchers stated that it is also important to understand consumers' general shopping behavior from a socio-cultural perspective. These researchers believe that retail space is a psychological space, where consumption practice such as purchasing secondhand products is inherently combined with social and cultural meanings (Gregson et al., 2002; Woodruffe-Burton & Wakenshaw, 2011; Fuentes & Hagberg, 2013).

From the socio-cultural perspective, the practice of consumption is regarded as a process of producing or reproducing images, experiences, identities, meanings and values (Na'amneh & Al Husban, 2012). Consumers' personal identity can be produced or reproduced through self-defining activities (e.g. choice of products, choice of stores) and self-expression with respect to their values and beliefs (Woodruffe-Burton & Wakenshaw, 2011). What to buy and where to buy, have impacts on people's self-values, self-identities, meanings, and beliefs. For example, consumers do grocery shopping because they try to fulfill the expected role of mother/woman/housewife in the society (Woodruffe-Burton & Wakenshaw, 2011); people buy luxury goods to show their high taste (Na'amneh & Al Husban, 2012); people go to certain stores because they can find their social place and feel a sense of belonging in the store (ibid.).

2.2 Secondhand products shopping behavior

To understand the consumers' shopping behavior towards secondhand products, it is necessary to clarify what a secondhand product is. According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2015), secondhand/second-hand is an adjective word, which describes something not new and owned by somebody else before. Therefore, in this thesis a 'secondhand product' is defined as:

“Something not new and has a previous owner.”

As mentioned earlier, understanding consumers' buying behavior includes exploring the reason of why people buy and why people make the purchase decision. Therefore, behaviors of shopping secondhand products could be interpreted by the consumers' shopping motivations or intentions, because 'motivation' is a word used to explain

people's behaviors and actions, namely to explain the question why, such as why people buy (Guiot & Roux, 2010).

Motivation is defined by Moorman (1990, p.4, cited in Bigné et al., 2013) as the "individual's willingness to undertake the necessary actions to accomplish a goal". Similarly, Guiot & Roux (2010, p.357) define the motivation for secondhand shopping as "psychological and material motives that orient consumers toward second-hand products and/or channels". Extending this definition to the research in this thesis, the motivation of shopping secondhand products is defined as:

"The psychological and material motives that orient consumers towards buying secondhand or used products through social media platforms."

Therefore, to understand the consumer's shopping behavior towards secondhand products includes to explore what kind of psychological or material motivations and reasons that drive people to make the purchase decision for a secondhand product on social media platform.

Economic, recreational and critical motivations

By extending the two general shopping motivations (utilitarian and hedonic shopping motivations) in secondhand shopping in order to explain consumers' behaviors of used products, economic reasons (i.e. utilitarian motivations) and recreational reasons (i.e. hedonic motivations) are also concluded in many studies (Bardhi, 2003; Bardhi & Arnould, 2005; Guiot & Roux, 2010; Bauk, 2012). What's more, some critical reasons specifically emerge in secondhand shopping also need to be considered combined with economic and recreational reasons, in order to understand consumers' shopping behaviors of secondhand products, see Figure 3.

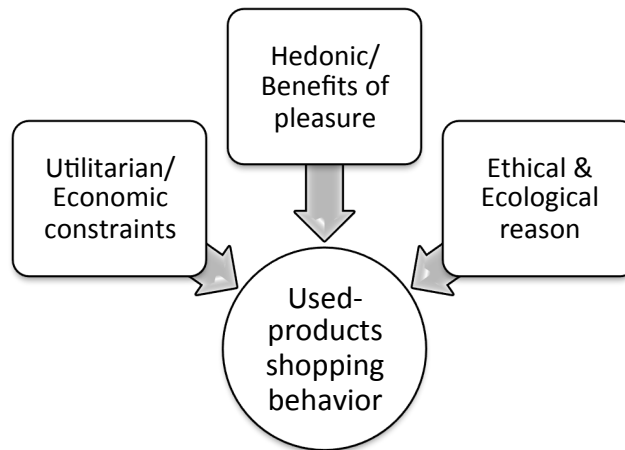


Figure 3. Secondhand products shopping behavior in physical stores (Source: figure based on Guiot & Roux, 2010).

Economic reasons:

Economic reasons, i.e. buy secondhand products for saving costs, have been pointed out as the major reason explaining people’s secondhand-products shopping behaviors (Roux & Korchia, 2006, Woodruffe-Burton & Wakenshaw, 2011, Xu et al., 2014, Bauk, 2012). Price, therefore, has significant impacts on consumers buying intention in a secondhand shopping activity. However, the price of the secondhand goods that sellers are willing to exchange depends on the degree of emotional attachment toward the product (Brough & Isaac, 2012), which means depends on the seller. When people dispose of some products attached to emotions, they often expect to sell their products at a higher price than its market price (Brough & Isaac, 2012). However, Brough & Isaac (2012) concluded that the product attachment, which is defined as “the psychological or emotional connection between a consumer’s self-concept and a tangible product” (Brough & Isaac, 2012, p. 79), also can make sellers decrease rather than increase the price of the product, because sellers in secondary market are willing to sacrifices profit. Moreover, strongly attached sellers are more sensitive and more influenced by the buyer usage intent (Brough & Isaac, 2012).

Particularly, the research from Guiot & Roux (2009, 2010) shows that consumers buy secondhand products because of economic constraints, for example:

- Consumers get limited shopping budget.
- Consumers want to hunt a budget for the frugal purpose (Roux and Korchia, 2006).
- Consumers want a fair price according to the value perceived by them.

...

Recreational reasons:

Except gaining the economic benefits (utilitarian motivation), shopping in thrift stores, secondhand stores or charity shops emerges also as a process that allows consumers to obtain pleasure benefits (hedonic motivation) (Bardhi, 2003). For example, Gregson & Crewe (1998) found that people go to a car boot sale (a type of second-hand shopping in Britain) because they enjoy the activity of buying, and they regard this consumption practice not as an economic buying process, but as a process with unpredictability, excitement, and anticipation. Thus recreational reasons (Guiot & Roux, 2010), oriented by hedonic motivations, include, for example:

- Looking for stimulation and excitement in treasure hunting in stores.
 - Socializing with other people and making friends (Bardhi, 2003).
 - Searching for unique products with originality.
 - Searching for nostalgic pleasure from those products attached with memories and stories.
- ...

Critical reasons:

Except economic and recreational shoppers in the secondhand shopping, other consumers are shoppers who consider critical reasons (Guiot & Roux, 2010), such as ethical, moral, and ecological reasons as motivations when they make purchasing decision on used goods. For example, consumers purchase secondhand products for:

- Making donation to some social organizations.
 - Escaping conventional retail channel.
 - Environment protection through reusing the products (Bauk, 2012).
 - Anti-ostentation.
- ...

One thing that needs to be clarified again here is that, all these motivations (economic/utilitarian motivation, recreational/hedonic motivation, critical motivation), which were studied in previous research, are only applied to physical secondhand stores or shops. However, these studies provide a good theoretical basement for analyzing the shopping behavior in another trading channel, i.e. social media platforms.

2.3 Social media

2.3.1 What is social media?

Based on the development of web 2.0 technologies (Mohapatra, 2013), social media has been gaining increasing popularity around the world in recent years (Mikalef et al., 2013). It is a broad term, commonly known as a new class of information technologies, providing interpersonal communication and collaboration on Internet-based platforms (Kane et al., 2014). It is difficult to have a clear definition of what social media is and what it is not because there is no accurate definition existing (Kane et al., 2014, p.276). Different researchers give various definitions.

According to Strokes (2009, p.350), social media is defined as "the media that is published, created and shared by individuals on the Internet, such as blogs, image, video and more". Marketo (2010, cited in Andzulis, 2012, p.308) defines the social media as the "production, consumption and exchange of information through online social interactions and platforms." In addition, Goodrich & de Mooij (2014, p.103) see social media are "hybrid media in the sense of offering both electronic word of mouth (eWOM) opportunities and serving as a mass media platform for sending messages". Moreover, Hajli (2014, p.389) thinks that social media is the media, which enable consumers to generate content and have social interactions online via social platforms".

Combined with these definitions, social media in this thesis is defined as:

“Hybrid media that allow people to create content, to share information and to have social interactions on internet-based platforms.”

Since social media is such a broad term that consist hybrid media, it includes those online tools and platforms that allow individuals to collaborate on content, to share insights, opinions and experiences for both business and pleasure purpose (Chung & Austria, 2010; Hajli, 2014). Figure 4 shows a basic classification of the social media.

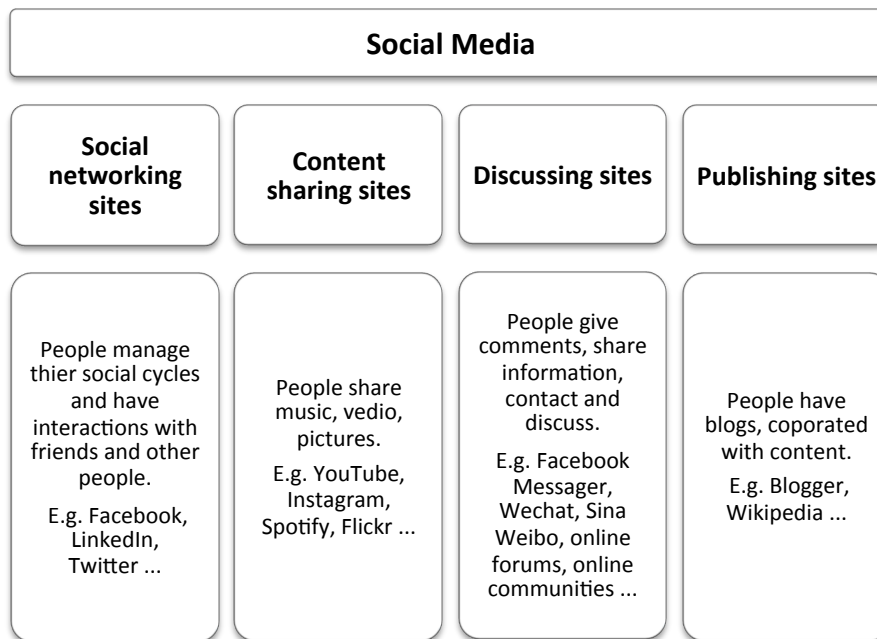


Figure 4. Classification of social media (Source: figure based on Cavazza, 2008).

As Figure 4 shows, social media does not consist solely of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, it also includes a wide range of methods and applications (Chung & Austria 2010; Erragcha & Romdhane, 2014; Hajli, 2014), such as media sharing sites (YouTube, Flickr), blogging sites (Mikalef et al., 2013), collaborative websites e.g. Wikipedia (Chung & Austria, 2010; Kane et al., 2014) and many other technologies.

2.3.2 Characteristics of social media

This research is not going to focus merely on a certain platform, but consider social media as a broad concept, which refers all online social platforms allowing people to interact with each other and to share information or experiences online (Hajli, 2014). Some common characteristics of social media are concluded by Weldoff (2012, cited in Erragcha & Romdhane, 2014).

- *Participation*: all consumers or Internet users can participate in giving opinions, suggestions, comments, and reviews at anyplace and anytime on social media platforms. For example, free to leave messages or comments under a Facebook post or a tweet in Twitter.
- *Openness*: social media sites are open to every individual user to exchange information and have collaboration-work together. For example, Wikipedia allows

people generate the content collaborated with others; review site Trip Adviser allows every user write down their personal comments about the restaurant, the hotel and so on.

- *Community*: people can build or join in different groups or communities where they can share the same interests in social media platforms. In this kind of community, people are easy to find social support, belongingness and friendship from an unknown person (Hajli, 2014). For example, people who love dogs join in a community aiming to share their dog pictures, feeding experience and funny stories.
- *Conversation*: with the help of the Internet, social media tools let people interact freely. People can have dialogs and build conversations with both unknown users and familiar friends through some social media tools, such as Facebook Messenger, WeChat, and QQ (Hajli, 2014).
- *Interconnection*: social media is developed through interconnecting with people, resources, knowledge, and information (Chung & Austria, 2010; Hajli, 2014). Based on the advanced information technology, social media make it much easier for people to building connections with people around the world, gain more resources from the Internet, learn more knowledge from others. Personal interests, business partners, worldwide information and many other things are intertwined through social media platform.

2.3.3 The function of social media in retail

Social media is becoming popular, and it plays a more important role influencing business decision and consumers' daily life. With the advanced development of the Internet, social media has developed as a new system available for both business and individual people.

For companies, along with the increasing popularity of social media, its business value and its potential in marketing and commerce have already been discussing (Mikalef et al., 2013). More and more companies adapt to the social media environment and use social media as strategic tool for gaining a competitive edge (Mikalef et al., 2013). Due to the wide access of population, social media offer positive values for business: (1) it facilitates word-of-mouth production (Mikalef et al., 2013) and communication (Hajli, 2014); (2) it helps business build their brand, promote new products and build intensive relationship

with customers (Chung & Austria, 2010); (3) it strengthen the relationship between customers and businesses and then increase sales (Hajli, 2014); and (4) it helps businesses build trust with customers, which is a key marketing strategy for business because trust, encouraged by social media, significantly affects consumer's intention to buy products online (Hajli, 2014).

For individual people, consumers begin to be active in social media because social media provides a virtual network platform where people feel free to express opinions, share or exchange information, find social support from other people and construct social interactions (Mikalef et al., 2013; Hajli, 2014). Therefore, except the potential business value that social media adds to companies, social media also provide good opportunities for individual people to do business with others e.g. friends, strangers (Chu & Liao, 2007). That is to say, social media platforms support the business transactions between individuals online, namely, the consumer-to-consumer business.

2.4 Trade secondhand products on social media – Consumer-to-consumer (C2C) business

2.4.1 Consumer-to-consumer (C2C) business

Consumer-to-consumer (C2C) business is one of the business models based on electronic commerce, i.e. e-commerce. E-commerce refers to “any form of business transactions in which the parties interact electronically rather than by physical exchanges or direct physical contact” (Mohapatra, 2013, p. 73). Thus, e-commerce is associated with a wide range of online business activities for products and services, including buying and selling over the Internet (Ali & Li, 2014, p.686).

Except the C2C business, other four main different types of business models exist: business-to-business (B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C), business-to-government (C2G), and mobile commerce (m-commerce) (Mohapatra, 2013). However, this research only put the focus on introducing the concept of C2C business transaction between individual consumers.

Generally speaking, C2C is seen as a simple way allowing customers or private individuals to engage in business with each other (Ren & Van Der Schaar, 2012; Mohapatra, 2013),

namely having the personal-to-personal trading. Based on this point of view, it is believed that trading secondhand or used products through social media platforms between individuals can be defined as a way of doing C2C business (Chu & Liao, 2007).

2.4.2 C2C business in secondhand products market

The prevalence of C2C in recent years mainly contributes to the development of those secondhand products markets, such as online auction-based sites e.g. eBay, Amazon (Liao & Chu, 2013) and those websites that allows private people trade (buy and sell) goods online (Ren & Van Der Schaar, 2012), e.g. ASOS marketplace, Blocket on the Swedish market. In these C2C markets, a wide variety of products including secondhand goods are sold, traded and exchanged online. What's more, these online markets of used products are different from conventional secondary markets (e.g. thrift store) because today's technology has altered the scale and scope of the sale of used goods, and has enabled buyers and seller to locate and trade goods more efficiently since this internet-based market reduce search and transaction costs for both sellers and buyers (Scott & Miller, 2002, Ghose et al., 2005; Chu & Liao, 2007; Ghose, 2009).

2.4.3 Factors influencing purchasing intentions in C2C business

Except those utilitarian reasons, hedonic reasons and critical reasons mentioned before, which might have influence on consumers' intention of buying secondhand products on social media platforms, there are some other factors mentioned in different academic studies showing that these factors can influence the people's purchasing decision in an online C2C transaction. Since trading secondhand products on social media counts as a C2C business, these factors might also have impacts on consumers' behavior of buying secondhand products through social media platforms. These aspects are:

- Convenience of product browsing
- Trust to seller
- Information given by the seller

Convenience of product browsing

In a successful online buying process, the first step is about searching information. According to the research from Mikalef et al. (2013), a convenient process of searching product information is important as it helps to increase the consumers' possibilities of purchasing online. Another study focused on the secondhand book trade online from Lloyd-Jones & Beynon (2007) also shows that the convenience of searching, easy to use and information-rich are motivations pushing people to purchase in the online environment. Additionally, a study, which focuses on analyzing the motivations of product browsing on social media platform, particularly shows a highly significant link between product browsing and purchase intention on social media websites (Mikalef et al., 2013). It is proved that conveniences of using social media and the selection of products available are two most important contributors to explain why people browse products on social media (ibid.).

Trust to seller

Since trading secondhand products on social media platforms between individual persons is a kind of C2C business model, it would be difficult to predict the trustworthiness of an unknown agent or consumer in this model (Ali & Li, 2014, p.687). Moreover, many secondhand exchanges or trades are one-time trades or transactions with relatively anonymous buyers (Brough & Isaac, 2012), hence trust to sellers is of significance in influencing the buyers' purchasing intentions.

Normally, trust is defined as "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party" (Mayer et al., 1995, p.715, cited in Lee & Sang Jun, 2005).

It is concluded that the initial trust, both including the trust of goods and trust of sellers, are considerably influence people's willingness or intentions of purchasing the secondhand goods online from an unknown seller (Lee & Sang Jun, 2005). Furthermore, the study from Hajli (2014, p.399) also shows that trust, encouraged by social media, has significant impacts on the consumer's intention of buying. Consumers are more willing to buy from social networking sites (SNSs) when they are encouraged to trust the sellers (Hajli, 2014).

Information given by the seller

Consumers are not able to view (i.e. feel, touch, smell etc.) the products in person when people don't buy in a physical store and a face-to-face environment (Lewis, 2011; Ali & Li, 2014). Thus, information given by the seller is very important for the consumer to make purchase decision.

However, when people purchase goods online, no matter in the e-commerce websites or through some social media platforms, information asymmetries are always exacerbated in those online transactions (Lewis, 2011, p.1535). Whether to post the necessary product information (e.g. product pictures, product description, used condition) or not, depends on the product as well as the seller to a great extent (Lewis, 2011).

Some studies show that information such as the photos and text, posted by sellers online strongly influence the price of the product and also the buying intentions of consumers (Ghose, 2009; Lewis, 2011; Liao & Chu, 2013). For example, Consumers are more willing to buy from social networking sites when the system quality and information quality are highly trusted (Hajli, 2014). For those contents posted by anonymous users, they gain little trust from buyers because with the widespread use of social media individuals can easily post information (Chen et al., 2011).

2.5 Summary

The starting point of this chapter looks at consumers' shopping or buying behaviors, thus this chapter firstly introduces that general shopping behaviors that led either by utilitarian aspects such as economic or by hedonic aspects such as fun and leisure. Utilitarian shopping and hedonic shopping will be applied as theoretical basement when answering the second and the third research questions. After then, a review of previous literature related to secondhand-products shopping behaviors is presented in section 2. In this section, three kinds of motivations, i.e. economic, recreational and critical motivations, are mentioned as the driving forces motivating people to buy secondhand products according to previous studies. In section 3, an introduction to social media, including the definition, classification, characteristics and its importance to retail business are concluded. After that, to connect trading secondhand products with social media, the concept of consumer-to-

consumer (C2C) business is introduced in section 4 since trading (buying and selling) goods between individual people on social media platforms is a C2C business model. More importantly, three specific aspects, i.e. convenience of information searching, trust on seller, information of products, which also can have impacts on influencing the consumers' online buying behavior, are summarized from previous studies.

Moreover, since the three motivation factors of secondhand buying behavior (i.e. economic reason, recreational reason, critical reason), and the other three factors that might influence online C2C business (i.e. convenience, trust, products information), all can contribute to answer the third research question of why people buy secondhand products on social media, therefore, I summarized them as a six-factors model that have impacts on customers' secondhand buying behavior (Figure 5).

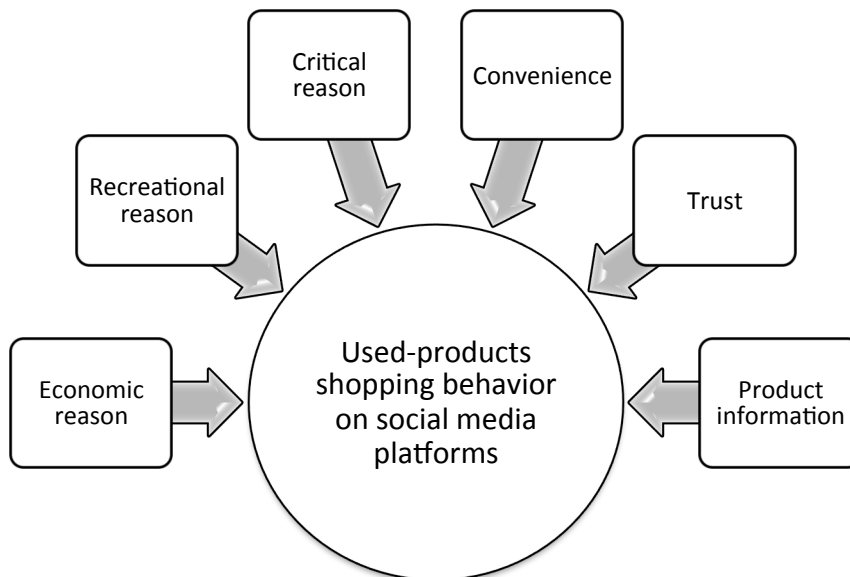


Figure 5. Six factors influencing consumers' secondhand products buying behavior (Source: my own).

3 Methodology

A research that lacks crucial information about methods used are nearly failed and cannot be trusted (Biggam, 2011). Therefore, this chapter firstly describes how I look upon the methodology and the methodological position that this thesis stands in, and then explains the research design process through answering questions like how empirical data was collected and how the practical research was implemented. Lastly, chosen methods were evaluated and criticized to reflect some methods' limitations in this thesis.

3.1 Methodological positioning

In contrast to positivism, interpretivism supports that a social world should not be studied according to the same principles and procedures as in the natural science, because the subject in social science – people – is different from that of the natural science (Bryman, 2008, p.15). Moreover, phenomenology suggests that phenomenologists view human behavior as a product of how people interpret their world, and phenomenologists attempt to see things from that person's point of view (Bryman, 2004, p. 52).

In this thesis, the social science study of understanding people's buying behavior of secondhand products on social media is a complicated issue, and it cannot be implemented in a precise manner through merely imitating the natural sciences (Bryman, 2008, p.14). To understand the social phenomenon that people buy secondhand products on social media platforms is to capture the process of interpretation. This means that the knowledge in this thesis is created through interpreting the views of those investigated subjects and grasping meanings of subjects' shopping behaviors of buying secondhand products through social media. Therefore, this thesis is based on an interpretative approach to understanding, rather than quantifying, as the principle objective.

Moreover, as constructionism recommends, "social phenomenon and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors" (Bryman, 2008, p.19). This thesis does not plan to fulfill the entire research gap in this research area or discipline because it is impossible to achieve by only relying on this master thesis. The aim of this thesis is to generate understanding of this new phenomenon that people start exchanging secondhand products based on social media platform, for further research. Moreover, since the

development of social media is in a fast-changing pace, the contribution of this thesis may not be able to last for long, which is foreseen. Therefore, this thesis does not present a definitive version of the social reality but presents a specific version of reality within the specific time, space, and subjects. The new knowledge in this research field will be constantly developed with the development of social media.

3.2 Research design

3.2.1 Research strategy

Quantitative and qualitative are two research traditions of doing research in the academic world (Bryman, 2004). Choosing quantitative or qualitative as the research strategy influences the choice of methods used to collect research data, as well as the process of data analysis, and thus it has impacts on the research results (ibid.). The decision of whether to employ quantitative or qualitative research depends on the research questions and the aims that researchers are willing to achieve (Bryman, 2004; May, 2011; Silverman, 2013).

Quantitative research is a study of social reality, which is mainly to answer how question (e.g. how many/how much), which refers to research that is concerned with quantities and measurements (Biggam, 2011), in order to understand how knowledge about the social world should be generated (Bryman, 2004, p.11). For example, to find out how many people study more than 10 hours per day. Normally, researchers are in outsiders' stances to confirm a relationship between theory/concept and research. Structured research is constructed, and the output data is hard and reliable (Bryman, 2004, p. 103).

Qualitative research is an approach that seeks to describe and analyze the culture and behavioral of human (Bryman, 2004, p.5), which also refers to answer why questions (Biggam, 2011, p.130). Doing a qualitative research is about to see things from an insider's stance, i.e. from the perspective of people who are being studied, to provide rich, deep and detailed descriptions of the social setting researchers investigate, to interpret what's going on in terms of an understanding of events, behavior etc. in the context of participants (Bryman, 2004). Additionally, it is flexible to develop a qualitative research since it tends

to be open and unstructured (ibid.). This openness enhances the opportunities of coming unexpected issue, which may be of interest (Bryman, 2004, p.66).

In this thesis, it is assured that it would be mainly an explorative and interpretative study focusing on understanding the consumers' secondhand-products shopping behavior through describing the main features of C2C secondhand shopping on social media platforms, and exploring why consumers buy secondhand products on social media and what will influence consumers' purchase decisions when they buy secondhand products through social media. Therefore, qualitative research strategy is more appropriate than quantitative research since this thesis does not aim to answer "how many/much" questions, but to find out the deep meanings of consumer and interpret their behaviors.

3.2.2 Combined research methods

This thesis is based on a qualitative research tradition, which focuses on exploring rich and deep understanding of research subjects. However, in order to gain a round perspective on the research problem, it was decided to use combined methods, i.e. questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, to collect research data. These two methods worked together to deliver the empirical data, and these two methods complement each other.

Silverman (2013) suggests that researchers should not be restricted by only choosing one specific method. There is no right or wrong method. There are only methods that are appropriate or less appropriate to the research question and topic (ibid.). There are many studies applying a combined method of both quantitative and qualitative methods (Bryman, 2004; Biggam, 2011; Silverman, 2013), for example many qualitative studies combines observation and interview. That is either because there are more than one research questions in a research, or because the researcher wants to use different methods or sources to corroborate each other, in this way, the researcher may use more than one method to collect research data (Silverman, 2013). Specifically, Silverman (ibid.) also suggests that it is always good to keep things simple in a qualitative research, through using the non-interview data as a guide to conducting interviews.

As mentioned in thesis's research background, there are only a few academic literature focusing this research topic are found, therefore, it was decided that firstly using the method of questionnaire in order to have a general image, or so to speak, to have a glimpse

about the research topic, i.e. shopping secondhand products on social media. Questions for example, how often people check the secondhand trading site on social media, and what factors people think are important to influence their purchase decision when they buy a secondhand product on social media and so on, are conducted in the questionnaire.

After having this glimpse of what people think, semi-structured interviews were developed based on the 'image' from the questionnaire results. The latter interview method aims to have a deep understanding of consumers' secondhand-products shopping behavior, in order to describe what a C2C secondhand shopping on social media looks like and explain why people buy secondhand products on social media and to explore what factors or aspects have impacts on their buying decision. As said so, the preparation of interviews, including design the interview questions, were based on the results collected from questionnaires. Therefore, doing questionnaire provides a background for continuing the research. It is a pre-study, which contributes to the latter method - semi-structured interview. These two methods complement each other. Thus, the main rationale for the use of mixed methods research was in terms of completeness, in that a more comprehensive picture would be generated (Bryman, 2008, p.611).

Both questionnaire and semi-structured interview are important in this thesis, however regarding the weights of importance they are different. As Bryman (2004) said, in a combined method study, both approaches (quantitative and qualitative) are important. However, researchers rarely give them the equal weight in one study. The main focus is on the semi-structured interview while the questionnaire is mainly to provide a glimpse on the research topic and to complement the interviews.

To briefly summarize, this thesis located the work largely within the tradition of qualitative research, however, has used a survey procedure in tandem with the semi-structured interview. That is to say, this thesis used combined research methods of both quantitative questionnaires and qualitative semi-structured interview, to collect data. The questionnaire provides a good picture of understanding the research topic and generates some statistical results about research questions. Interviews used to illustrate the findings from the questionnaire deeply.

3.3 Data collection – Questionnaires

3.3.1 Survey

The aim of doing the questionnaire in this thesis is to have a first understanding or impression about people's thoughts about trading second-hand products on social media platforms, attitudinal surveys are developed to seek the answers about what people think and people's attitude (May, 2011).

According to Bryman (2004), survey is one of the main methods of collecting data in a quantitative research. It aims to describe and explain the characteristics of opinions of a population through a representative sample (May, 2011). Thus, a survey has the capacity of generating quantifiable data on large numbers of people who are known to be representative of a wider population in order to test theories or hypotheses (Bryman, 2004, p.11).

Bryman (2004, p.108) gives three reasons to construct a sample survey. He suggests that survey is an appropriate and useful means of gathering information when (1) the research ask for quantitative data; (2) the information that researcher want to seek is familiar to the respondents; and (3) the researcher already has considerable prior knowledge of the problem. Obviously, the aim of using the questionnaire in this thesis corresponds with the second reason. Because the thesis wants collect information from those people who are familiar with trading secondhand products on social media, in order to gain a basic understanding of the research topic. I chose to collect my data from a group named "sell/buy stuff in Lund, Sweden" on Facebook.

Questionnaire is the concrete tool for collecting data in the survey method (May, 2011). To develop a questionnaire, sampling method, the construction process including question designs and wording, practical questionnaires' handing out and respondents' collection in the thesis are explained in below sections.

3.3.2 Sampling

When choosing a sample to be researched, it is important to be aware that the chosen sample is representative of the population (May, 2011). In this thesis, *purposive sampling*

was chosen as the sampling method to define the research population. It is a way of deciding the survey sample and it occurs when the sample is selected according to known characteristics the researcher is investigating (Wrench et al., 2013) and features related to the research topic (May, 2011; Silverman, 2013). The strength of using purposive samples lies in its ability of selecting participants examined in the study, which enables researchers collect information effectively (Wrench et al., 2013, p.322). However, one of the weaknesses of this sampling method is, if the respondents know the research, they might not be truly honest, and they will give answers they assumed to be expected. Thus, it might be difficult to defend the representativeness of the sample because of the subjectivity (ibid.).

In this thesis, people from the group “Sell/Buy stuff in Lund, Sweden” on Facebook are the target sample. Regarding why, there are two main reasons need to be stressed. First of all, due to the unclear scope of social media, it is nearly impossible to collect responses from users on all social media platforms. Facebook is the representative one among them, with the widest range of social media users. Secondly, people from the Facebook group “Sell/Buy stuff in Lund, Sweden” are those who familiar with the research topic and are likely have the experiences of buying secondhand products through social media platform, e.g. Facebook. Therefore, it is both convenient and reasonable to focus on collecting data from this sample. However, the answer from survey respondents is uncontrollable in terms of the number of surveys that one respondent answers and the authenticity of the answers.

In terms of the sample size, it is always an issue in quantitative research especially when researchers want to achieve a representative result in a wide population (Biggam, 2011). However, as mentioned before, this research does not aim to reach a representative or generalized results from the questionnaire, but merely to have a pre-understanding or pre-study on the research topic, in order to support the latter method, semi-structured interview. Thus, totally 106 respondents were collected from the questionnaire. 106 respondents are perceived to be feasible to achieve the aim of providing a basic understanding of the research topic. The characteristic of 106 respondents is showed in Figure 6. The figure shows that the sample is mainly located in the female group, and also in young people from 18-34 years old. This implies a shortcoming regarding the representativeness of the sample: it is might be difficult to generalize thesis findings to a wider group of people with diverse age levels.

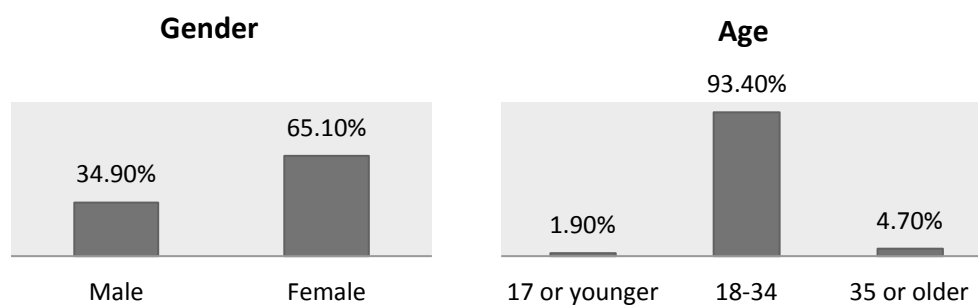


Figure 6. Gender and age of questionnaire respondents in survey study in this thesis.

3.3.3 Questionnaire construction

After deciding the purposive sampling method and the sample size, the concrete questionnaire design should be undertaken.

Question design

What types of questions to be asked in the questionnaire? Generally speaking, open-end or closed-end questions are two main types of questions constructed in a questionnaire (Peterson, 2000). *Open-end questions* are those questions in which participants feel free to provide their own appropriate answers, no possible answers or response categories are pre-determined by researchers (ibid.), for example, which brand of washing machine do you use? In contrast, the *closed-end question* limits the participants' responses to a set of predetermined answers (ibid.), for example, which cola brand do you prefer? Coca-Cola or Pepsi? In this research, mainly closed-end questions were designed in the questionnaire since it is easy to control the participants' answers, to code and to do the analysis. Specifically, factual questions (e.g. age, gender) and classification questions (May, 2011) (e.g. how often people visit Facebook, how many times people bought secondhand from Facebook etc.) are developed. In addition, open questions, which ask about respondents' other comments or opinions, are attached to three classification questions, question 7, 8 and 9 (Questionnaire is attached in Appendix 1).

Wording question

It is important to be cautious when design the language of questions in a questionnaire. That's because the word used in a question will influence how survey participants answer the question and then influence the findings (Peterson, 2000, p.45). Questions designed in a questionnaire should obey standard grammatical rules, and also should be brief, be

understandable, be relevant to the research question, be unambiguous, be specific with answers, and be objective (Peterson, 2000, p.50). Therefore, vague words, ambiguity, prejudicial language, leading question were avoided in this thesis, and also the words used in every question in the questionnaire are tested and revised till simple, unambiguous and easy to understandable.

Pilot testing

A pilot study in a survey study is necessary to make sure that the instruction is easy to follow and survey questions make sense to respondents (Wrench et al., 2013, p. 253). In this thesis, the questionnaire was sent to five people, i.e. the thesis tutor and other four people, to test and evaluate the feasibility before sending the survey out to the real population. Answers from testing were not counted in the real responses and will not be analyzed as the real data.

Practical implementation

To reach a faster response rate, an online survey (Bryman, 2008) was generated. The questionnaire in this thesis is developed based on the online questionnaire facility - SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com), which is a useful tool for collecting questionnaire used by both professional researchers and students (Biggam, 2011, p.122). After finishing the design, questionnaires (attached with the web link from SurveyMonkey) were handed out on Facebook within the group “Sell/Buy stuff in Lund, Sweden” as the people in the group are the sample in this thesis. The survey was distributed on Monday, March 9, 2015, around eight o’clock, and the collection was closed on Monday, March 16, 2015. In total, 106 respondents were collected.

3.4 Data collection – Semi-structured Interview

3.4.1 Why semi-structured interview?

Interviews give rich insights into people’s experiences, opinions, values, attitudes and feelings (May, 2011, p.131), also interview studies seek to find out how a particular group of people perceives things (Silverman, 2013, p.199). There are four types of interviews

being used in social research: structured interview, semi-structured interview, unstructured/focused interview, and group interview/focus group (May, 2011).

According to May (2011, p.132): a structured interview is conducted with aiming to control the interview through predetermined questions and seriously following the interview schedule; a unstructured/focused interview is a highly flexible interview method, which allows interviewees feel free to talk on a topic, normally related to life history, biography, and oral history; a group interview is conducted within a small number group of people, who are supposed to discuss certain topic under the guidance of the group interviewer; while a semi-structured interview is an open-up interview method, in which interview questions need to be are developed beforehand, and interviewees are free to talk.

In this thesis, after having a preliminary analysis on those responses from the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were constructed for interpreting and gaining deep understanding of the research questions. Because a semi-structured interview not only allows researchers go into the interviews with pre-prepared questions, but also enhance the possibilities of new issues arise through leaving spaces for interviewees to express their opinions (Biggam, 2011). On the one side, considering the difficulties of generating a good unstructured interview and a group interview, a semi-structured interview is easier to have since the interview pace can be partly controlled by the researchers. On the other hand, compared to a structured interview, semi-structured is more flexible and useful for researchers to explore answers step by step.

3.4.2 Sampling

Dislike a quantitative research, qualitative study does not give the equal attention to meet the statistical sampling criteria, rather, it should be more concerned with the issue that whether the interviewees conform to the ‘investigator’s emerging theoretical framework (Bryman, 2004, p.116). Thus, the adequacy of sample size in a qualitative method, such as in semi-structured interviews, is determined as soon as the researchers feel satisfied that the theoretical points are established (Bryman, 2004).

In this thesis, purposive sampling is also considered appropriate way of generating convenience samples as it addresses the concerned features related to research questions (Silverman, 2013, p.203). Following a preliminary analysis of questionnaires, data (i.e.

deep meanings, insights and interpretations of consumers ‘secondhand shopping behavior on social media) were sought from those people who have experiences of shopping secondhand products on social media, which provide test cases, so to speak, for ‘emerging propositions’ (Bryman, 2004, p.116). In this thesis, totally 10 interviews were selected. The information of interviewees is listed in Table 2. As shown below, interviewees are mainly young people aged from 18 to 34, coming from different countries. It is good to have different perspectives from different interviewees from different countries. However, it may cause some cultural biases in the research findings.

	Name	Country	Gender	Age	Interview type
1	Lisa	China	Female	22	Face to face interview
2	Alex	China	Male	24	Face to face interview
3	Stela	Bulgaria	Female	24	Face to face interview
4	Elza	Germany	Female	18	Face to face interview
5	Xin	China	Male	24	Face to face interview
6	Manuel	Switzerland	Male	24	Face to face interview
7	Daisy	China	Female	24	Face to face interview
8	Martin	Sweden	Male	28	Face to face interview
9	Olle	Sweden	Male	22	Face to face interview
10	Yogesh	India	Male	32	Face to face interview

Table 2. The summary of interviewees' information in this thesis (Source: my own).

3.4.3 Interview construction

Interview guide design

An interview protocol/ interview guide (Appendix 4) is necessary for the semi-structured interview (Silverman, 2013, p.204). The guidance is developed based on the information collected from questionnaire respondents, and mainly focuses on seeking a deep interpretation of consumers’ secondhand shopping behavior on social media platforms. However, the interview guide only played as the role of direction and guide kept in interviewer’s mind rather than actual questions that are read out verbatim.

Interview implementation

During the process of an interview, it is necessary to let interviewees feel unembarrassed by asking questions. Ten interviews in this thesis were set up in places where interviewees

expected to be, which can make them feel comfortable. Recording permission was asked before starting the interview. Moreover, only voluntary participations were required, and interviewees are well informed about the interview content beforehand (Silverman, 2013).

Interview transcription

The quality of the transcription gets influence on the quality of the research (Silverman, 2013). The process of transcribing interviews takes a great deal of time of researchers (Bryman, 2008), hence Silverman (2013, p.209) suggests it might not be necessary to transcribe all the data, but to select some, which are worthy to do analysis, to be transcribed in detail. In this thesis, since not all interviewees are willing to be recorded, it is impossible to transcribe every word and sentence into text. Therefore, only those answers related to the research questions and topics were noted down and then transcribed to texts.

3.5 Data analysis

The collection of data in this thesis consists of two parts. The one is the quantitative data from questionnaires, and the other is the data (transcripts) from semi-structured interviews. These two parts of data were analyzed in different ways.

3.5.1 Analysis of quantitative data

Survey data that collected from the questionnaire were analyzed by using the sophisticated computer software SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). All questions in the questionnaire are pre-coded as different variables in SPSS (see the codebook of the questionnaire in Appendix 2). Answers from each respondent (totally 106 respondents) were also coded in the SPSS after finishing the survey data collection.

Univariate analysis, which refers to the analysis of one variable at a time (Bryman, 2008) was developed through SPSS under each variable in the questionnaire, for example, analyzing the frequency of variable – gender in the first questionnaire question. Consequently, frequency tables that provide the number of people and the percentage of belonging to each of the categories for the variable in all questions are shown in Appendix

3. Moreover, diagrams like histograms and pie charts were the methods of displaying as well as interpreting those quantitative data in research findings.

3.5.2 Analysis of qualitative data

The analysis of the qualitative data involves coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p.66). Coding is the starting point and the basic operation of developing a qualitative analysis (Bryman, 2008, p.551). It helps to manage qualitative data in a good way (Bryman, 2008, p.550). It is a way of “generating an index of terms that will help you to interpret and theorize in relation to your data” (Bryman, 2008, p.550). Thus, coding as “mining the data, digging beneath and the surface to discover the hidden treasures contained within the data” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p.66). So to speak, coding is a process of making sense out of data, and a process of interacting with data through processing different analytical or thinking strategies.

Bryman (2008, p.551) suggests that it is better to begin transcription at an early stage and code the data as soon as possible as long as the data is collected. However, before coding, it is necessary to read through the texts (i.e. interview transcripts) first (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p.163). In this thesis, each interview transcript was written down as soon as the interview was finished and recorded. Those documents were read line by line the first time. Once the transcripts were read through, I began work on the data.

In this thesis, regarding dealing with the qualitative data, two analytical strategies/tools were used to analyze the qualitative data generated from interviews: asking questions, constant comparisons (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Asking questions:

The strategy of “asking questions” allows researchers use their common sense to probe new things from the data and to get better understanding from the subjects’ perspectives (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p.69). It helps researcher think outside the box (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p.160). For example, when I read the sentences below from the interview transcripts:

“If you see a product, and you just comment and talk to the seller, then arrange the meeting and everything you know, time and place, then you also have to do financial transaction with the person.” (Yogesh)

When analyzing this piece of data, I asked questions to myself. What is the hidden meaning in Yogesh description? What does Yogesh want to express? What is the relationship with the research question? Is there any correlation with the theory that I already had?

Moreover, as Corbin & Strauss said, “to generate new knowledge requires sensitivity to the multilayers of meaning that are embedded in the data” (2008, p.85). Some new concepts were categorized from the qualitative data in this thesis. For example:

“You cannot search the product, you can just wait for the product.” (Daisy)

While reading this sentence, questions like what the hidden idea is behind this phenomenon, what it means, what the connection with the research topic and research question were asked. Consequently, I interpreted it as a passive shopping process because consumers accept those products information passively and consumers cannot control the products’ coming up, which could be named as the new concept “passive shopping” in this thesis.

Constant comparison:

The strategy “constant comparison” refers to compare the incident with incident in the data for similarities and differences, and then to be classified into the categories or themes (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p.73). For example:

“I have seen some of my friends, friends of friends selling the products on Facebook ... I bought one from him (a friend of the friend)...” (Yogesh)

“I have brought books from Facebook twice...from my friends.” (Lisa)

These two incidents described by two different subjects share the one similarity: both of them buy secondhand products from friends or friends’ friends. This similarity may imply that those secondhand transactions happen in friend’s networks, which could be one of the characteristics of secondhand shopping on social media (see section 4.1.2).

Giving another example of how I did in constant comparison when viewed the data:

“I don’t think it is secure when you buy those products from an unknown seller.”
(Daisy)

“I only care about the product that I want to buy and the price. Trust does not matter.”
(Stela)

If comparing these two quotes, it is obvious that Daisy and Stela have different views regarding the importance of trust in a secondhand transaction made on social media. Daisy thought it is important that you buy a secondhand from a trusted person while Stela did not think the same. This difference was classified into two categories (i.e. trust is important, trust does not matter), which were put under the “trust” theme (see section 4.2.3).

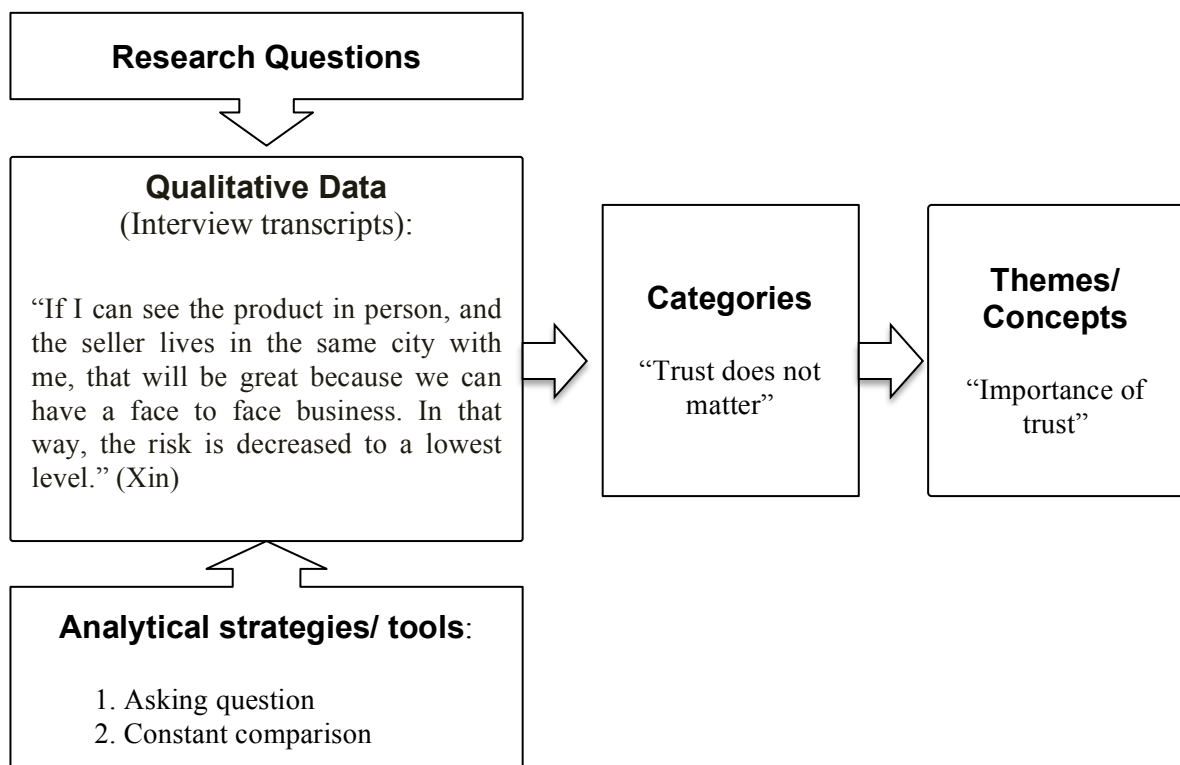


Figure 7. The analytical process of qualitative data in this thesis (Source: my own).

To summarize, I drew a figure (Figure 7) to present the process of analyzing the qualitative data in this thesis. As the figure shows, qualitative data (i.e. interview transcripts) were read bearing research questions in mind, and were analyzed with the help of two analytical research strategies, asking questions and constant comparison (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Paragraphs and sentences were analyzed by asking questions and making comparisons, in order to classify different categories, e.g. trust does not matter in a secondhand shopping from social media. After that, vast arrays of categories were collected into different themes in the end, e.g. importance of trust. This analyzing process led to a detection and collection

of themes throughout the whole qualitative data. (Examples of the whole coding of qualitative data in this thesis can be found in Appendix 5) What's more, qualitative findings in this thesis were also interpreted with the help of quantitative data of questionnaires that collected before, in order to build a systematic analysis, which forges the interconnections between data and reflects the importance of findings

3.6 Evaluation of Methodology

Reliability and validity are fundamental concerns in quantitative studies but seem to have uncertain places in qualitative studies (Armstrong et al., 1997, p.597). One strategy for addressing terms such as credibility, transferability, conformability, internal or external validity, reliability and objectivity is that of “triangulation” in a qualitative research (ibid.). Since this thesis puts work largely within qualitative research tradition, thus the ‘triangulation’ of the study will be mainly discussed to evaluate the methodology. However, reliability and validity regarding quantitative data collected from the questionnaires should be evaluated as well.

3.6.1 Triangulation

Triangulation is a phrase refers how to handle multiple sources of data (Bryman, 2008; May, 2011). According to Armstrong et al. (1997, p.597), triangulation can involve “a variety of data sources; multiple theoretical perspectives to interpret a single set of data; multiple methodologies to study a single problem; and several different researchers or evaluators”. Therefore, triangulation entails applying more than one methods or source of data in the study of social phenomenon (Bryman, 2008; Silverman, 2012), which implies an integration of more than one method of investigation in research. For example, the combination of quantitative and qualitative research techniques provides broadly consistent data (Bryman, 2004).

Triangulation not only can make social researchers feel more confident about their study (Webb et al., 1966, cited in Bryman, 2004), but also can improve the reliability of a single method (Silverman, 2013) through a variety of data sources. Moreover, using more than one method allows researchers to triangulate results (Biggam, 2011), and to get a range of perspectives (particularly useful in qualitative research) and so achieve a more rounded

picture, or ‘thick description’ of what you are looking at (Geertz, 1973, cited in Biggam, 2011).

Two main research methods were used in this thesis:

- (1) A quantitative research method: a questionnaire administered on Facebook to a purposive sample of 106 respondents.
- (2) A qualitative research method: ten semi-structure interviews, with each interview lasting about forty minutes.

The survey study was constructed firstly to generate a general picture of what people think about the research topic and research questions while semi-structured interview focused on digging the deep reasons behind those statistical findings from the questionnaire. In this way, completeness of the research methods was achieved since semi-structured interview findings reinforce the statistical findings from questionnaires. A comprehensive finding was developed by using the combined research methods.

3.6.2 Reliability

According to Hammersley (1990, p.67), “reliability refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions”. It means that a research “should be possible for other researchers to replicate the survey using the same type of sampling, questionnaire, and process” (May, 2011, p. 97). Yin (2003, p.38) also suggests that, to achieve a reliable study is to “make as many steps as operational as possible and to conduct the research as if someone were looking over your shoulder”. Thus a reliable research “focuses on the need for a record of evidence that you did the research in a fair and objective way” (Biggam, 2011, p.145).

This thesis met the reliability to some extent by providing details of the appropriateness of data collection methods, i.e. the survey study and the semi-structured interview, the choice of survey sample, the choice of interviewees, the construction and implementation of each method, and the procedures of doing analysis to both quantitative and qualitative data in Appendixes. Thus, reliability is sought through a detailed, structured, systematic design of the research. However, in this thesis, the reliability is not relevant that much because the

sample is restricted in the group “sell/buy stuff in Lund, Sweden” on Facebook, in which most of the respondents are university students. Thus, it cannot be assured that to gain the same results if other researchers replicate the survey study in a different sample group.

3.6.3 Validity

Validity is another word for truth. It refers to the credibility of the research (Silverman, 2013). A valid research relates to “how you gather and analyze your empirical data, i.e. the strategies and techniques that you use” (Biggam, 2011, p.145). Hammersley (1990, p.57) stated that “by validity, I mean truth: interpreted as the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers”. Bryman (2004, p.29) also claims that validity refers to the issue of “how we can be sure that a measure really does reflect the concept to which it is supposed to be referring”. Thus, validity is about the degree to which the instrument measures what it is intended to measure” (Wrench et al., 2013, p. 232).

In this thesis, all methods were appropriately chosen to measure the phenomenon that is supposed to measure. The aim of this research is to get an understanding of customers’ shopping behavior when buying a secondhand product on social media, whereby answering what, how and why. The survey study was to measure a first impression related to the research topic and to support the implementation of the interviews. To make sure that every question asked in the questionnaire is necessary, and the measurement is valid, the questionnaire design was tested and evaluated by friends outside of this research. The analysis of those quantitative data followed the SPSS procedure since only simple statistic results (i.e. frequency, percent) were needed. In addition, regarding the semi-structured interview, interview questions were designed according to research questions and the expected answer from the interviewees. Coding interview transcripts was taken a step by step in a structured way. Different categories and themes were finally classified under each research question to deliver the answer.

However, this research does not achieve a full validity because it does not truly represent the phenomenon due to the sample limitation. The sample size in the survey study raises the problem of representation. Survey sample only has 106 respondents, which is too small to generalize the result even though generalization from quantitative data is not the aim of this thesis. In addition, since this thesis chose a purposive sampling method instead of a

randomly sampling method, the results in this thesis will not be generalized and representative to a bigger population.

3.7 Critiques on chosen methods

Researchers need to understand the different uses of methods as well as to be aware of weakness and limitations of the chosen methods (May, 2011). In this section, limitations and critiques of chosen methods are presented.

Problem of generalization

Both quantitative and qualitative studies share the problem of selection of people (Bryman, 2004). Quantitative research is concerned to establish the study within respondents who are representative in a wider population, in order to enhance the generalizability (ibid.). However, some researchers mentioned that it is not necessary to give a qualitative study the equal attention to meet the same sampling criteria (ibid.).

In this thesis, samples from both questionnaire and interviews are mainly young people. Because the population chosen to focus on in questionnaire is the Facebook group “Sell/buy stuff in Lund, Sweden”, most of the users are students from Lund University. In terms of reasons why chose people in “Sell/buy stuff in Lund, Sweden” as sample, it is because on the one side it is impossible to focus on all social media platform as well as the secondhand trade at the same time in this thesis, on the other side it is because of the convenience to get the purposive sample in this group on Facebook. The limitation might happen regarding the generalization of this result as doing the same questionnaire in different social media platform may cause different results. However, the intention of this thesis is not to generalize the results of the questionnaire, and also 108 responses are not enough to generalize but can provide references for constructing the semi-structured interviews. As said before, questionnaire and the latter method, interview, complemented each other in this thesis and worked together to deliver the results.

Moreover, since the sample is mainly restricted to the group of students, some empirical findings can be pre-determined. For example, in term of the third research question that why people shop a secondhand product on social media, price can be pre-determined as an

important factor because students do not have much money to buy new furniture for instance.

The problem of reactivity

According to Bryman (2004, p.111) ‘reactivity’ is “the reaction on the part of those being investigated to the investigator and his or her research instruments”. In both quantitative studies (e.g. surveys and experiments etc.) and qualitative studies (e.g. interviews, observation etc.), answers of investigators may be influenced by what they perceive to be under the investigation (Bryman, 2004). For example, in the survey of this thesis, respondents may choose to the answer ‘very important’ when ask them how important do they think environment protection will influence their purchase decision when shopping secondhand products, that is because they perceive them as an environmental person. It may influence the research result in some way.

Moreover, the interviews respondents may be influenced by characteristics of the interviewer (Bryman, 2004, p.165). During the interview, the reaction of the interviewees might be influenced by the performance of the interviewer. And not all interviewees feel comfortable to be initiative, talkative and contributive in this research. Therefore, results could be different if change the interviewee and interviewer.

Qualitative findings are subjective

Some criticisms point out, “qualitative findings rely too much on the researchers’ often unsystematic views about what is significant and important” (Bryman, 2008, p. 391). It might be true. In this thesis, the analysis process regarding the qualitative data from the semi-structured interview is generated from the coding, by applying two analytical tools (i.e. asking questions, constant comparison). As Corbin & Strauss (2008. P.67) suggest, every researcher has its own analytical strategies or techniques to interpret data and to make sense out of data. Therefore, in this thesis the analysis process of qualitative data might be too subjective because it depends on researcher’s knowledge, background, and personal characteristics for example. Different researchers may choose different analytical tools or strategies and also interpret the same data in different days.

4 Analysis of Findings

This chapter not only gives a presentation of findings from the survey and semi-structured interviews, but also develops an analysis of those results in relation to the relevant theoretical frameworks. Data from both quantitative survey and qualitative semi-structured interviews complement each other in order to interpret and answer my three research questions accordingly. In addition, to differentiate the subjects in combined methods, it should be noted here that, in this thesis the quantitative data refers the results from respondents of surveys, and qualitative data refers results from interviewees of semi-structured interviews.

4.1 What are characteristics of C2C secondhand shopping on social media?

Social media is becoming a new channel or platform for people to exchange secondhand products online. It is necessary to understand how the “trading environment” looks like before to start analyzing how people behave in this new platform and why people behave. Some characteristics of a C2C secondhand transaction on social media were categorized from empirical data, which help to understand the consumers’ secondhand shopping behaviors. Therefore, this section is mainly to answer the first research question – to investigate and describe the main characteristics of a C2C secondhand trading on social media. Both quantitative and qualitative data complement each other to give systematic understanding of this research question.

4.1.1 Social media: an open marketplace

Social media such as Facebook is becoming increasingly important in daily lives for all participants, including survey respondents and interviewees. The Figure 8 shows that around 75 percent of the survey respondents say that they use Facebook frequently or even all the time. Moreover, one of the interviewees also pointed out that social media is “a necessary part” of the daily life and “even you feel uncomfortable when you do not use it” (Olle).

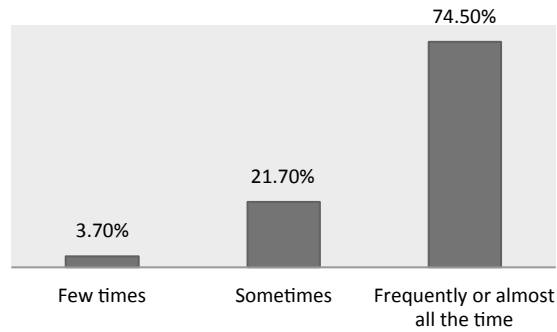


Figure 8. The result of using frequency of Facebook.

Results from interviews also reported that, it is obvious that all interviewees view the social media as a platform mainly for recreational purposes. For example, Daisy said, “It is a place that I mainly [use to] communicate with my friends and families, and share the recent situation, share pictures and so on.” She uses social media for connecting, communicating friends and families, as well as a place for sharing information. Elza regards social media as a place that is “very informative” because “you can get to know things about what is happening on the other side of the world from the public media”. At the same time, Elza also views social media as a place “to reach out people you do not even know”, namely, making new friends. Moreover, Yogesh views social media is “a place of giving viewpoints”.

However, except these recreational options that social media platforms offer to users, some interviewees also get noticed that social media is becoming a place of doing online businesses for both companies and individuals.

“There are always some advertisements coming up on the Facebook homepage, which are promotion information for business sale... there are some friends selling their old stuff on it (Facebook).” (Lisa)

“There are some people who use Facebook to promote their own businesses like start-ups. For example, there is one guy in Lund who cooks Indian food, and then he creates a group page on Facebook where people can buy his food. It is the way that he promotes his own business, to get in touch with more people.” (Manuel)

Just as Lisa and Manuel mentioned, social media is not merely a place of having fun, but a place, an online platform or an online channel of making money, like a marketplace. In this online marketplace, companies start posting advertisements in order to build close

relationships with their customers (Mikalef et al., 2013; Hajli, 2014). Individuals also begin doing their ‘small’ businesses by trading goods, including secondhand products, or services on social media platforms (Chu & Liao, 2007). Those individual businesses are C2C businesses as individual consumers are engaged in the online transactions of products (Ren & Van Der Schaar, 2012). Traced back to the reasons, the five characteristics of social media: participation, interconnection, openness, community and conversation (Weldoff, 2012, cited in Erragcha & Romdhane, 2014), combined with the empirical data from interviews give answers to this phenomenon.

First of all, the “openness” of social media make it reachable for every internet user. People not only can join in social media in any place and at any time, but also people are given more freedom to upload, post and generate content online. Secondly, the features of “community” and “participation” of social media allow people participate in any groups, social networks, and communities online. People on social media take part in different ‘communities’. This community could be a friend network, a discussing group, or a forum regarding a certain personal interest or hobby, such as a forum of photography, a group of a class, and a discussing group about sustainability. Some interviewees even gave a further mention that “people join in the group because we have the same purpose and interests” (Manuel, Stela). This argument has been proved by some examples. For example, Manuel has the group with his classmates in Master program. Elza joined a group related to sustainability because she wants “to communicate with them (other people in the group) who are interested in the same topic”. Stela has a group called “buy and sell in Skåne” where she can buy secondhand products from the people in Skåne region. Xin joined “a forum of photography” to share pictures, to discuss and to improve his photography skills. Third, as Alex said, “you can contact the seller within seconds”, the ‘conversation’ is the convenience that people see that social media offer for them to connect with sellers/buyers when they exchange secondhand products on social media. Thus, the high freedom and the convenience of using a social media give opportunities for social media users to get involved in C2C businesses, where people could be a seller, as well as a buyer in a product trading or transaction on social media.

4.1.2 Informal market transaction

Social media platforms are becoming online open marketplaces for trading products between individuals. However, there are some findings showing that this marketplace lacks standardized rules that like a physical retail store should have.

Exchanging secondhand: a sub-function/activity of social media

As mentioned earlier, all interviewees stated that they use social media mainly for recreational reasons. However, as Xin and Elza suggested below, doing a secondhand product transaction is merely a ‘sub-function’ of the social media, and the main function of social media is still about recreation.

“The forum is established not for doing this kind of secondhand transaction. It is about communicating, connecting, and discussing with each other, with the people who has the same interest with you. That is the aim. Selling and buying are not the main part of the forum, and it is like a sub-function ... and it is more informal when you exchange something in the forum.” (Xin)

“...Instagram is not about buying or selling cloth, and it is about sharing inspired pictures. Facebook can be, but not the main one of trading secondhand products.” (Elza)

This finding also can be drawn from the statistical results of the survey. Among those respondents who use Facebook frequently or even all the time, only 35 percent of them check the information from the selling/buying group - “sell/buy stuff in Lund, Sweden” on Facebook regularly, once a day or more than once a day. The rest, 65 percent visit the group only a few times a week or even a month (Figure 9). Moreover, the data also reported that around 41 percent of the Facebook-frequent-users do not have any shopping experience in the group “sell/buy stuff in Lund, Sweden” (Figure 10). This result may also imply that browsing secondhand products is a sub-activity when people are active in using social media, because they do not put much time in checking the group information from “sell/buy in Lund, Sweden” although they joined the group and had the buying intentions.

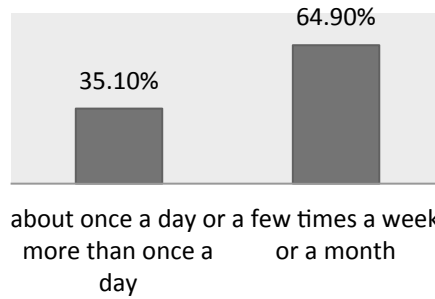


Figure 9. The frequency of visiting “sell/buy stuff in Lund, Sweden” group of Facebook frequent users.

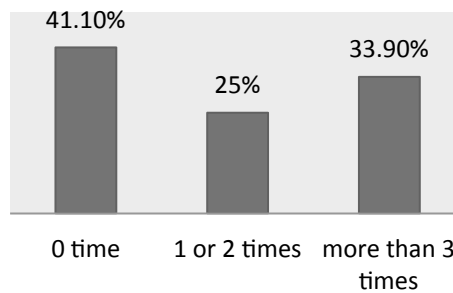


Figure 10. The frequency of purchasing in “sell/buy stuff in Lund, Sweden” group on Facebook of Facebook frequent users.

Cluttered and unstructured information

There are no standards or restrictions that to tell social media users how to post, what to post and in which way to post when they post selling information of a secondhand product. As Elza complained:

“Everything is messy there (the group “sell/buy stuff in Lund” on Facebook) like a very informal market with different kind of sellers, different quality of pictures, different information, and descriptions... If you go a secondhand shop ... all products are categorized well, such as clothes, furniture, kitchen stuffs ... all the products and information on Facebook are posted by different people and all those products are not categorized.” (Elza)

The messy, cluttered and unstructured way of displaying information, the diversity of information, and the spotty quality of products, all make Elza feel the “informality” of the secondhand shopping on social media if compared with shopping in a physical retail shop.

Non-transparent transaction

As social media are highly free places for consumers to exchange information or products, the finding shows that secondhand transactions occur between individuals, either with a known friend or an unknown seller. However, according to the respondents, Yogesh, and Xin, those exchanges or transactions happen on private levels, which are not transparent enough.

“If you see a product, and you just comment and talk to the seller, then arrange the meeting and everything you know, time and place, then you also have to do financial transaction with the person.” (Yogesh)

“It is not transparent enough, like a formal buying process when you go to a shop, because there is no secure about the quality of the product, the money [when buy through social media]... you can not return the goods, and you do not have any receipt ” (Xin)

The description of Yogesh implies that, the agreement of selling/buying is made between the seller and the buyer non-transparently. That is because the whole process, from searching products till the final financial transaction with the seller is implemented privately, and there is no paper receipt or contract stating the responsibility of any side of them. Moreover, as Xin stated, buying a secondhand product on social media is informal because there is no guarantee for a C2C secondhand transaction when considering the quality, payment method, money security, and returning service.

Secondhand transactions happen in friend’s circles, groups or communities.

It is also found that interviewees prefer to have secondhand transactions within their social networks, such as in a friends’ circle. For example, Lisa bought books from her classmates on Facebook, and Yogesh bought furniture from friend’s friend. Both of them got informed about those selling information on secondhand products by their friends or by friends’ friends. Since it is highly flexible for people to share information on social media, it is the direct way for people to get those selling ‘advertisements’ in their friend’s circles or social networks.

Besides, since everyone is free to establish or join a group or a community, in which people share the same interests and purposes, secondhand transactions also happen within

a certain group, either a group especially focusing on the secondhand exchange or an interest group where sellers can easily reach the potential or target buyers. For example,

“I have bought from Facebook, the group called “sell/buy stuff in Lund”. (Olle)

“I bought a lens ... from a Chinese forum, where people can discuss the same thing [photography] together. I mean, the thing that every member is interested in because it is a forum based on the interest. That is why people join in the forum and join in this community.” (Xin)

“I am a fan of fashion and designer bags...I bought a bag from a private seller in the forum, which is called ‘the bag forum’...It is a forum, which is especially for bag lovers.” (Daisy)

Olle bought secondhand stuff from a group of trading secondhand products on Facebook. Xin bought a lens from a photography forum. Daisy bought a designer bag from a bag forum. Just like their cases, these groups and communities provide good platforms for them to exchange their secondhand products because of the wide range of users and the high possibility of sharing information.

What’s more, the existing of these communities, where people can seek belongingness by grouping their interests and hobbies, facilitates the secondhand trading because it is a win-win situation for both the seller and the buyer.

“For a seller, it is just easy to target your group. I mean to find the potential consumers whom you are going to sell your products. The same, in terms of the buyer, it is also easy to join in the group or community on Facebook for example in order to find out the products that you want to buy. It is quite useful especially when you buy something.” (Daisy)

“When people start selling their used products, of course they will post it in the forum (forum of photography), because the people in the forum are the people who are most likely to buy the product, for example, to sell a lens in a photography forum. It always works!” (Xin)

As Daisy and Xin argued, on the one side, target customers are easily reachable for sellers because sellers know where the potential customers are; on the other side, those groups or communities also give potential buyers hints that help them figure out where to buy a secondhand product or an interested product.

4.2 How do people behave in a C2C secondhand shopping process on social media?

Since addressing the customers' decision-making process helps to understand customers shopping behavior (Pride & Ferrell, 2012), this section helps to enrich the research purpose through investigating how people behave in a secondhand shopping process when they buy a secondhand product on social media. I generate two new patterns of shopping behaviors, "passive shopping" and "active shopping", through coding qualitative data in this thesis. I also found that these two shopping patterns can cause "occasional shopping" results, which offer customers hedonic shopping values during their purchasing processes. Therefore, in this section, these three new concepts are going to work together to give a better interpretation of customers' behavior of buying a secondhand product on social media, so that to answer my second research question.

4.2.1 Passive shopping

Lloyd-Jones and Beynon (2007) suggest that a convenient information searching process can push people to shop in an online environment. Data from my survey study shows that a majority of respondents think and behave like that. The data shows that 80 percent of respondents reported that the convenience of information searching is a very important factor to consider when buying secondhand products through social media (Figure 11).

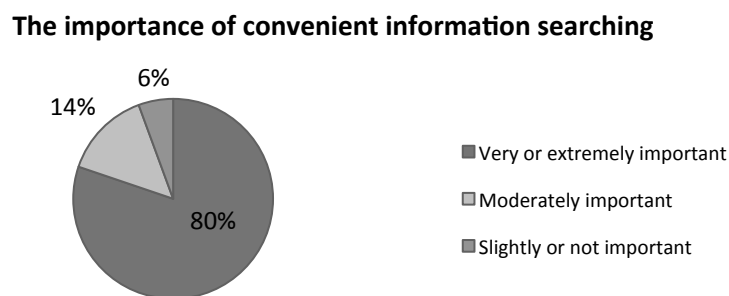


Figure 11. The importance of convenient information searching on social media.

Nevertheless, the convenience of searching when buying on social media is not as convenient as the survey shows. During the interviews, many interviewees claimed that, it is not convenient for them to search for a certain secondhand product on social media. For

example, Lisa said, “we cannot search ...we can only passively view the product when somebody posts it on Facebook”. Martin compared the social media channel with online e-commerce stores and said, “it is not as good as an online store because you cannot search the product! On online stores like Amazon and eBay, they have search engine themselves, and you can search product name, brand, colors, size and so on according to your needs...” (Martin). Another example from Daisy, when she talked about searching the product on Facebook, she argued, “you cannot search the product, you can just wait for the product” (Daisy). She used the word “wait” to depict her helpless feeling of waiting for a product coming up.

Therefore, in terms of the weakness that, customers cannot have a systematic searching of product on social media, often because the seller has not yet presented the product in the marketplace (i.e. social media), or because the social media platform does not have the searching function of products platform. This inconvenience decides that secondhand buyers have to accept the information passively from the seller. The information could include such as what product to sell and when to sell the product. Thus, in this shopping process, buyers like Daisy actually are situated in a very passive way of shopping, because “it is not like shopping in a store, you know what products the store sell ... you never know who will sell what on what time through social media” (Daisy). I call it as a “passive shopping” in this thesis.

Literally speaking, the word “passive” is explained by Oxford English Dictionary (2015) as an adjective word, which refers to the antonym word of “active”. It means:

“Accepting or allowing what happens or what others do, without active response or resistance.”

Thus, the concept “passive shopping” in this thesis describes that buyers can merely accept and allow the information happens on social media because product information are irregularly and unexpectedly posted or published by individual sellers. There is a similar concept called “(web) browsing behavior” which is used by some researchers to define the consumers’ behavior in the first stage of online shopping including information searching, information skimming and making purchasing choice via internet (Park et al., 2012, p.1584). Bloch et al., (1989, cited in Rowley, 2002, p.370) regards the browsing behavior as a part of the shopping experience and regards it as a screening activity. Those studies analyzing browsing behaviors get focused on the utilitarian browsing behaviors (browsing

for acquiring products through goal-oriented behavior, risk reduction strategies etc.) and hedonic browsing behaviors (browsing for gaining enjoyable aspects of shopping such as fun) (Putsis et al., 1994; Rowley, 2002; Park et al., 2012). In this thesis, I perceive “passive shopping” is a similar concept to “(web) browsing behavior” because both of them focus on the online information searching process. However, since I want to emphasize the passive and active (will be mentioned in the next sector) roles of consumers when they buy secondhand products on social media platforms. Passive and active are two relative concepts. Therefore, I decided to use the terms “passive shopping” and “active shopping” to define two different shopping behavior patterns, which are the specific findings from the context of buying secondhand products on social media platforms in this thesis. To differentiate, the word “browse” used in this thesis merely means the activity of skimming or checking information.

In a passive shopping process, products such as secondhand products are not ready to be displayed on a shelf like in a grocery store. What products to sell and when to sell the products depend on individual sellers. Thus, in this process, customers firstly browse the product information that are given by different sellers on a social media platform, and then make a purchase decision when they get a worthy offer (Figure 12). In this information browsing process, customers are either non-purposive buyers who have no specific purchasing purpose in mind or purposive buyers with particular purchasing aims of buying a certain product.

Non-purposive:

Some interviewees without specific purchasing purpose in mind see browsing secondhand selling information on social media as a leisure activity. For example:

“I checked the information in the group not that often, about few times a month, just for fun. You know, when you have nothing to do, you log in your Facebook and begin to check all news, information in the groups and updates of your friends. Seating in my sofa and drinking beer while looking at your phone.” (Martin)

As Martin described, browsing secondhand products’ selling information on social media is one of the activities that he does when he feel boring and has nothing to do. It is a kind of “social shopping” of attaining entertainments (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003) for him, because he does not have any specific purchase intention and he only views the browsing process as an activity for having fun and for spending time.

Purposive:

Different from Martin, interviewees like Daisy, Manuel, Lisa, and Stela, are task-oriented shoppers. They view those selling sites only when they are “looking for a particular thing” (Stela). As Lisa said, “I will not check the information in the group (“sell/buy stuff in Lund”) unless I have special things to buy.” With specific purchase purposes in mind, they focus on seeking specific information when they are browsing those selling information and end the purchase until the task is accomplished.

However, due to the passive position of a buyer in a secondhand transaction based on social media, customers have to check selling information very frequently since no one knows what will happen. Just as Daisy described:

“I updated the information in the forum (the bag forum) almost every day because I want to buy a Louis Vuitton bag. So I went there with this clear purpose, and I do not want to miss any opportunities.” (Daisy)

Daisy does not feel tired of searching and browsing information related to the product that she want to buy. She even feels “happy” when she was strolling taking part of different information. Thus, even though it took a long time for her to wait for a desired offer (i.e. a desired bag with good price and used condition), she still see the searching and waiting as a funny, enjoyable and interesting process. This may imply that shopping a secondhand product on social media with a specific purchase purpose in mind tends to be a task-oriented (Babin et al., 1994) hedonic shopping process relating to some hedonic aspects such as fun and excitement (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003).

4.2.2 Active shopping

In contrast to the passive shopping, “active shopping” is the other new concept of the shopping behavior of buying a secondhand product on social media in this thesis. Active shopping focuses on the active role of buyers to attract sellers in a secondhand transaction. For example:

“I wrote a post in the group (“sell/buy stuff in Lund”) that I want to buy a bed. Then you just wait till somebody contact you via Facebook...” (Xin)

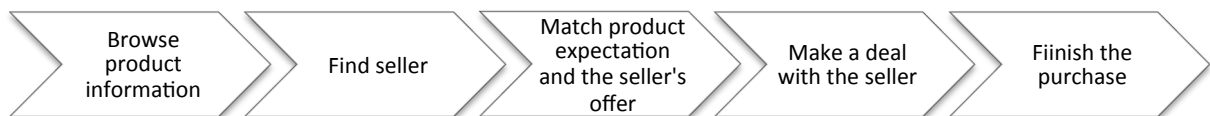
“You can put your request forward, I mean, for example, one of my friend in Malmö, he posted ‘I am looking for a Windows laptop, anyone of your friend who is selling,

please contact me’ on Facebook. So you see, he gave this specification actually. So it is not only about put your products there, but also put what you want and ask your friends you spread the information.” (Yogesh)

“I tried to find a course book from the previous students in my program; then I post ‘I am looking for the book’ on Facebook. After that, the same day, a student from the second-year contact me privately via message...” (Stela)

In these examples mentioned above, buyers such as Xin, Yogesh, and Stela choose to put their specific purchasing purpose or request forward. In this process, the role of a buyer transfers from a passive to an active position. Speaking of “active”, I mean buyers do not have to accept product information passively, browse product information and wait for the products coming up, but to post their request forward to ask for a product, to attract potential sellers, and to choose the seller. Both passive and active shopping processes are graphed below in Figure 12.

Passive Shopping Process:



Active Shopping Process:

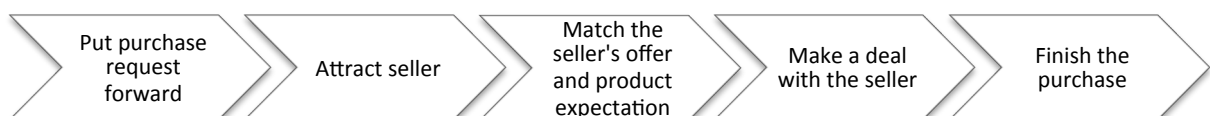


Figure 12. The passive and active shopping processes (Source: my own).

4.2.3 Occasional shopping result

Due to the inconvenience of product searching on social media, both buyers and sellers have difficulties of finding each other. Therefore, for the passive shopper and the active shopper, the shopping result - whether the consumer can buy a desired secondhand product or not, is unexpected and cannot be foreseen. I refer this unexpected result as a result of “occasional shopping”, which regards buying a secondhand product on social media is like

“a process of matching both sellers and buyers” (Daisy), and also like “an occasional buying” process (Xin). To differentiate, passive and active shopping emphasizes the shopping process while occasional shopping focuses on the shopping result.

It is found that this matching process between the seller/product and the buyer can happen at any time, even when you do not have any purchase intentions before. For example,

“When I see my friend sell something that I think is good, and I may need it, and then I buy it. You know, even though it is not my plan to browse the social media, but occasionally you see your friend is selling something you are interested, so I just buy it ... even you don't see a need; you still buy because you find something attractive and interesting on social media.” (Yogesh)

As this example from Yogesh, he did not know that he will meet the product, and he did not expect to buy anything on social media before he had browsed the social media as usual. However, he still bought an attractive product that he thought he might need later by accident. Examples like this can also be found in other cases of interviewees. These examples emphasized the occasionality of a secondhand trading, and also imply that a successful secondhand transaction can only be met not expected.

Further, Martin also suggested “when you see a certain product that suits you very well, then you should buy it otherwise, either other people buy it or that post will disappear among dozens of posts”. As he said, buyers should grab the chance when they meet a satisfied secondhand product by accident because the specific product with a specific seller, used condition and price, may only occur once.

Due to the non-expectation, this kind of occasional shopping brings some hedonic values for buyers because a successful secondhand transaction happens by chance. Here giving examples from Daisy and Xin when they talked about one of their secondhand shopping experiences on social media platform:

“I felt excited because the price is really low.” (Alex)

“I was happy ... I finally saw a person who is selling her bag in [at] a good price. Both the price and bag are good for me. And the most important thing is, the seller is a Chinese... in that way we can talk in Chinese through WeChat, and it is more convenient.” (Daisy)

“I saw someone was selling his lens in the forum because he posted the information, including the pictures, use conditions and price and everything in the community. You

know what, that was the lens that I actually want to buy! I was excited because it is just happen... I felt very happy, excited and surprised because it is not something that you can expect, and you never know when it will happen!” (Xin)

Alex got a very cost-efficient deal from the seller, which made him feel excited. Daisy was happy because she met a desired product and plus a perfect seller who speaks the same language by chance. For Xin, he also felt glad and got surprised by the product’s coming up because he did not expect it would happen. In their cases, excitement, happy and surprise are hedonic aspects (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003) that they obtain from buying secondhand products on social media because of the unexpected shopping results.

4.3 Why do people buy secondhand products on social media platforms?

This section focuses on answering the third research question – why people buy a secondhand product from social media and what factors can influence their purchase decision – by explaining different shopping intentions. As mentioned before, both quantitative and qualitative data contribute to the comprehensive results. The finding shows that four factors: economic consideration (i.e. price), convenience (i.e. location), product information, and trust take determinant places in motivating consumers to buy a secondhand product from social media platform. By contrast, recreational purpose, and environmental consideration show less-important roles of motivating customers to buy secondhand products from social media. Each of these factors will be discussed respectively below.

4.3.1 Economic benefits

Many researchers have already mentioned that economic reason is the major reason explaining why people shop a secondhand product (Roux & Korchia, 2006; Bauk, 2012; Xu et al., 2014). In this thesis, it is also quite obvious to say that gaining the economic benefits from the cheap prices is the most important motivation. 97 percent of survey respondents reported that price is an extremely important factor when they consider buying a secondhand product on social media. Correspondingly, nearly 95 percent of people think

gaining economic benefits (e.g. save cost) is a significantly important reason that motivates them to buy secondhand products (Figure 13).

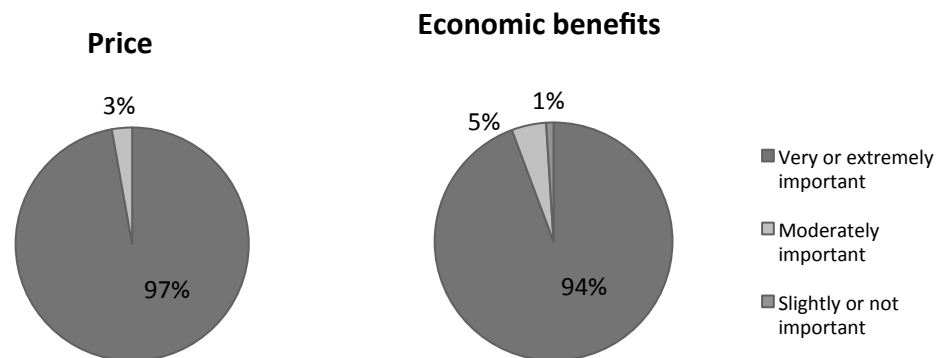


Figure 13. The importance of price and gaining economic benefits when people buy a secondhand product on social media.

Corresponding with this statistic result from quantitative data, almost all interviewees also were quite straightforward in putting the price in the priority when they consider buying a secondhand product on social media, by saying “price is always the most important thing!” (Xin), and “buying secondhand products on social media is about price” (Alex). Moreover, the low price is the attractive and advantage factor of adsorbing buyers if compared price of a new product, just as Daisy stated, “I don’t have enough money. I buy secondhand products because they are cheap. Otherwise, I would spend more money to buy new products”.

More importantly, some interviewees also emphasized another attractive aspect of price namely that the price can be negotiated when buying a secondhand product from an individual seller on social media. For example:

“The price (of the lens) is not fixed ... because once when you become a friend with the seller, he will give you a good price, which is good for both you and him... because he (the seller) thinks that knowing a new person who shares the same interest is more important than the price. So he decreased several hundred in the price. I was so happy about that.” (Xin)

Xin negotiated the price with the lens’ seller through communicating with the seller in private, even making friends with the seller. Just as Brough & Isaac (2012) stated in their research, when the seller has emotional attachment to the secondhand product, and when

the seller approves the buyer's usage intent, the seller is more likely to sacrifice the profit by decreasing the price. Since Xin shares the same interest with the seller and the seller also supports the usage intent of Xin, they made a deal each other, even though the seller may lose some profits. In addition, Manuel also pointed out that the reason why the price is easily to be negotiated is because: "it is consumer-to-consumer, and there is no one who wants to earn extra money between you and the seller" (Manuel). Thus, the non-transparency in this particular C2C business model of exchanging secondhand products between individual seller and buyer gives consumer more opportunities to bargain and more room to negotiate with the seller in private. This may also happen in a flea market when buying from an individual seller.

However, "it is not only about price" (Stela). Many interviewees mentioned that the price was the leading but not the only reason driving interviewees to buy a secondhand product on social media. For example, Stela seeks for a worthy secondhand product with "good price, fair quality, and a near location"; Martin balances the price and also the product's used condition to define a "worthy deal" when he bought a secondhand PS4; Olle assesses a worthy deal by judging the product's "price, quality, location of the seller, convenience". In relation to the theory, these examples reflect utilitarian shopping behaviors because most of the interviewees address the utilitarian aspect – price/cost saving, as most important. According to Babin et al. (1994) and Tauber (1972), utilitarian shopping is an overall assessment of utilitarian/rational aspects. It is also a judgment process of functional benefits and sacrifices (Overby & Lee, 2006). Just as these interviewees mentioned, they try to seek a good balance between price and other rational aspects, such as convenience, product information (e.g. quality and the used condition of the product). Once the benefits and sacrifices are balanced to be acceptable, they will make a purchase decision. Therefore, their behaviors of buying a secondhand product on social media are task-oriented behaviors, which are mainly driven by rational aspects. Those utilitarian aspects that interviewees mentioned above are going to be respectively discussed in below sections.

4.3.2 Convenience

Although lacking convenient information searching option, one of the main motivations that people mentioned is convenience. However, different from the convenience of

searching, the convenience here refers to the time saving and product location when people buy from a seller who is nearby.

Time saving

Like all shopping on online websites, the time of using social media is highly flexible because as Lisa said “when making a deal on Facebook, we will do the exchange immediately or tomorrow, anytime you want. Just talk to the seller”. Yogesh also mentioned that he buys secondhand products on social media for saving time of going to physical secondhand shops because “people do not have so much of time to go out and meet someone and decide” (Yogesh). For both of them, saving time (Babin et al., 1994) is one of the important aspects motivating them to buy on social media.

Location

In addition, some interviewees also reported the location of the product, as a rational aspect (Babin et al., 1994), is important when considering a convenient buying of secondhand products. As Stela said, “it won’t smart if you buy a desk or a bed from Malmö if I live here in Helsingborg”. The convenient location is also the reason why people choose to buy secondhand products from the seller who is nearby, such as in the compact city like Lund.

4.3.3 Product Information

Product information could be an important factor influencing customers’ buying intentions (Ghose, 2009; Lewis, 2011). The survey strengthens this point as around 95 percent of the respondents think product information that seller post is important (Figure 14).

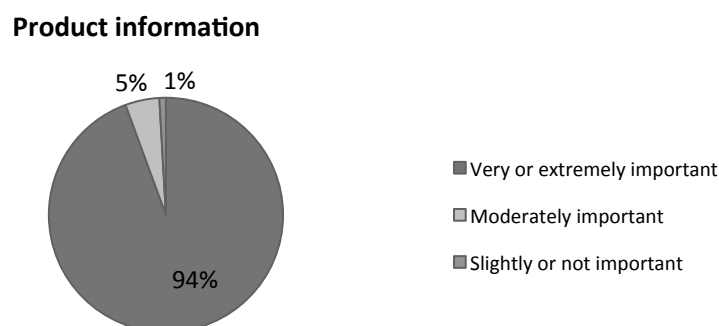


Figure 14. The importance of product information when people buy a secondhand product on social media.

Empirical findings from interviews also complement this statistic result. Many interviewees reported product information is important because it has impacts on assessments of a product's quality. Therefore, it will influence their purchase decision and even motivate them to buy a secondhand product. They further argued they require not only "basic information, like the product pictures, the description of the product, the use conditions" (Xin), but also 'quality' information, which can provide them a good overview of the product.

In addition, Lisa mentioned, "I prefer to buy from a post, which provide you detailed information". Further, Xin also said, "If someone post a product with very vague and bad pictures, and nothing about product description. I don't think I will buy it, even look at it". It implies that the intention of buying is low when sellers post poor product information. Nevertheless, a highly trusted quality information including a detailed description of a product and clear product images can increase the trust in the product and have a positive influence on their shopping behavior regarding a secondhand product.

4.3.4 Trust

Trust could have significant influence on customers' buying behavior when buying online from social media platforms, because there is no assurance of trading with an unknown seller (Lee & Sang Jun, 2005; Hajli, 2014). In this thesis, respondents to the survey on the importance of trust reported an almost even split between very and moderately important, with a smaller but still considerable number reporting slightly or not important (Figure 15). Different people hold the different point of views regarding this factor.

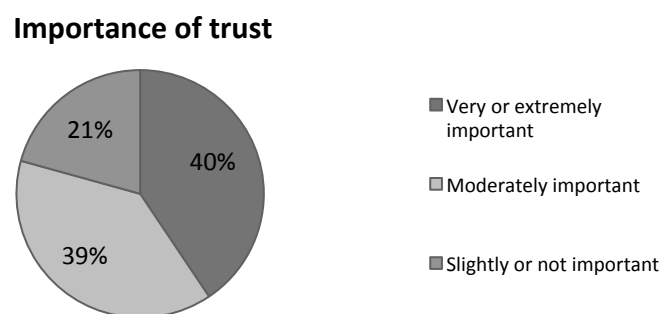


Figure 15. The importance of trust when people buy a secondhand product on social media.

The empirical findings from interviews give some clues that help to interpret this situation, although the data cannot differentiate between the moderately and other two groups of views. Instead, the interviewees explained why trust is important or not. Some interviewees stated the need of knowing the seller for security reasons, such as financial security and authenticity of products. The other group stated they do not really care about trust because they insist a face-to-face transaction, which they think would reduce the risk of cheating. Moreover, trust also depends on the value of the product that you intend to buy. Trust is more needed when purchasing an expensive product from social media platforms, the fictitious and informal market.

I have to know whom I am trading with

This group of people prefers to buy secondhand products from the people whom they know, for example, from friends or from friends' friends, because they are suspicious of the security of having the C2C transaction of secondhand products especially when they purchase from an unknown seller on social media. In that way they “don't have to worry about buying a fake product because you know whom you are trading with” (Daisy).

On one hand, some interviewees argued that they have to see the product in person, because they believe “information and pictures can be easily manipulated” (Lisa) and “pictures that people post online can cheat you” (Manuel). Thus, and it is not safe to buy a product without touching, seeing and feeling the product in person. On the other hand, other interviewees like Daisy, Elza and Yogesh have more concern about the problem of financial transfer in the transaction and the money security, because they think it is very likely to happen the situation that “you give them (sellers) the money and get the fake product and even never get the product” (Daisy).

In addition, when it is not feasible to buy a desired secondhand product from a known seller, then buyers such as Xin turn to buy from the person whom they know indirectly. By saying ‘indirect’ here, it means that although the seller and the buyer do not have a direct connection, in some way they share the same interest and the seller is regarded as a professor of knowing the product. For example, when Xin talked about his experience of buying a lens from a stranger in a photography forum, he mentioned:

“The condition of the lens is really good. You know, many people in that forum are professional photographers, and he is one of them. He posted a lot of excellent pictures

in the forum, and he is just the expert... That makes me feel more comfortable to buy the lens from him. Because I know the lens was taken care by him in a good way... when you buy from the person who knows the thing that you want to buy, like a lens or a camera, you feel comfortable...” (Xin)

As Xin said, even though he does not know the seller, the trust is still given because of the same interests they share, and seller’s professional background. Those communities, like the photography forum that Xin joined, provide social supports and a kind of community identification because people have shared values. It makes people feel a sense of belonging and it leads to a positive impact on trust.

Trust does not matter

Interviewees such as Stela and Xin regard trust not important because both of them think the “risk of cheating can be decreased to a lowest level” (Xin) in a face-to-face business transaction. Just as Stela described:

“I only care about the product that I want to buy and the price. Trust does not matter. I can go to seller’s place to see the product if it is not ok, then I won’t buy it. In that case, I don’t think I will be cheated. Because it is not something like you should prepay with a bank card.” (Stela)

4.3.5 Recreational purpose

In a physical shopping environment, gaining recreational, entertainment, or pleasure benefits could be on the main motives driving people to buy (Bardhi, 2003). However, the survey result shows it might be different in an online shopping environment, such as buy a secondhand product on social media. Even though social media is platform used mainly for recreational purpose, such as making fun, making friends, connecting friends, sharing information and following friends’ updates, most of respondents, 67 percent of them in survey reported that the recreational reason is slightly or even not important for them when they buy secondhand transaction on social media (Figure 16).

Recreational reason

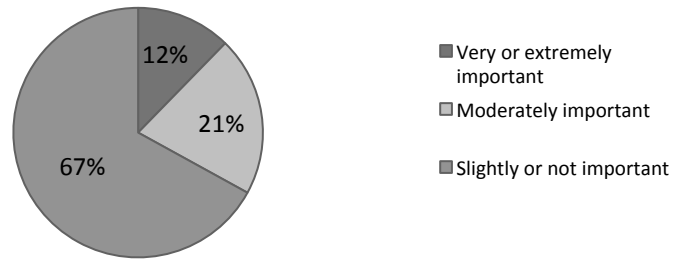


Figure 16. The importance of the recreational reason when people buy a secondhand product on social media.

Those who see recreational motivation not important merely see the C2C secondhand product transaction as “nothing more than business” (Stela). However, there are some interviewees do not deny making friends with the seller, and they look for possibilities and opportunities while talking with the seller. For example, as Lisa described below:

“Another beneficial aspect that social media has I think is socializing with people. When selling or buying on social media, at the same time you are making friends with each other. Maybe the seller would be the potential boyfriend some day...Social media is a magic platform. Everything can happen!” (Lisa)

Moreover, the finding also shows few interviewees, such as Xin would like to socialize with the seller who shares the same interest and are pleased to talk about the product. Price is important, and the process of socializing may increase the possibility for the buyer to get a fair and desired price. It has already been mentioned in section 4.3.1 before.

4.3.6 Environmental protection

Buying secondhand products relates to the sustainable consumption and wastes reduction (Baker, 2011; Xu et al., 2014). Guiot and Roux (2010) found that environmental protection is a critical reason motivating people to visit a physical secondhand shop or a charity shop, and then to buy a secondhand product. However, the survey shows that only one-third of respondents think that protecting the environment is an important factor that motivate them do a secondhand shopping on social media (Figure 17).

Environmental protection

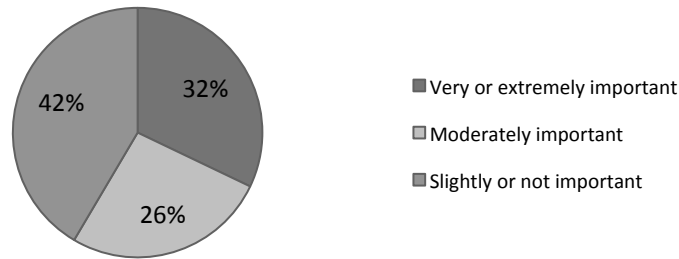


Figure 17. The importance of the environmental protection when people buy a secondhand product on social media.

In terms of the reason, some answers from interviewees help to explain it. Interviewees, who do not take protecting environment as a main motivation of buying a secondhand product, doubt about the effort of protecting the environment in saying that “I do not think several buying of secondhand products can save the environment” (Xin) and “secondhand product is just a small portion of goods that I actually consume in my daily life” (Manuel).

Moreover, some interviewees like Alex, only view the environment protection as an after-buying comfort, just as he said:

“It doesn’t mean that I don’t want to protect the environment... you also feel good after you buy second-hand products because you know you are protecting the environment. But it is not a driving force for me.” (Alex)

It shows protecting environment is not significant enough being a driving force for Alex when buying secondhand goods. However, it is undeniable that buying a secondhand can give Alex consolation and comforts after he realizes that he is protecting the environment from recycling and reusing, through buying a secondhand product.

However, for those people who are environmentalism hold different opinions:

“If a product is used again and again, then the life of the product will go for a long...Buying secondhand products contribute to environment protection. It is the driving force to make me buy secondhand products...to buy secondhand products, if you see from a big picture, you are protecting the environment, and you are saving the climate. I am an environmentalist.” (Yogesh)

“It is environmental reasons mainly because the fashion industry has a really dark side. It is really awful if you read about it, the work condition of labors, the low salary treatment, and so on... It is better to reuse clothing than to recycle it, much better.”

(Elza)

As Yogesh and Elza stated, they are the people who care about the environment in their daily life, and they indicated that apart from considering price, environmental protection is the main driving force that motivates them to buy a secondhand product.

5 Conclusion and reflections

This chapter presents a conclusion from the main findings in this thesis and summarizes the answers to the three research questions. The research contribution and practical implications for society are discussed as well. Then, I reflect on this whole thesis process to show that some limitations are realized after finishing all thesis work. At last, I give some suggestions regarding future research in this research area.

5.1 Conclusions

There are three main findings from the analysis of research findings that answer the three research questions:

(1) Social media is an online open marketplace and secondhand products on social media are exchanged or transacted in an informal way.

Social media are places for people to attain entertainment and recreation. The features of openness, participation, community and conservation contribute to the success of social media being an open platform for doing C2C businesses. Social media platforms are like open marketplaces that allow users to exchange (i.e. sell and buy) secondhand products online between individuals.

This online market for a C2C secondhand product transaction is different from formal physical markets to some extent because of the informality. First of all, participants regard exchanging secondhand products on social media merely as a sub-function of the social media. Second, information related to selling/buying secondhand products that are displayed on social media sites are cluttered and unstructured. Third, transactions of secondhand products on social media are not formal and transparent when considering the method of payment, the guarantee of the product quality, and returning service. Fourth, the secondhand transactions mainly happen within a certain community, e.g. a friend's circle, an interest group or a forum.

(2) Consumers are either passive or active shoppers, and it is highly possible for them to experience hedonic factors due to the occasional and unexpected shopping result when they buy a secondhand product on social media platforms.

In this thesis, two new concepts – “passive shopping” and “active shopping” were generated and concluded from the empirical findings. They are two different types of consumer behavior patterns regarding shopping for secondhand products on social media.

Due to the inconvenience of searching for information on a certain secondhand product on social media platforms, buyers are situated in a passive position because they do not know what products will be sold and when. Therefore, I call this “passive shopping” in this thesis. In a passive shopping, buyers, who are either purposive or non-purposive, start browsing for the product information on the social media, and then they make purchase decisions when they are satisfied with an offer (Figure 18).

In contrast, “active shopping” refers to a buyer who puts a product request forward, that is taking an initiative in order to attract a seller on social media. The difference between a passive shopping process and an active shopping process is presented in Figure 18. As the figure shows, in active shopping, the role of the buyer transforms from passively searching product information to actively putting the purchase request forward, and also from passively looking for a proper seller to actively attracting a potential seller.

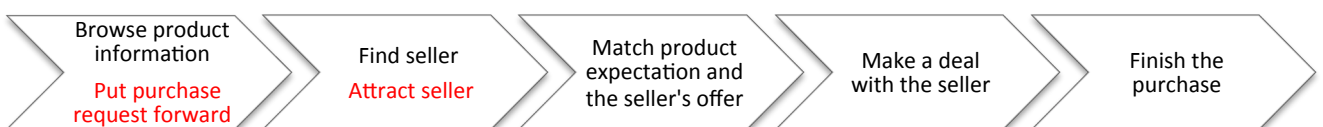


Figure 18. The differences between passive shopping and active shopping process (Source: my own).

Besides the differences, passive shopping and active shopping share a commonality. Both of these secondhand shopping behaviors lead to an occasional and unexpected shopping result (Figure 19), because the C2C secondhand transaction on social media is a process of matching both selling and buying, and the transaction happens by chance. Buyers cannot predict what product will be up for purchase. Specifically because of this non-expectation, buyers easily experience hedonic factors such as excitement, surprise and happiness during their shopping process from searching information to finding a desired product by accident.

Thus, we can say that the shopping processes including passive and active shopping for secondhand products on social media are fulfilled by hedonic values because of the unexpected occurrence of product availability.

Passive shopping	Passively accept information given by potential seller	Non-purposive buying	Check information infrequently without buying purpose	Occasional shopping result (1) A process of matching selling and buying (2) Bring hedonic values
		Purposive buying	Join in community with buying purpose, and check out selling information frequently	
Active shopping	Actively give purchase request/ information out	Purposive buying	Join in community with buying purpose, and give information out initiatively	

Figure 19. An overview of passive shopping and active shopping (Source: my own).

(3) Utilitarian aspects of shopping such as price, convenience, product, and trust mainly drive consumers’ behavior of buying secondhand products on social media.

The findings suggest that although the purpose of using social media both in general and to browse for products or attract sellers, is driven by hedonic reasons such as having fun and spending time, the decision to purchase a secondhand product on social media is mainly motivated by utilitarian shopping aspects such as price, convenience, and product information, as summarized in the figure below (Figure 20).

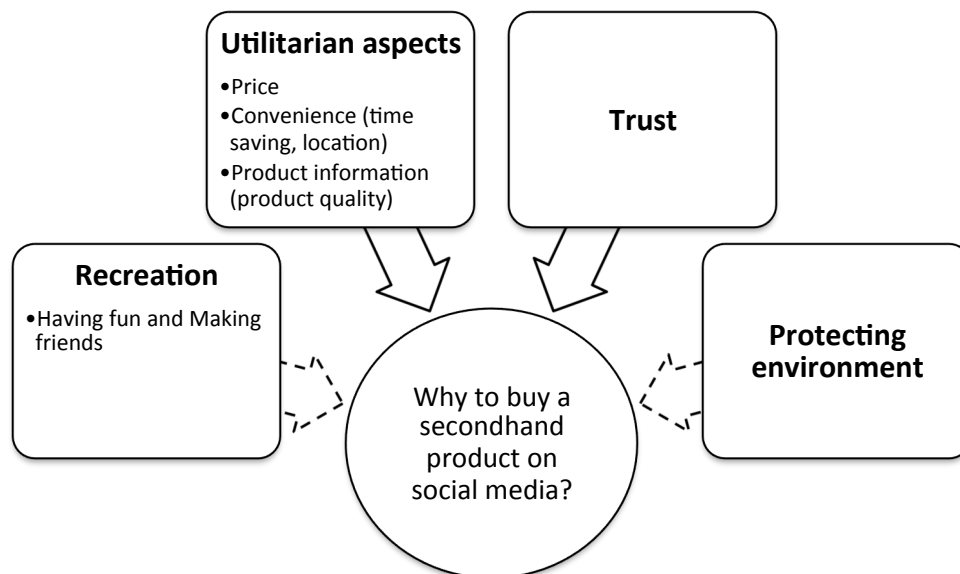


Figure 20. A summary of factors having an impact on secondhand product shopping behavior (Source: my own).

Among these utilitarian aspects, price is the primary factor that motivates customers to buy a secondhand product. Convenient location and the advantage of time-saving is also an important factor to consider. The detailed product information also has an influence on people's decision-making process to some extent because it helps to define the product quality, which is of importance for buyers. Importantly, the findings also show that price is not the only reason that motivates people to buy. Interviewees reported that they always search for a “worthy” and appropriate balance of these factors by weighing them according to their “needs”, which implies a utilitarian shopping behavior.

Besides these utilitarian aspects, trust is also a considerably important reason for many interviewees because trading on social media with an unknown seller raises the problem of financial security. In terms of protecting the environment and recreational reasons, the finding shows that neither of them is important enough to motivate customers to buy a secondhand product. The dotted lines in Figure 20 refer to the non-importance of these factors.

5.2 Implications for research

This thesis has made a significant knowledge contribution to the relevant research area through a deep exploration of consumers' behavior of buying secondhand products on social media – the new channel and marketplace of doing C2C businesses.

- Firstly, the findings elucidate the characteristics of C2C secondhand transactions on a social media platform, which provides an overview of this new market. Thus, it provides evidence or a reference for other researchers who regard social media as a marketplace of doing C2C businesses and want to deepen the research either on C2C business or on secondhand shopping, to construct their studies.
- Secondly, I put forward two new concepts: “passive shopping” and “active shopping”, which are the main findings of this thesis. These two new types of shopping patterns describe and explain different shopping behaviors of buying secondhand products from social media platforms. Speaking further, they provide two new angles for other researchers to use to analyze consumers' shopping behaviors.

- Thirdly, based on the research analyzing shopping motivations of secondhand products in secondhand stores, mainly from Guiot & Roux (2009, 2010), this thesis further enriches the understanding of why people buy a secondhand product in two ways. On one hand, I extended Guiot and Roux’s findings to an online secondhand trading environment (i.e. social media platforms). On the other hand, I analyzed those motivating factors from utilitarian and hedonic perspectives.

5.3 Implications for society

In addition to the knowledge contribution, some practical implications with societal relevance are also realized:

- The findings highlight that the product information searching function of social media is under-developed and time-consuming, especially for a buyer who wants to buy a secondhand product on social media. Therefore, a platform could be built by an online retailer to provide services for all social media users in order to help them find out the best “matched” product, through scanning and filtering all secondhand products’ information. Information could be filtered according to the buyers’ purchasing requests related to price range, color, brand, and size for instance.
- The active shopping pattern mentioned in the findings could become a trend in the future. Consumers could become more willing to take a dominant role in shopping processes or service processes. They put their request forward, and then they try to get the feedback from the seller or a service provider as soon as possible. This could be a new business model that puts consumers in a highly dominant position while sellers, retailers, and service providers are in a responsive position because they must adapt to the customized request as fast as they can.
- In terms of those factors that motivate people to buy secondhand products, the findings suggest that although physical secondhand stores (e.g. secondhand shops, charity shops) have challenges with marketing budgets and logistics, as mentioned at the beginning of this thesis, these stores still have big opportunities to attract more customers. Based on the findings and the previous research, we see that price is the most important factor without any doubts, both in a physical trading or an online trading. It is also reasonable

to say that buying secondhand products from a physical store is less convenient but offers a lower risk of cheating than buying from an online trading channel. Most importantly, physical stores are perceived to provide more recreational experiences and more hedonic values to customers. This is the attraction point that a secondhand retailer could explore and capitalize on. Secondhand stores could focus on their store decorations, layout design, employees, service quality and so on, in order to create a shopping environment where customers can experience hedonic factors, such as fun, happiness, excitement, fancy and so on.

- As mentioned very early, secondhand shopping supports environmental protection and should be promoted to the wide public. However, both the findings in this thesis and previous research show that protecting the environment is not the dominant motivation and consumers merely see it as an after- buying comfort. Nevertheless, from a socio-cultural point of view, this could be a big potential for secondhand retailers to increase their sales and attract more customers. Socio-cultural perspective says that customers search for symbolic meanings from products, store and brands in order to construct their self-identities and express their values, meanings and beliefs during the consumption (Na'amneh & Al Husban, 2012). As a particular shopping practice, secondhand products' consumption carries strong environmental values. Consumers express their values of being frugal, caring, and environmental friendly through consuming secondhand products. However, these values need to be activated because they are often unconscious. Therefore, secondhand retailers could arouse the environmental or ethical conscious of customers through, for example, cooperating with NGOs to promote marketing campaigns of protecting the environment, animals, and children.

5.4 Reflection on the study

When I look back at the whole design process of this thesis, I am aware that there are many potential improvements that could be made. Except those methodological limitations mentioned early, other limitations exist and are realized after finishing all the work.

- When I analyzed why consumers buy secondhand products on social media, I realized that it could be interesting to answer the question from a socio-cultural perspective. For example, to investigate how those secondhand shopping motivating factors have

impacts on consumers to produce / reproduce their identities and how they express their personal values in a secondhand shopping process.

- “Passive shopping” and “active shopping” are generated and concluded as concepts explaining and understanding consumers’ shopping patterns, processes and behaviors specifically in the context of trading secondhand products on social media platforms. However, the application of these two concepts should not be restricted merely to social media. They need to be applied in other shopping or service settings, such as shopping behaviors in a shopping mall, bank service and so on. Therefore, it is necessary to build a model regarding “passive shopping” and “active shopping”, in order to apply them in a wider context in the future.
- Six factors that were summarized from previous research were analyzed respectively in order to answer the third research question, which was appropriate for my thesis. However, I might have missed the opportunity to detect other new elements or factors that also have impacts on consumers’ secondhand shopping behavior from my own empirical data.
- I did not do a deep comparison between physical secondhand trading and online secondhand shopping in this thesis. But it would be interesting to do such a comparison regarding the differences in shopping behaviors and shopping motivation for example in these two different trading channels.
- Writing a master’s thesis takes a significant amount of time. Time was planned well in this thesis process. However, it was still deficient to collect more quantitative data and qualitative data.

5.5 Future Research

Future research in relation to the research area could be developed by: (1) investigating the research question in a wider sample. For example, the research sample could be expanded to a wider age range including both young and elderly people; the sample could be chosen from different secondhand trading groups in different social media platforms; (2) only applying a quantitative method to be able to generalize findings; (3) only applying qualitative interviews to gain deeper and richer understandings of consumers’ buying

behavior, regarding passive shopping and active shopping processes, and also to detect new shopping motivating factors; (4) investigating the differences that how consumers perceive environment protection in different secondhand trading channels, such as to compare a physical secondhand store and an online secondhand trading environment; (5) analyzing the decision-making process of buying a secondhand product from a socio-cultural perspective.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

A survey study focusing on consumers' shopping behavior of secondhand products on social media

Thank you for participating in this survey study. The purpose is to gather your opinions and thoughts about shopping secondhand products through social media platform (e.g. Facebook). Be assured that your answers will only be used as research data in my master thesis. This survey consists of 9 questions, and it takes only about 2-3 minutes.

1. What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. What is your age?
 - a. 17 or younger
 - b. 18-24
 - c. 25-34
 - d. 35-44
 - e. 45-54
 - f. 55 or older

3. How often do you use Facebook?
 - a. Almost never
 - b. Once in a while
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Frequently
 - e. Almost all the time

4. How often do you check the information from "Sell/Buy stuff in Lund, Sweden" on Facebook?
 - a. About once a day
 - b. More than once a day
 - c. A few times a week
 - d. A few times a month
 - e. Less than few times a month

5. How many times have you bought something from "Sell/Buy stuff in Lund, Sweden" on Facebook?
 - a. 0 time
 - b. 1 or 2 times
 - c. 3 or 4 times
 - d. More than 4 times
 - e. I don't remember

6. What secondhand products did you buy or want to buy through Facebook? (Multiple choice)
- a. Electronic products (e.g. phone, laptops etc.)
 - b. Books
 - c. Clothes
 - d. Household products (e.g. beds, chairs, kitchenware etc.)
 - e. I am not interested to buy
 - f. Other (please specify) _____

7. How important are the reasons below do you think will motivate you to shop secondhand products on Facebook?

	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
For economic benefits (e.g. saving money)					
For recreational reasons (e.g. making friends, having fun)					
For environmental protection					
For ethical consideration					

Other reasons? _____

8. How important are the factors below when you take a decision of shopping secondhand products on Facebook?

	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
Price of product					
Convenience of information searching					
Trust to the seller					
Product information (E.g. product's picture) posted by seller					

Other factors? _____

9. Do you think Facebook is becoming a very important platform for trading secondhand products in the future?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I have no opinion

Do you have any comments? _____

Appendix 2: Codebook of survey

Full variable name	SPSS variable name	Coding instructions
Identification number	id	Subject identification number
Sex	sex	1=male; 2=female
Age	age	1=17 or younger; 2=18-24; 3=25-34; 4=35-44; 5=45-54; 6= 55 or older
Frequency of using Facebook	fref	1=almost never; 2=once in a while; 3=sometimes; 4=frequently; 5=almost all the time
Frequency of using the group "Sell/buy stuff in Lund, Sweden"	freg	1=about once a day; 2=more than once a day; 3=a few times a week; 4=a few times a month; 5=less than few times a month
Number of purchase from "Sell/buy stuff in Lund, Sweden"	numpur	1= 0 time, 2=1 or 2 times; 3=3 or 4 times; 4= more than 4 times; 5=I don't remember
Secondhand products: electronic products	secpro	1=electronic products; 2=books; 3=clothes; 4=household products; 5=I am not interested to buy; 6=other
Importance of secondhand shopping motivation	im1 to im4	1=extremely important; 2=very important; 3= moderately important; 4=slightly important; 5=not at all important
Other shopping reason/motivation	othermot	Other reasons to shop secondhand products
Importance of influencing factors	if1 to if4	1=extremely important; 2=very important; 3= moderately important; 4=slightly important; 5=not at all important
Other influencing factors	otherfac	Other factors influence purchase decision
Facebook is becoming very important for trading secondhand products	Fbimp	1=yes; 2=no; 3=I have no opinion
Comments on Facebook is becoming very important for trading secondhand products	comments	Comments on "FB is becoming very important"

Appendix 3: Main statistical results from questionnaires

Q1: What is your gender?			
Gender		Frequency	Percent
	Male	37	34.9 %
	Female	69	65.1 %
	Total	106	100 %
Q2: What is your age?			
Age		Frequency	Percent
	17 or younger	2	1.9 %
	18-24	57	53.8 %
	25-34	42	39.6 %
	35-44	5	4.7 %
	45-54	0	0 %
	55 or older	0	0 %
	Total	106	100.0 %
Q3: How often do you use Facebook?			
Frequency of using Facebook		Frequency	Percent
	Almost never	1	0.9 %
	Once in a while	3	2.8 %
	Sometimes	23	21.7 %
	Frequently	58	54.7 %
	Almost all the time	21	19.8 %
	Total	106	100.0 %
Q4: How often do you check the information from “Sell/Buy stuff in Lund, Sweden” on Facebook?			
Frequency of checking		Frequency	Percent
	About once a day	18	17.0 %
	More than once a day	13	12.3 %
	A few times a week	42	39.6 %
	A few times a month	29	27.4 %
	Less than few times a month	4	3.8 %
	Total	106	100.0 %
Q5: How many times have you bought something from “Sell/Buy stuff in Lund, Sweden” on Facebook?			
Number of purchase from “sell/buy stuff in		Frequency	Percent
	0 time	40	37.7 %
	1 or 2 times	35	33.0 %
	3 or 4 times	14	13.2 %
	More tan 4 times	14	13.2 %
	Do not remember	3	2.8 %

Lund, Sweden”	Total	106	100.0 %
Q6: What secondhand products did you buy or want to buy through Facebook? (Multiple choice)			
Product classifications		Frequency	Percent
	Electronic Products	28	/
	Books	44	/
	Clothes	26	/
	Household products	76	/
	Not interested to buy	3	/
Other products	10	/	
Q7: How important are the reasons below do you think will motivate you to shop secondhand products on Facebook?			
Economic benefits		Frequency	Percent
	Extremely important	65	61.3 %
	Very important	35	33.0 %
	Moderately important	5	4.7 %
	Slightly important	1	0.9 %
	Not at all important	0	0 %
Total	106	100 %	
Recreational reason		Frequency	Percent
	Extremely important	2	1.9 %
	Very important	11	10.4 %
	Moderately important	22	20.8 %
	Slightly important	28	26.4 %
	Not at all important	43	40.6 %
Total	106	100 %	
Environmental protection		Frequency	Percent
	Extremely important	7	6.6 %
	Very important	27	25.5 %
	Moderately important	28	26.4 %
	Slightly important	26	24.5 %
	Not at all important	18	17 %
Total	106	100.0 %	
Ethical consideration		Frequency	Percent
	Extremely important	4	3.8 %
	Very important	7	6.6 %
	Moderately important	16	15.1 %
	Slightly important	29	27.4 %
	Not at all important	50	47.2 %
Total	106	100.0 %	
Q8: How important are the factors below when you take a decision of shopping secondhand products on Facebook?			
		Frequency	Percent
	Extremely important	71	67.0 %
	Very important	32	30.2 %
	Moderately important	3	2.8 %

Product price	Slightly important	0	0 %
	Not at all important	0	0 %
	Total	106	100.0 %
Convenience of information searching		Frequency	Percent
	Extremely important	37	34.9 %
	Very important	48	45.3 %
	Moderately important	15	14.2 %
	Slightly important	4	3.8 %
	Not at all important	2	1.9 %
	Total	106	100.0 %
Trust to seller		Frequency	Percent
	Extremely important	15	14.2 %
	Very important	28	26.4 %
	Moderately important	41	38.7 %
	Slightly important	17	16.0 %
	Not at all important	5	4.7 %
	Total	106	100.0 %
Product information		Frequency	Percent
	Extremely important	45	42.5 %
	Very important	55	51.9 %
	Moderately important	5	4.7 %
	Slightly important	1	0.9 %
	Not at all important	0	0 %
	Total	106	100.0 %
Q9: Do you think Facebook is becoming a very important platform for trading secondhand products in the future?			
Facebook is becoming very important		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	59	55.7 %
	No	37	34.9 %
	I have no opinion	10	9.4 %
	Total	106	100.0 %

Appendix 4: Interview guide

Interview guide

Date/time

Setting

Respondent/interviewee

Introduce self (e.g. country, age)

Permission to record

Purpose of study

1. Do you use social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Weibo, Wechat etc.), and how often?
2. What purpose for you to use social media?
3. What are the benefits do you think that a social media platform has?
4. Do you think social media is becoming a platform of doing business for both companies and individuals? (Give examples)
5. Have you ever seen that people exchange (i.e. sell and buy) secondhand products on social media? (Give a description)
6. Do you buy secondhand products on social media? In which social media platform did you buy them?
7. Why do you choose to buy secondhand products from social media platforms? (E.g. economic, recreational, critical reasons etc.) Could you describe one of your purchase experiences? (E.g. how it happens and works, how you feel about it etc.)
8. Is economic reason the most important reason for you? How about those recreational reasons, for example, making friends, having fun etc.?
9. There are many people doubt about the environmental or ethical benefits from shopping secondhand products, what do you think?
10. What other factors or aspects do you think are important to consider when you buy secondhand products from social media? (E.g. price, convenience, trust to seller, product information etc.)
11. Do you think social media such as Facebook will become the very important platform for trading secondhand products? And why?

Appendix 5: Examples of coding qualitative data

Texts in interview transcripts	Classified Categories	Classified Themes	To answer:
<p>“There are always some advertisements coming up on the Facebook homepage, which are promotion information for business sale... there are some friends, they are selling their old stuff on it (Facebook), and also asking for people if they have something to sell.” (Lisa)</p> <p>“There are some people who use Facebook to promote their own businesses like start-ups. For example, there is one guy in Lund who cooks Indian food, and then he creates a group page on Facebook where people can buy his food. So it is the way that he promotes his own business, to get in touch with more people.” (Manuel)</p>	Online market	Social media is an online open marketplace	Research Question 1
<p>“The one (forum) that I join is a forum of photography ... People share their pictures there, discuss there, and making friends there. I also bought a lens there.” (Xin)</p>	Openness & participation		
<p>“...There are a lot of groups existing in my Facebook. Such as I have a group with classmates in my master program, and I have a group called ‘sell/buy stuff in Lund’ where people do those secondhand transactions with each other ...you know people join in the group because we have the same purpose and interest...” (Manuel)</p>	Community		
<p>“You can connect to sellers’ social media account and follow them.” (Elza)</p> <p>“I contact him (the seller) via Messenger and we arrange the meeting.” (Olle)</p>	Conversation		
<p>“The forum is established not for doing this kind of secondhand transaction. It is about communicating, connecting, and discussing with each other, with the people who has the same interest with you. That is the aim. Selling and buying are not the main part of the forum, and it is like a sub-function, which is good ... and it is more informal when you exchange something in the forum.” (Xin)</p>	Exchanging secondhand: a sub-function/activity of social media	Informal market transaction on social media	Research Question 1
<p>“... Everything is messy there (the group of “sell/buy stuff in Lund” on Facebook) like a very informal market with different kind of sellers, different quality of pictures, different information, and descriptions... If you go a secondhand shop ... all products are categorized well, such as clothes, furniture, kitchen stuffs...all the products and information on Facebook are posted by different people and all those products are not categorized. It is for you find a thing there unless you have patience and check the updates every day.” (Elza)</p>	Cluttered and unstructured information		

<p>“If you see a product, and you just comment and talk to the seller, then arrange the meeting and everything you know, time and place, then you also have to do financial transaction with the person.” (Yogesh)</p> <p>“It is not transparent enough, like a formal buying process when you go to a shop, because there is no secure about the quality of the product, the money [when buy through social media]... you can not return the goods, and you do not have any receipt ” (Xin)</p>	Non-transparent		
<p>“I have seen some of my friends, friends of friends selling the products on Facebook ... I bought one from him (friend’s friend)...” (Yogesh)</p> <p>“I have bought from Facebook, the group called “sell/buy stuff in Lund”. (Olle)</p> <p>“I bought a lens ... from a Chinese forum, where people can discuss the same thing together. I mean, the thing that every member is interested in because it is a forum based on the interest. That is why people join in the forum and join in this community. ” (Xin)</p>	Secondhand transactions happen in friend’s circle, groups or communities		
<p>“You cannot search the product, because you can just wait for the product.” (Daisy)</p> <p>“It is not as good as an online store because you cannot search the product!” (Martin)</p>	Passive shopping	Passive shopping	Research Question 2
<p>“I checked the information in the group not that often, about few times a month, just for fun. You know, when you have nothing to do, you log in your Facebook and begin to check all news, information in the groups and updates of your friends. Seating in my sofa and drinking beer while looking at your phone.” (Martin)</p>	Passive shopping without purpose		
<p>“... I updated the information in the forum (the bag forum) almost every day because I want to buy a Louis Vuitton bag. So I went there with this clear purpose, and I do not want to miss any opportunities...” (Daisy)</p>	Passive shopping with purpose		
<p>“You can put your request forward, I mean, for example, one of my friend in Malmö, he posted ‘I am looking for a Windows laptop, anyone of your friend who is selling, please contact me’ on Facebook. So you see, he gave this specification actually. So it is not only about put your products there, but also put what you want and ask your friends you spread the information.” (Yogesh)</p>	Active shopping with purpose	Active shopping	Research Question 2
<p>“Price is always the most important thing!” (Xin)</p> <p>“Buying secondhand products on social media is about Price ...you could buy these things at reasonable prices.” (Alex)</p>	/	Gain economic benefits	Research Question 3
<p>“... When making a deal on Facebook, we will do the exchange immediately or tomorrow, anytime you want. Just talk to the seller.” (Lisa)</p> <p>“It’s very convenient. We can set a time and a meeting place that suits both of us and then conduct the transaction.” (Olle)</p>	/	Convenience	Research Question 3

<p>“... I don’t know the seller, but she is the friend of my best friend, and since my best friend share her information, which means my best friend has trust in her. So, you know, I don’t have to worry about buying a fake product because you know whom you are trading with.” (Daisy)</p> <p>“People can buy their stuff there (in Instagram) and transfer money. But I do not see that safe ... I could send you the money, but you never send me the product... If you exchange with your friend you are familiar with, of course, you do not need to worry about it.” (Elza)</p>	I have to know whom I am trading with	Trust	Research Question 3
<p>“If I can see the product in person, and the seller lives in the same city with me, that will be great because we can have a face to face business. In that way, the risk is decreased to a lowest level.” (Xin)</p>	Trust does not matter		
<p>“Nothing more than business.” (Stela)</p> <p>“I do enjoy talking to sellers through Facebook because the second hand shopping provides me a good excuse to make friends with others.” (Alex)</p>	/	Recreational reason	Research Question 3
<p>“It is just a small portion of goods that I actually consume in my daily life.” (Manuel)</p> <p>“I know people should be or need to be like that, to protect the environment, to be kind and so on. But, I don’t really think several buying of secondhand products can save the environment.” (Xin)</p>	Environment doesn’t matter much in secondhand shopping	Environmental protection	Research Question 3
<p>“If a product is used again and again, then the life of the product will go for a long...Buying secondhand products contribute to environment protection. It is the driving force to make me buy secondhand products...to buy secondhand products, if you see from a big picture, you are protecting the environment, and you are saving the climate. I am an environmentalist.” (Yogesh)</p>	Protecting environment is important when shopping secondhand products		
<p>“I prefer to buy from a post, which provide you detailed information... And I hate those posts that say nothing except posting a bad picture there...” (Lisa)</p>	/	Product information	Research Question 3