

# MASTER'S THESIS

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## Value as Meaningful Difference: A Study of Value in Second-Hand Consumption

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# Sammendrag

Formålet med denne studien er å undersøke hvordan verdi varierer blant konsumenter i gjenbrukskulturen i Norge. Mens tidligere forskning på konsumentverdi fokuserer på spesifikke verdityper og hvordan disse oppstår hos individet, viser våre funn til viktigheten av å forstå verdi som 'value as meaningful difference'. Denne forståelsen av verdi gir oss muligheten til å tolke verdi i en helhetlig form og ikke fokusere i like stor grad på individuelle verdityper. Vårt fokus er heller på meningen konsumentene får fra gjenbrukskonsum, som legger til rette for en ny forståelse for hva verdi er i et sosiokulturelt perspektiv. Vi gjennomførte 18 fenomenologiske intervjuer for å samle inn data, hvor vi hadde et åpent sinn rundt hvilke meninger som var viktige for informantene. Dette ga oss muligheten til å se helheten av verdiaspektet og heterogeniteten i gjenbrukskulturen. Våre funn viser at det eksisterer fem ulike sub-grupper i gjenbrukskulturen, som viser til at konsumentene i disse sub-gruppene er svært mangfoldig og verdsetter ulike meningsdimensjoner når de konsumerer. Heterogenitet i gjenbrukskulturen er derfor tydelig tilstede. Vår forskning bidrar dermed med ny kunnskap til både verditeorien og gjenbruksteorien.

# Preface

This master thesis finalises our Master of Science at Nord University Business School (HHN). The paper counts for 30 ETCS, and the topic is related to our major in International Business and Marketing. We have chosen to write this thesis as a scientific article with an adjoining introductory chapter as opposed to the more traditional master thesis. The purpose of this thesis is to examine how value differ between second-hand consumers. The process has been very educational and interesting, but also very demanding and challenging. We have chosen to publish the article in Journal of Consumer Behaviour which means that this thesis follows the guidelines of the journal.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude towards our supervisor professor Frank Lindberg for constructive feedback and valuable advice throughout the process. His continuous commitment and involvement have been motivating and inspirational throughout the development of this thesis. Furthermore, we would like to thank all of the informants for participating and dedicating their valuable time, and thus making this thesis possible. Finally, we would like to thank each other for excellent cooperation.

Bodø, 27th of May 2020



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# Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate how value differs among consumers in the second-hand consumption culture in Norway. While previous research on consumer value focuses on specific value types and how these occur within the individual, our findings show the importance of understanding value as meaningful difference. This understanding of value allows us to interpret value in a holistic sense and not to focus as much on the individual value types. Rather, the focus is on the meaning consumers attain from second-hand consumption, which enables another understanding of what value is in a socio-cultural perspective. We conducted 18 phenomenological interviews to collect data, where we were open-minded about which meanings that were of importance for the informants, allowing us to view value holistically and see the heterogeneity within the second-hand culture. Our findings show that there are five sub-groups within the second-hand consumption culture, referring to the consumers of these sub-groups being highly diverse and value different meaning dimensions when consuming. Therefore, within-culture heterogeneity is significantly present in the second-hand consumption culture. Our research therefore contributes with new knowledge to both the value theory and the second-hand consumption theory.

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# Introductory chapter

## **Theoretical framework**

The purpose of this introductory chapter is to explicate the theoretical foundation of the thesis. In the article we ask the question: *How do value differ between consumers of second-hand consumption?*, and in this introductory chapter we review theory which concerns different perspectives on consumption theory and value theory, as well as theory on second-hand consumption to which we build the theory of the article on.

## **Perspectives on consumption and value**

Consumer behaviour is defined as “the dynamic interaction of affect and cognition, behaviour, and the environment by which human beings conduct the exchange aspect of their lives” (American Marketing Association Dictionary, referred in Ekström, Ottosson & Parment, 2017, p. 11). As consumption as a concept has changed, so has the concept of consumer behaviour. The focus has now shifted to the behaviour both before and after a purchase, and not only just the behaviour revolving around the purchase itself. Within marketing research, it is now important to understand the whole consumption process, from consumer’s desire for a product to the disposing or recycling of it (Solomon, Russell-Bennett & Previte, 2013).

Consumption is the use of goods and services and takes place in the life of every individual. Consumers make decisions regarding almost every aspect, from which milk and toothpaste to buy, to which clothes to wear and where to live. These decisions are influenced by our values and routines, but also by other consumers' attitudes, meanings and habits (Ekström et al., 2017). In recent years there has been a change in the classic concept of consumption, and according to a postmodern perspective, co-creation is now an important aspect (Firat & Venkatesh, referred in Ekström et al., 2017). Consumers are now both consuming and creating the product or a service at the same time, for instance when assembling furniture or sewing their own clothes. They are co-creating the end result, through their ability to use, interpret and evaluate products and services in their own ways, as well as co-creating value through the experience they have with a product, service, or other people (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008).

Holt (2004) was the first to define identity value as “the aspect of a brand’s value that derives from the brand’s contribution to self-expression” (Holt, 2004, p. 11). Consumers often use specific products to reflect their identity or to fit into certain social groups, making the identity value of a product or service important for consumers self-expression. Consumer’s identity, values, and attitudes can therefore have an impact on their consumption, for example if a product is broken, worn, or needs to be replaced, then some will try to fix it by themselves or they throw it away. On the other hand, if a product is still functionable, but is not used, some try to sell it or donate it to organizations for second-hand use.

Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) criticise how prior research understands consumers as rational, logical thinkers, as it may neglect important consumption phenomena influencing value such as emotional response, aesthetic enjoyment, and symbolic meaning. These important aspects are encompassed in their experiential value, which considers the consumption experience as a phenomenon including fantasies, feelings, and fun. Holbrook (2006) argues that consumers do not value the product or service in itself, but the satisfying experience that comes with the consumption.

While previous research has focused on the pre-purchase activities, such as the fulfilment of a need, or post-purchase activities, such as the evaluation of satisfaction, consumption experience research emphasise several other aspects that influence consumer behaviour and decisions (Carù & Cova, 2003). The consumption experience occurs over a period of time, and as Arnould, Price and Zinkhan (2002) argue, it can be split into four stages; (1) the pre-consumption experience (searching for, preparing for or imagining the experience), (2) the purchase experience (deciding, buying, and encounter with the experience), (3) the core consumption experience (the satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the experience), and (4) the remembered consumption experience (reminisce about the experience through photographs, stories, and objects). As a result, the consumption experience cannot be meaningfully decomposed into the sole shopping experience, as it is a complex whole.

For example, Carù and Cova (2003) argue for the development of the concept of immersion as a tool to understand how consumers are consuming an experience. Immersion in this context means that the consumers have to be deeply involved into the experience where the distance between the consumer and the experience is reduced. In order for the consumers to value an experience, they need to be open-minded and plunge themselves into the experience



(Hansen & Mossberg, 2013). Cova (1997) argues that value is created in social settings where the link (social relationships) are more important than the things consumed, e.g. products, goods, and experiences.

It is argued by Arnould and Thompson (2005) that value creation is influenced by several cultural aspects, such as norms and ideology. They describe culture as a heterogeneous system with several different meanings, values and ways of living, seen in a broader socio-cultural context. Culture can thus be said to be the very foundation of meaning, experiences, and actions (McCracken, 1986). Consumer culture theory (CCT) researchers argue that consumption is shaped by “sociocultural practices that emerges within the structures and ideological imperatives of dynamic marketplaces” (Arnould & Thompson, 2005, p. 875). CCT focuses on the socio-cultural dimensions of consumption including aspects such as symbolism and consumers’ stories, while concerning socio-cultural meanings and dynamics that influence consumers’ value and experiences.

## **Second-hand consumption**

“Second-hand/used goods shopping refers to the purchase of previously owned products.” (Fernando, Sivakumaran & Suganthi, 2018). Today, the assortment of second-hand goods is extensive, where some of the most traded goods are clothes, shoes, interior, books, electronics, toys, cars and bicycles (Ferraro, Sands & Brace-Govan, 2016). A second-hand market is a market that includes all these consumer goods disposed of by a household that is sold, swapped or given away, either with or without the help of an intermediary (Stroeker, 1995). Second-hand goods can be sold privately through, for instance, mobile applications or websites such as Finn.no, Tise, and Facebook Marketplace, or by second-hand retailers, meaning physical stores such as Fretex and Røde Kors Bruktbutikk.

According to Weinstein (2014) second-hand consumption has evolved drastically throughout the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first century. The second-hand consumption culture in the nineteenth and twentieth century were mostly characterized by poverty and was a stigmatized practice. In the twenty-first century however, consuming second-hand has regained popularity and it is now destigmatized (Weinstein, 2014). Today this culture is more characterized by engagement, for example doing something for the greater good and differentiate from the mainstream consumption. This development has been experienced by

several consumers who have consumed second-hand goods for a longer period of time, where they previously felt like others looked down on them if they consumed second-hand goods. Today, fewer consumers involved in second-hand consumption experience stigma or prejudice towards their choice of consume (Weinstein, 2014).

Second-hand consumption is referred to as a form of ethical consumption (Low & Davenport, 2007). Ethical consumption involves personal consumption where consumers consume a product or a service to support a particular ethical cause, for instance animal welfare, human rights or the environment. Ethical consumption has grown considerably in size and gained significant attention the last decades (Papaoikonomou, Ryan & Valverde, 2011). Consumers engage in different ethical consumption activities, such as the purchase of environmentally friendly or Fairtrade products or boycott of certain products or companies, in order to have a more sustainable consumption. Many of these activities may be a way for consumers to differentiate themselves from other consumers and to identify with certain groups. Consumers often use visible objects like tote bags to show their belonging to different social groups that emphasize the importance of ethical consumption. Previous research also shows that a reason for ethical consumption is that consumers wish to construct an ethical self and be more authentic. They do not only want to purchase sustainable products, but also reuse, recycle and engage in an improvement of the industry (Papaoikonomou et al., 2011).

According to Yan, Bae and Xu (2015) the society's ongoing concern about the environment has caused an increase in consumers' tendency to consume second-hand goods. This is because second-hand consumption reduces the over-consumption of goods, and the excessive waste that comes with it (Fernando et al., 2018). Thomas (referred in Yan et al., 2015) argues that if second-hand goods are still usable and valuable, second-hand consumption could reduce the demands from consumers for brand new products, and in that way have a remarkable impact on the environment. Most people want to live a more sustainable and environmentally friendly life, leading to a smaller impact on the world. Second-hand consumption attempts to minimize the damaging effects that the production of new products has on the environment, by reducing disposal of usable goods (Beard, 2008). Bekin, Carrigan and Szmigin (2007) also argue that activities related to second-hand consumption is an element within waste-reduction strategies, and that consumers in recent years have become more concerned about this topic. Instead of just throwing away usable goods, consumers try to donate, resell, recycle, reuse, and repurpose the goods (Bekin et al., 2007).

Second-hand consumption is also generally associated with different economic reasons (Ferraro et al., 2016). Traditionally second-hand goods were mostly traded within communities with limited financial resources, this meaning the poor parts of society. However, there has been a shift in second-hand consumption, where it now has become a matter of choice and not only a matter of economic reasons (Yan et al., 2015; Guiot & Roux, 2010). Frugality is also a large motivator for consuming second-hand, as well as thrift. Thrifty consumers, people who carefully manage their resources, may wish to save in the present through cautious consumption (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005). Second-hand goods are usually more affordable than brand new products, which indirectly causes a price discrimination between new and used goods, which again may cause thrifty consumers to buy second-hand goods (Anderson & Ginsburgh, referred in Ferraro et al., 2016). Consumers who consume second-hand goods based on economic motives may identify themselves with a more cautious way of living when it comes to spending money, they do not overconsume and do not waste their resources.

## **Methodology**

In this chapter we will define, explain, and justify how we collected data for our research, analysed it, and based on these methods, tried to answer the research question we have defined. This study is an empirical research, which is based on a qualitative method, with in-depth interviews as the primary source of the data collection.

Methodology entails how to proceed in investigating whether assumptions or hypotheses are in compliance with the reality or not. Methodology in social science is used as an approach to gather information about the social reality, how to analyse this information and how to portray societal processes and relations (Johannessen, Christoffersen & Tufte, 2011). It is a combination of different methods and techniques that is utilized in the enquiry of a specific situation (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, Jackson & Jaspersen, 2018). This implies that the information needs to be withdrawn from reality, analysed and interpreted, to where the researcher can utilize it to answer a specific research question. When conducting research, it is important to consistently use the same method, and to be systematic, thorough and open. In a research process it is important to not take alternative routes or short cuts as it will impair the validity and credibility of the study. As researchers we had to be focused and open to

other results and answers to the research topic than what was intended (Johannessen et al., 2011).

## **Research paradigms**

In the 1960s, Thomas Kuhn introduced the concept of paradigm which can be defined as “a consensual pattern in the way scientists understand, and inquire into, the world” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018, p. 70). In the field of social science, mainly two paradigms are recognized and used; positivism and social constructionism. Rehman and Alharthi (2016) argue that a paradigm influences ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods, and must therefore be defined first. The chosen paradigm will determine which research strategy, methodology, data collection method and data analysis techniques that will be used in this research.

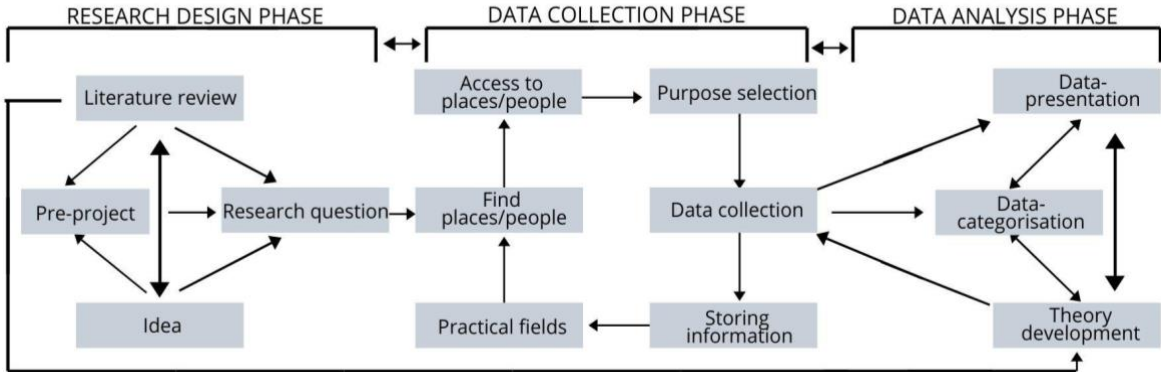
Positivism is based on the idea that the social world exists externally, and that human behaviour can be studied through scientific and objective methods. This view was developed by Auguste Comte, who argued that knowledge is only significant if it is based on external observations of the reality (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). Research done with a positivistic view happens by the use of hypotheses and deductions, with large numbers of data samples. Because of this, and the fact that positivism seeks explanation and correlation, this paradigm is often associated with quantitative methodology.

Social constructionism originates from the view that reality is not external and objective but is determined by people and their behaviour and interactions with others. The focus is on how people make sense of the world and the meanings they place upon behaviour and experiences (Gergen & Gergen, 2007). Social constructionism criticises positivism for their inadequate and incorrect picture of human behaviour and emphasizes that people cannot be studied and analysed in the same way as natural objects. The aim of research done with this view is to increase general understanding of the situation and the motives behind actions, through collecting small but rich data. Thus, social constructionism is often used when doing qualitative research (Gergen & Gergen, 2007). On the basis of our research question, we have chosen social constructionism as our research approach as it is difficult to predict how value differs within second-hand consumption, and as we need to understand the individuals on a deeper level in order to contribute to and extend the existing research.

**Research strategy**

Research strategy is defined as the whole process from idea and research question, to analysis, discussion and conclusion. It includes the organizing of research activities to achieve the aims of the research, as well as stating what will be researched and how. The research strategy is thus the foundation of how the research is to be conducted (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018; Johannessen et al., 2011). On the other hand, Mehmetoglu (2004) argues that the research process is a circular process where the different activities occur simultaneously. He also argues that research strategy, which he calls research design, is the first of three phases in the research process, as well as research collection and research analysis (Figure 1). The benefit of a circular research process is that it makes the researcher reflect on all the phases and parts of the research while conducting it, which results in a more comprehensive research. Phase two and three, data collection and data analysis, will be thoroughly discussed later in this chapter.

*Figure 1: The circular qualitative research process (Mehmetoglu, 2004, p. 52, own translation)*



According to Johannessen et al. (2011) there are several research strategies one can use in social sciences, such as case study, ethnography, phenomenology and grounded theory. We have chosen to use phenomenology as the strategy in this study, as the aim is to gain a deeper understanding of how value differs among second-hand consumers.

Phenomenology can be defined as a research strategy where the researcher seeks to explore and describe people and their experiences with, and understanding of, a phenomenon. The aim is to acquire an increased comprehension and insight to other peoples' lifeworld. In order

to understand the world, one must understand the human, as it is the human that constitutes the reality (Johannessen et al., 2011). Meaning is a central keyword within phenomenology as the researcher strives to understand the meaning behind a phenomenon through the view of others. When an action or an expression is interpreted, it must be seen in the context in which it occurs, referring to the fact that the researcher cannot understand the meaning outside the context where meaning is created.

Creswell (referred in Johannessen et al., 2011) presents three steps to follow in a phenomenological research strategy; preparation, data collection, and analysing and reporting. When preparing for conducting the study, the researcher must understand the philosophical perspective which underlies the phenomenology, particularly how humans experience certain phenomena. Every human interprets experiences, actions and expressions differently, and it is this interpretation that the researcher is interested in. During the data collection, only people that have experiences with the phenomenon being studied, can participate. In-depth interviews are one of the most used data collection methods, as the aim for the researcher is to gain an extensive apprehension of the interpretations of the informants. It is however important that the researcher understands its own interpretation pattern and prerequisites, as one cannot understand others if one does not understand oneself. After sufficient data is collected, it must be analysed. The researcher first forms an overall impression, before reducing the data by identifying aspects that give meaning to the informants. This is important in order for the researcher to be able to handle the data systematically and analytically (Creswell, referred in Johannessen et al., 2011). Phenomenological data analysis will be further reviewed later.

## **Qualitative methodology**

Methodology in social sciences is used as an approach to emphasize a research hypothesis or question, as it describes how to approach and analyse the research hypothesis or question, and based on this, come to a conclusion. Qualitative research is a scientific method which inquires profoundly into a specific phenomenon. The aim is to explore and describe the fundamental meaning behind a specific phenomenon, where the focus is on why and how it occurs, rather than how often it occurs (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). Qualitative methodology is characterized by fewer informants, however these informants possess deeper knowledge about the phenomena, and one usually utilizes interviews or observation to collect data. With these

techniques the researcher uncovers deeper knowledge and meaning about the phenomena from the informants (Johannessen et al., 2011).

Based on our research question, we consider qualitative methodology to be best suited, as the research question is explorative. The aim of this study is to explore how value differs between consumers of second-hand consumption and with qualitative methodology we are able to immerse into the phenomenon. Based on this methodology we will be able to identify and select informants who possess necessary knowledge and experience within the field, hence, we will be able to answer our research question.

## **Data collection**

In order to achieve a successful empirical research, one relies on data to use as evidence when arguing the findings within the research and to be able to draw a conclusion (Mehmetoglu, 2004). This is done by collecting a sufficient amount of relevant data, in which the researcher builds an adequate foundation to base his reasoning on. One can thus say that qualitative research is only as good as the data itself (Mehmetoglu, 2004). In this chapter we present different data collection methods within qualitative research, where we further explain which approach we have chosen for our study, before we define our strategy and criteria for choosing informants.

In the very beginning of this study, we conducted a literature review to create a foundation of knowledge and to get an overview of relevant concepts (Mehmetoglu, 2004). A literature review is an analytical search through existing research with a focus on a particular research topic. When conducting a literature review the researcher assesses, describes and clarifies the knowledge that is already acknowledged within a field of study (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018). Our literature review consisted both of manual and computerized searches. Previous studies found in our university library were a valuable source of theory, in addition to literature provided to us by our supervisor Frank Lindberg. We also utilized databases such as Google Scholar and BIBSYS by searching for key terms and subjects in relation to our research topic, to locate relevant articles, reports and books. In this process we aimed to be critical to the literature and to only select material that were relevant to our field of study.

Within qualitative research, and based on phenomenology as research strategy, human beings are the main data collection source. To collect the necessary data, there are different methods one can apply. Within qualitative research there are mainly four methods; interviews, observation, written documents and visual data (Mehmetoglu, 2004). Which method to apply varies based on to what extent of contact the researcher wants with the informants, what they want to achieve with the study and which physical limitations are present (Johannessen et al., 2011). In relation to our research question and based on phenomenology as our research design, we consider in-depth interviews to be the most efficient data collection method for our study as we need to understand the deeper meaning behind the informants' expressions because of the complexity of our research question.

### **Interview**

Interview is the most used data collection method within qualitative methodology. It is a method where the researcher aims to understand how the interviewee views the world and to build an in-depth knowledge about human beings' feelings, meanings, perceptions and understanding of reality (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Interviews is a conversation between the researcher and the interviewee, where the researcher asks questions about, listens to, and tries to understand the worldview of the informant. This method provides a feasibility in which the researcher can gather abundant and detailed information surrounding the themes and phenomena in question (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Furthermore, the researcher is able to connect with the interviewee, which generates complexity and nuances within the data, compared to other methods (Johannessen et al., 2011). The method is well-suited when the researcher desires to understand the experiences and perceptions of an informant, or if he or she wants to reconstruct an event (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This is essential in our study, as we were dependent on receiving deep and thorough information from the interviewees to answer our research question.

The interview process goes through a linear progression of seven stages, from the first idea to the final report. These seven steps are a guideline to help the researcher keep his or her engagement throughout the entire investigation and to retain the initial vision of the research (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The seven steps are thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying and reporting. In the first stage, thematizing, the researcher formulates the aim of the study and conceptualizes the overall theme, while in the second



stage, the design stage, the planning of how to conduct the research is stated. In the third stage, the actual interview is conducted based on a predefined script. After the interview is conducted the researcher moves into the fourth stage which is transcribing, meaning translating oral speech to written text to use as material for analysis, which leads the researcher on to the next stage, the analysis. In this stage, the researcher goes through the gathered data and searches for material that can be used to argue for the research topic. When the analysis is complete, the question of verification arises, which leads to the sixth stage, where the researcher needs to confirm the reliability, validity and generalizability of the study. In the final stage, reporting, the findings of the study and the conclusion to the research question is communicated through a written report (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

An interview is usually conducted on the basis of a script, also called an interview guide, which structures the direction of the interview (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). According to Johannessen et al. (2011) interview guides can be conducted on the basis of three different forms of structure; unstructured, structured and semi-structured. In an unstructured interview the researcher does not have any predefined questions, however there is an overall theme and central terms that guide the interview. This form of interview is relatively informal and resembles a conversation rather than an interview. Such interviews can cause problems if the interviewee is not able to elaborate around the subject, but on the other hand, it could be very effective as the informant is able to talk freely (Johannessen et al., 2011). A structured interview is the opposite of an unstructured interview. These interviews are based on a pre-set interview guide with a fixed theme and questions, in addition to predefined answer alternatives, which the informant has to choose from. In such cases, the interviews will be similarly constructed, and the researcher will not be able to grasp the deeper meaning behind the answers (Johannessen et al., 2011).

The last form of structure is a semi-structured interview. This form of interview is based on a script, which includes an overview of topics the researcher wants to cover, along with a draft of relevant questions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). How structured or unstructured such an interview becomes, is dependent on both the informant and the researcher. The interview will unfold in different directions depending on to which degree the researcher sticks to the interview guide, whether or not he or she is able to ask follow-up questions, and his or her ability to adopt and follow new directions as they arise (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

In relation to our research question, and based on our research strategy, we believed that a semi-structured interview was most suited to our study. This form of interview gave us the opportunity to truly understand the reasoning and meaning behind the answers collected from the interviewees. With this method we were able to get answers on a set of predefined questions related to our research question (see Appendix 1), but we were also able to follow up if the informant mentioned a theme or topic we found interesting, and from there go into subjects which created engagement or interest, both within the informant and for us as researchers.

In all of the interviews, we initiated the interview by kindly presenting ourselves and our study, we informed the informant that they would be anonymous and that the conversation was confidential, as well as their right to withdraw from the interview at any time. To get to know the informants and to establish a relation, we began by asking general questions about them, their occupation and their interests. Further, we aimed the conversation towards our research topic, where we asked questions regarding their second-hand consumption habits, why they began consuming second-hand and how second-hand consumption is meaningful to them, before we ended the interview by thanking the informant for participating. During the first interviews, we realized that some of the predefined questions in the interview guide were not as relevant to our research question as we initially thought. There were questions that we did not ask after a few rounds because of this, and questions we had to reformulate, as they were difficult for the informants to understand. On average the interviews lasted for about 30 minutes, where some were a little shorter and some significantly longer. The interviews varied in length depending on the informants' level of knowledge and how emerged they were in the phenomena. Some of the interviews were conducted in person and others through FaceTime or Skype, depending on whether it was possible to meet or not, based on geography. To document the information gathered, all of the interviews were recorded, before they were transcribed into text.

### **Selection strategy and selection criteria for informants**

Within qualitative research there exist several selection strategies for the election of informants. One of the most common strategies to use is purposeful sampling, or strategic selection, where the researcher selects a target group that possesses the necessary information in order for sufficient data to be collected (Johannessen et al., 2011). In our study, a criteria-

based selection strategy is used, where the informants are chosen based on pre-set criteria. The main purpose of these criteria is to ensure that the informants are in possession of proper knowledge and information that is needed to examine the research question. The criteria were established before we started to contact potential informants, and it was important that all the informants fulfilled every one of the criteria.

In this phase of the study, we identified several important criteria for the selection of informants. The first criteria were that the informants had to consume second-hand goods regularly in order to obtain consistency in the findings and for us to gain a deep understanding of the research topic. Secondly, the informants had to be of both genders to gain a comprehensive insight into the phenomenon, and not become biased. Finally, the informants have to be of different age groups in order to obtain as large a variety as possible in the group of informants.

In the search for relevant informants, we began by asking our acquaintances that we knew consumed second-hand. To get a broader demographic of the informants, we actively searched social media for accounts that openly expressed their consumption of second-hand goods. We contacted several of the accounts that matched our criteria, and some of them were willing to participate. After conducting these interviews, we kindly asked the informants if they knew someone else who could be relevant for the study. This method is called snowball sampling and is common to use when it is difficult to identify individuals that belong to the population studied (Easterby-Smith et al., 2018; Johannessen et al., 2011). Most of the informants had at least one person who could be relevant and referred us to them. In this way, we gathered 18 informants.

## **Data analysis**

In a circular research process, data analysis will happen simultaneously with data collection and the other activities that occur in the research process. However, it can be said that the analysis will be reinforced after the data collection is completed (Mehmetoglu, 2004). Since we have chosen phenomenology as research strategy and interview as the main data collection method, we will in this chapter review different methods for analysing the data in the light of these approaches.

When analysing data collected from a phenomenological research strategy, it is common to analyse the meaning. The researcher is preoccupied with the content of the data and reads the data interpretative as the goal is to understand the deeper meaning behind people's thoughts and actions. Malterud (referred in Johannessen et al., 2011) argues that there are four procedures one has to follow; (1) overall impression and summary of the meaning, (2) codes, categories and terms, (3) condensing, and (4) a summary. In the first phase the researcher obtains an overall impression of the data and searches for relevant main themes. Irrelevant information is removed in order to emphasize the meaning, through the use of meaning condensation. The next step concerns identifying aspects of the data material that gives knowledge and information to the main themes. This is done by the use of codes, which is a tool for recognizing, organising, and categorizing meaningful information. The process of coding is done simultaneously with the interpretation process and must not remove the entirety of the data material collected. In the third procedure, the researcher extracts the material that has been coded, meaning the data that is identified as meaningful. This data can now be organized in a matrix or table, making it easy for the researcher to write a more condensed text with citations from the informants. The last phase consists of summarizing the data material in order to formulate new terms and descriptions. The researcher must consider if the condensed text is in line with the impression that the original data material gave before the coding process, since the researcher has gained new knowledge during the process of analysing the data.

On the other hand, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) argue that when analysing data collected from an interview, one can use different methods such as meaning coding, meaning condensation and meaning interpretation. It is the meaning derived from the research that is important, where the purpose is to organise and analyse the different behaviours. Meaning coding is about connecting one or several keywords to part of a text so that one can easily identify and categorize the text. Meaning condensation involves a summarizing of the content in an interview to shorter, more concise expressions. This can be done through the use of a matrix, which entails both the actual statement and the compromised formulation (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Both meaning coding and condensation provides structure and gives an overview over extensive transcribed interviews. Meaning interpretation, however, is about analysing and interpreting a text part, and thus expanding what is being said. This part of the analysis goes beyond the structuring of the different statements and gives the researcher a deeper understanding of the text and meaning behind it (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Based on our research question and topic, it was beneficial to use the analysing methods of Kvale and Brinkmann (2009). In this way the culture we studied was presented, behaviours and statements were analysed and categorized to create structure and an overview, before the behaviour, statements and interactions of the informants were interpreted to understand the meaning behind them. Since we wished to gain a deeper understanding of what the data collected really meant and told us, this was a favourable way for us to analyse the data collected.

Our data analysis process began by us thoroughly reading through the transcribed texts from the interviews, before we constructed a table where the main findings from the interviews were categorized and presented, including the personalia of the informant. In the last column of the table, our interpretation of the meaning behind what the informants had described as reasons for consuming second-hand were presented (see Table 1 in Scientific Article). This was done to get a detailed overview of the findings and to simplify further analysis. Meaning condensation was consistently utilized throughout the entire analysis for the essence and key points of what was said to be clarified. This is presented as condensed citations in the scientific article under findings. On the basis of these citations we were able to extract relevant findings which we later discussed up against each other and towards existing theory.

### **Quality of the study**

Lincoln and Guba (referred in Johannessen et al., 2011; referred in Mehmetoglu, 2004) argue that there are four criteria a study needs to be measured up against in order to secure its quality and credibility; validity, reliability, transferability, and confirmability.

Validity is about the degree of representation the observations and data collected have of the purpose of the study. It refers to the truth that is experienced, perceived, seen and felt by the people studied (Johannessen et al., 2011; Mehmetoglu, 2004). Sandberg (2005) discusses three types of validity as suitable criteria for justifying the knowledge produced within interpretive research; communicative validity, pragmatic validity, and transgressive validity. To gain communicative validity the researcher must be active in the interview to create a dialogue in order to obtain a clearer understanding of the phenomena, analysing the empirical data in a coherent way, and discuss the findings with other researchers that are involved

within the same context. However, communicative validity does not extensively emphasize the deviation between what people say they do and what they actually do. Pragmatic validity can reduce this weakness by examining whether the statements made by the informants are actually true. To ensure this we were active and asked relevant follow-up questions to obtain a clearer understanding and to confirm that the informants' statements were actually true. Even though communicative validity and pragmatic validity are two suitable criteria for justifying validity, it has been argued that they do not pay enough attention to possible contradictions. To ensure this we searched for differences among the statements of the informants by assessing them from several perspectives, in addition to securing that the informant selection was representable for the population (Sandberg, 2005). In order to strengthen the validity of our study, we ensured that the informants were of both genders, differed in age, and lived spread across Norway. When analysing the data, we handled the material in a comprehensive way, but as our research question concerns differences in value, we also searched for contradictions within the statements. We also discussed the findings with our supervisor and other researchers in order to ensure validity.

Reliability is connected to the data used in the study, and how they are collected, analysed, interpreted and processed. According to Sandberg (2005) a common criterion for establishing reliability is whether the scientific results can be duplicated under identical conditions. Different techniques, such as auditing, can be used in order to achieve reliable data and evaluate the researcher's documentation and presentation of the data collected, the methods used and decisions made (Johannessen et al., 2011; Mehmetoglu, 2004). In order to reinforce the reliability of the study, we described the whole research process, both the context of the study and the informants thoroughly, so that the readers get a deeper understanding. In addition, we have argued for how we reached our conclusion, and used interpreted statements that support our analysis and results.

Transferability involves to which degree the results of a study can be transferred to a similar context or phenomenon (Johannessen et al., 2011; Mehmetoglu, 2004). We organised the data and developed different terms, concepts, theories and interpretations that others can benefit from. Thus, the knowledge can be transferred and not just generalized. During this study, we have acquired significant knowledge of how value differs between consumers of second-hand consumption, which we hope can be transferred to similar studies in the future.

Confirmability is about securing that the findings in the study are a result of the research and not of the researcher's subjective preferences, beliefs and attitudes. It is important that the researchers are objective and gain an empiric foundation from the informants about the researchers' findings and interpretations. The confirmability can also be strengthened if the researchers' interpretations are supported by literature and if every choice made during the research process can be justified (Johannessen et al., 2011; Mehmetoglu, 2004). In our method chapter we have argued for the decisions made, and in the discussion chapter we have compared and discussed our interpretations of the data against earlier research. We have also recorded all of the interviews and transcribed them, so that no answers can be misunderstood, and in this way secured confirmability.

During the preparation of this study, several questions arose regarding the limitations and weaknesses of the study. As we have 18 informants and only five of them were men, the selection of informants might not be completely accurate in representing the population and may thus provide a somewhat weak basis for the conclusion. This could have been reinforced if we had more time and resources to find and interview a greater selection of informants. However, the informants participating in this study are deeply immersed into the concept of second-hand consumption and have great experience and knowledge about the concept, and we therefore believe that the data collected from these informants gives an interesting and representative insight into the phenomenon of second-hand consumption.

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# Scientific Article

## Value as Meaningful Difference: A Study of Value in Second-Hand Consumption

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how value differs among consumers in the second-hand consumption culture in Norway. While previous research on consumer value focuses on specific value types and how these occur within the individual, our findings show the importance of understanding value as meaningful difference. This understanding of value allows us to interpret value in a holistic sense and not to focus as much on the individual value types. Rather, the focus is on the meaning consumers attain from second-hand consumption, which enables another understanding of what value is in a socio-cultural perspective. We conducted 18 phenomenological interviews to collect data, where we were open-minded about which meanings that were of importance for the informants, allowing us to view value holistically and see the heterogeneity within the second-hand culture. Our findings show that there are five sub-groups within the second-hand consumption culture, referring to the consumers of these sub-groups being highly diverse and value different meaning dimensions when consuming. Therefore, within-culture heterogeneity is significantly present in the second-hand consumption culture. Our research therefore contributes with new knowledge to both the value theory and the second-hand consumption theory.

**Keywords:** second-hand consumption, value, value as meaningful difference, socio-cultural perspective

## Introduction

The concept of value is important in marketing. In the American Marketing Association's definition of marketing, value and its importance in marketing is emphasised. The definition reads as follows: "Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large" (American Marketing Association [AMA], 2017). However, the concept of 'value' is yet very difficult to define (Arnould, 2014; Karababa & Kjeldgaard, 2014; Zeithaml, 1988). Traditionally, value is considered in an economic sense, where marketing behaviour is viewed as an exchange of value between different parties (Bagozzi, 1975). Zeithaml (1988) argues that value is represented as the consumer's perception of a trade-off between what is given and what is received. Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo (2007) criticise Zeithaml's (1988) view on perceived value and argue that it is too narrow minded and that perceived value is a complex structure that is influenced by various aspects such as quality, price and benefits. On the other hand, Sheth, Newman and Gross (1991) extend Zeithaml's (1988) view on perceived value and introduce five consumption values affecting consumer behaviour and decision making, namely functional, emotional, social, conditional, and epistemic value.

Holbrook (2006) argues that consumers do not desire the product or service in itself, but the satisfying experience that comes with the consumption. Karababa and Kjeldgaard (2014) support this view and argue that in the marketing context, experiential value combines economic value and semiotic value (meanings associated with symbols). Several researchers build on this extended consumption research and are focusing more on the topic of identity value. Holt (2004) was the first to define identity value as "the aspect of a brand's value that derives from the brand's contribution to self-expression" (Holt, 2004, p. 11). This prompted several researchers to examine the aspect of identity value in relation to other contexts within the marketing literature.

Second-hand consumption has existed for centuries, but until the new millennium the products involved were considered damaged goods and were only consumed by those compelled to use the discarded goods of others (Fernando, Sivakumaran & Suganthi, 2018). After the turn of the millennium, there has been a shift in the perception of consuming second-hand goods where several consumers now are concerned with recycling and reusing,

both because of environmental and economic reasons (Weinstein, 2014). Within the field of second-hand consumption, much attention in previous research has been paid to why the consumers choose to buy second-hand goods (Ferraro, Sands & Brace-Govan, 2016; Guiot & Roux, 2010; Padmavathy, Swapana & Paul, 2019; Yan, Bae & Xu, 2015), where the main focus has been on what occurs before a purchase and the consumers reasons for buying. However, there is a need to investigate the complexity of the second-hand consumption culture, and therefore we do not focus on the reasons for buying second-hand goods, but rather on the value the consumers get from consuming second-hand. This is an aspect within the second-hand literature, which has not, to our extended knowledge, been researched in the past, where we intend to contribute with new and broader knowledge.

In this study, we argue that value is created in social settings where ‘links’ (social relationships) are more important than things, e.g. brands, products, and experiences (Cova, 1997), and that value is established from a socio-culture’s point of view and not from the individual’s point of view (Penz, 2006). We root our discussion of value in a socio-cultural perspective where we go beyond the purely individual level and understand the individual in a holistic view (Karababa & Kjeldgaard, 2014). Therefore, value is given by the cultural meaning.

This study concentrates on how value is created for the second-hand consumers, where second-hand consumption in this context involves the use of previously owned goods within fashion and interior. Within this context, previous research has not, to our extended knowledge, emphasized the aspect of differences in second-hand consumption value. We therefore ask the following question: *How do value differ between consumers of second-hand consumption?* As we research the complex second-hand consumption culture and focus on the differences within this culture, we utilize Graeber’s (2001) perspective on ‘value as meaningful difference’ in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of how value occurs in second-hand consumption.

# Theory

## **Socio-cultural perspectives on value in marketing**

Holbrook (1999) presents the idea of experiential value, where value resides in the experience as an outcome of consumption, rather than within the product, object or brand itself. He defines value as “an interactive relativistic preference experience” (Holbrook, 1999, p. 5) meaning that consumer value is personal and situational, involving an interaction between the consumer and an object, product, service or other people, and is derived from the consumer experience itself rather than from a brand or product. Thus, the consumer is an active part in co-creating value through an experience. Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) argue that certain experiential aspects of consumption, such as fantasies, fun and emotions, is important to experiential value.

It has been argued that the focus of most consumption research is on the individual and how their individual perception and comprehension influence their behaviour. As a critic of this, researchers have introduced topics such as ‘communities’ (Cova, Kozinets & Shankar, 2007) in order to better understand group dynamics and collective emotional phenomena of consumption. Consumers often use specific products to reflect their identity or to fit into certain social groups, making the identity value of a product or service important for consumers self-expression (Holt, 2004). Cova (1997) goes further and introduces the concept of ‘linking value’ of products, which aims to describe the collective dimension of consumption and how products create social bonds with people. The idea is that these products foster social connections and links, which are of more value to consumers than the actual use value of a product. It is emphasised that linking value illustrates how economic value and social value are interconnected in the marketing context.

The view on value presented by Holbrook (1999), lays the foundation of the Service Dominant Logic (SDL) perspective and its discussion on value (Ng & Smith, 2012). Vargo and Lusch (2004, 2008) argue for the shift from ‘value-in-exchange’ to ‘value-in-use’, a core transition in SDL. In the SDL perspective, value is an output of the consumer's actions, perceptions and experiences, making a company or marketer only able to offer value propositions. Therefore, the consumers co-create value through the experience they have with a product, service, or other people (Ng & Smith, 2012; Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008).

Arnould and Thompson (2005) argue that several cultural aspects influence value creation, in addition to the consumer and the producer of the object. They describe culture as a heterogeneous system with several different meanings, values and ways of living, seen in a broader socio-cultural context. It has been argued that culture is the very foundation of meaning, experiences, and actions (McCracken, 1986). Karababa and Kjeldgaard (2014) argue that cultural meanings and value are mediated through consumption and are co-created between multiple actors. Consumer culture theory (CCT) researchers criticise that value in SDL is perceived as economic which is a too limited approach, rather it can also be perceived as meaning. This implies that consumers and producers also co-create meaning through consumption activities, in addition to the co-creation of value (Karababa & Kjeldgaard, 2014).

### **Value as meaningful difference**

One definition of value is presented by the anthropologist David Graeber (2001), who argues that there are three general meanings of value. First, in a sociological understanding, there are values that people hold in social groups or societies. Different social groups or societies treasure different sets of values, for instance human rights and sustainability (Graeber, 2001). Second, value exists in the traditional economic sense. This can be measured by for instance the market value of a car or one ton of steel. This type of value is also often referred to as exchange value and measures how much people are willing to give up to gain specific objects. Finally, there is value in a linguistic sense, which derives from the structural linguistic work of Ferdinand de Saussure who argues that the meaning of a concept springs from the contrast it creates to other concepts (Andersen, Lindberg & Östberg, 2020). However, Graeber (2001) argues that all above views on value are essentially one and the same, because they all concern 'meaningful difference' of some sort. Therefore, the first and second meaning of value can be incorporated into the third, signifying 'value as meaningful difference'.

Hartmann, Ostberg, Parment and Solér (2020) emphasize the idea of Graeber (2001) and argue that if we understand value as meaningful difference, we can see and analyse the different ways things and concepts mean to people. The important part is that the difference has to be meaningful in order for it to create value. Karababa and Kjeldgaard (2014) build further upon the research of Graeber (2001) and argue that value must be seen as interrelated and context-dependent in a socio-cultural approach. Value is created according to socially defined patterns



and criteria, hence the value of a product is “a dynamic, subjective, and context-dependent notion, which has been constantly co-created within a network of actors” (Karababa & Kjeldgaard, 2014, p. 124).

Following Graeber’s (2001) theory of value as meaningful difference, parallels can be drawn between second-hand consumption and the value that is created as meaningful difference. There is clearly a difference between the consumption of new goods and second-hand goods, as it symbolizes different lifeworld’s. However, this difference has little importance if one cannot understand why it is meaningful for the consumers. For instance, the societal value of sustainability is emphasised through second-hand consumption. Consumers of second-hand goods might do things differently regarding their everyday consumption and its degree of sustainability, then consumers of newly produced goods do. The alleged value then, springs from the idea that not only does second-hand consumers do things differently, but also that this difference is meaningful as it is linked to one’s lifeworld.

### **Value in second-hand consumption**

The culture within second-hand consumption has an immense impact on how the consumers view second-hand consumption and how much they emphasize it. Many consumers identify themselves with this culture that aims to be different from mainstream consumption patterns and society that exist today, as they do not believe consuming only new goods match their values and beliefs (DeLong, Heinemann & Reiley, 2005; Guiot & Roux, 2010). Culture is a ‘lens’ through which the consumers see the world and its aspects and determines how the consumers construct their reality. The more involved an individual is in a specific culture, the larger impact that culture and its other members have on the individual, and its consumption (McCracken, 1986).

The second-hand consumption culture differentiates from ‘regular’ consumption culture in several ways. The most prominent difference is the goods the consumers consume, where in the second-hand culture the goods are previously owned and used, while in the ‘regular’ consumption culture the goods are newly produced and unused. They also differ in that there are no big commercial actors influencing the consumption behaviour of the consumers in second-hand culture, as the thrift shops and flea markets where second-hand goods are sold are often run by non-profit organizations (Stötzer, Andeßner & Scheichl, 2020).

Previous research on second-hand consumption shows that there are differences in what people are concerned with when consuming second-hand goods. While some are concerned about prices (Yan et al., 2015) or recreational aspects (Guiot & Roux, 2010), others might be concerned about sustainability (Ferraro et al., 2016), fashion (Padmavathy et al., 2019) or ethical aspects (Guiot & Roux, 2010).

Consumers who are concerned with the ethical aspect of second-hand consumption often think through their purchase, and consider where a product is made, how it is made and if it is really necessary to buy. They are concerned whether their consumption has a negative impact on others, be it animal welfare or labour rights (Guiot & Roux, 2010). Thus, these consumers are aware of the impact their lifestyle has on other people, communities and the environment, and on businesses to become more sustainable and ethical (Pyke & Regan, 2015).

Those who are concerned with the economy while consuming second-hand are generally more price sensitive, where they typically prefer and search for the lowest prices (Yan et al., 2015). This can be related to bargain hunting, meaning constantly searching for the best prices, which is a common economical practice related to second-hand consumption (Cervellon, Carey & Harms, 2012). Second-hand goods are usually more affordable as opposed to brand new products, which indirectly causes a price discrimination between new and used goods, which again causes thrifty consumers to buy second-hand goods (Anderson & Ginsburgh, referred in Ferraro et al., 2016).

The consumers that buy and consume second-hand goods may also do it because of a growing interest in the environment and a desire to live as sustainably as possible. Many feel that we live in a 'throw-away society' in which big international companies, often clothing companies, promote, and by consuming second-hand goods one can show resistance towards this kind of industry and differentiate oneself from the mainstream market (Ferraro et al., 2016). This has increased consumers' tendency to consume second-hand goods, as over-consumption of goods, and the excessive waste that comes with it, is reduced by second-hand consumption (Fernando et al., 2018).

Those who consume second-hand out of the recreational aspect are often concerned about being unique and gaining nostalgic pleasure (Roux & Guiot, 2008). For them nostalgia is a yearning for a sentimental or bittersweet experience or a feeling from the past (Baker &

Kennedy, 1994), which they can attain by consuming second-hand goods from previous decades. Nostalgic feelings are not related to a specific memory, but rather to an emotional state (Hirsch, 1992). This emotional state is framed within a past era, and the longing for this emotional state facilitates attempts within the individual to recreate this specific era. The desire to recreate the past in the present is, for many people, a driving force for their consumption behaviour. However, recreating an era from the past with items from the present rarely arouses nostalgic feelings, consequently the consumption patterns of these consumers differ from 'regular' consumption, as they search for the nostalgic feeling by consuming second-hand.

Some of the consumers that buy and consume second-hand goods may also do it because of a great interest in fashion. These consumers are concerned about their personal style, to be perceived as unique and authentic (Michael, 2015), and "... to be one-of a kind in a society where originality seems almost impossible" (Nordby, 2013, p. 53). However, the fashion industry today consists mostly of huge international chain stores who mass produce pieces to sell worldwide. Hence, these consumers often choose to differentiate themselves from this by consuming second-hand fashion, meaning vintage and thrift store clothing, as these clothes are rarely found elsewhere. Thus, they will be able to stand out in the crowd and be as conspicuous as they desire.

## **Method**

For this research a phenomenological inspired framework is utilized, where the focus is on interpreting the meaning extracted from the interviews (Johannessen, Christoffersen & Tufte, 2011; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Data were gathered through in-depth interviews, some in person while most online, either on Skype or FaceTime. As the aim was to include informants from all over Norway, conducting interviews online was the easiest and most convenient way because of the scope of this research. During the interviews the informants were asked to reflect upon their own consumption regarding second-hand goods, describe how they began with this form of consumption, how second-hand consumption is meaningful to them, and if they could relate to other consumers when consuming second-hand. During the interviews we focused on the socio-cultural setting of the informants, and not just on his/her personal attitudes, motivations, and buying decisions. Therefore, we followed a semi-structured interview guide which allowed us to be more open-minded and gain a holistic understanding

of the phenomenon. In this way we were able to obtain answers on the topics we in advance wanted to research, as well as exploring some new topics that either we or the informants showed interest in (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). All interviews were recorded with the informants' permission, and the length of the interviews ranged from 20 minutes to 1 hour.

We have several criteria for finding relevant informants to this study. They have to consume second-hand goods on a regular basis and be of both genders and different age groups. During the selection of informants, the aim was to gather informants with as large a variety as possible in what the consumers are concerned with regarding second-hand consumption. We used the method of snowball sampling (Johannessen et al., 2011) to gather informants where we first began by asking people we knew consumed second-hand, who then referred us to other consumers they knew matched our criteria. Out of the 18 informants, 5 of them were men and 13 were women. The age ranges from 19 to 59, and they live spread across Norway. In regard to how long they have consumed second-hand goods regularly, it varied between a few years to several decades. Table 1 provides a list over the 18 informants with a brief description and overview of their background, years of consuming second-hand, what type of second-hand goods they consume, and their argument for consuming second-hand goods.

*Table 1: List of informants*

<b>Infor- mant no.</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Education/work</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Consumption category</b>	<b>Informants consumption argument</b>
1	M	28	University student	5	Clothes, furniture, interior	Environment
2	F	56	Nurse/Manager health care facility	7	Furniture, interior	Economy
3	M	19	High school/Military service	4	Clothes, accessories	Expressive
4	F	24	High school/Shop assistant	6	Interior, furniture	Recreational
5	F	39	English and tourism/Visual merchandiser	11	Clothes, accessories, leisure equipment	Expressive
6	F	21	Improving grades/Shop assistant	3	Interior, clothes	Recreational
7	F	20	University student	5	Clothes, accessories	Expressive
8	M	50	Navy and architect/Unemployed	14	Interior	Recreational

9	F	26	Nurse/Nurse	5	Furniture, interior, clothes	Recreational
10	F	23	University student/Part-time health care worker	4	Clothes, interior	Expressive
11	F	28	B. Sc. Psychology/Teacher	10	Clothes, interior, furniture	Recreational
12	F	19	High school/Military service	3	Clothes, sports equipment	Environment
13	F	23	University student/Part-time shop assistant	6	Clothes	Expressive
14	F	22	Improving grades/Part-time chef assistant	7	Clothes	Expressive
15	F	28	B. Sc. Drama and theatre/University student, own tailoring business	9	Clothes, furniture	Moral principles
16	F	29	Engineer/IT-consultant	7	Interior, clothes	Moral principles
17	M	59	Philosophy, political science/Scientist within circular economy	28	Clothes, books, interior	Environment
18	M	28	University student/Part-time health care worker	8	Furniture, equipment	Economy

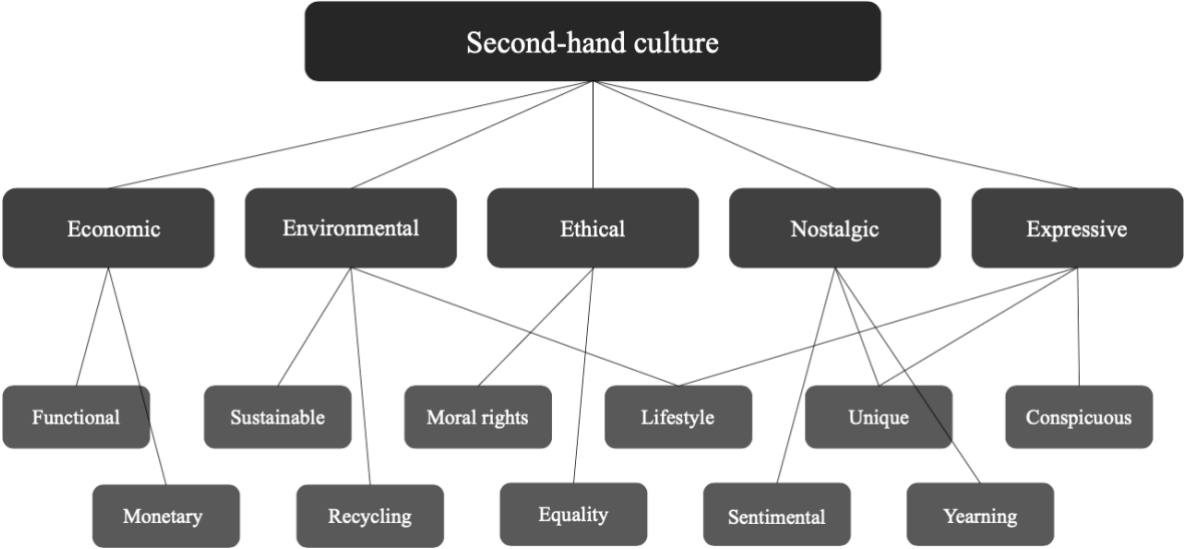
When conducting a socio-cultural study with in-depth interviews, the researcher must extract the meaning from what the informants are saying and interpret it within the socio-cultural context of the study. Because we apply this perspective, we use the methods of meaning condensation and meaning interpretation when analysing the data material collected (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). By interpreting the data material, actively looking for similarities and dissimilarities, and categorizing the different arguments, it became clear that all of the informants had mainly one argument each for consuming second-hand goods. We attempted to identify what deeper meanings that could lie behind the consumption arguments and if this kind of consumption generates value. The data analysis was designed to extract the meaningful difference between how the consumers themselves value second-hand consumption. Even though we extracted and interpreted the underlying meaning behind what the informants said, it was important to maintain the statements given by the informants in order to secure credibility and validity (Vespestad, Lindberg & Mossberg, 2019).

# Findings

Our findings show that second-hand consumption is regarded differently as compared to ordinary consumption of new goods. Consumers try to differentiate themselves from ‘the masses’ and the mainstream consumption patterns fabricated by the dominant companies and industries, by consuming second-hand goods. However, the differentiation varies between consumers and as illustrated in Table 1, the consumers do not only have one overall shared argument when consuming second-hand, but instead there exist several different consumption arguments within this complex culture. This implies that the meaning derived from the difference between the consumption of second-hand goods and new goods, varies between consumers with different consumption arguments.

As a result of our socio-cultural perspective, our findings show that there exist five sub-groups of consumers with different consumption arguments influenced by the second-hand consumption culture which we have labelled; (1) the economic difference; (2) the environmental difference; (3) the ethical difference; (4) the nostalgic difference; and (5) the expressive difference. These five sub-groups are displayed in the middle part of Figure 2. Each of these sub-groups are concerned with different meaning aspects when consuming, which distinguish them from each other. Not all consumers attain the same value from this meaning when consuming second-hand. For instance, the consumers who are concerned with the economic difference, functional and monetary values are important, while the consumers concerned with the nostalgic difference do not see these value aspects as essential.

Figure 2: Findings overview



While the second-hand culture was previously associated with poverty, and those involved in this culture often experienced stigma or prejudice, the culture today is more characterized by engagement, individuality, authenticity, doing something for the greater good, and the differentiation from the mainstream consumption (Weinstein, 2014). This development has been experienced by several of the informants who have consumed second-hand goods for a longer period of time, where they previously felt like others looked down on them if they consumed second-hand goods. Today, none of the informants experience stigma or prejudice towards their choice of consumption. Consumers' change in attitude can also be seen reflected in the growth of the second-hand market in Norway in recent years. This can especially be reflected in, for instance, the growth of the digital C2C websites or applications where the sales have been doubled in the last years (Hegnar, 2020).

Consumers of the different sub-groups within the second-hand culture differentiate both from the consumers of newly produced goods and from consumers of other second-hand sub-groups. For instance, when purchasing used clothes in comparison to new, the consumers concerned with the economic difference value second-hand consumption as it is a cheaper alternative, while the consumers concerned with the environmental difference value second-hand consumption because of a desire to save the planet and live a sustainable life. However, what separates the sub-groups from each other are the eleven dimensions identifying meaningful arguments (see lower part of Figure 2). Some of the sub-groups have the same meaningful dimensions as another sub-group (lifestyle and unique), however these dimensions have dissimilar meanings depending on the sub-group. For instance, uniqueness in relation to consumers concerned about nostalgia relates to the yearning of goods that have soul and history, while consumers concerned with expressiveness want to acquire goods that nobody else possesses in order to be perceived as unique. This difference between the sub-groups are perceived by the consumers as meaningful, and it is this meaningful difference that creates value.

### **Sub-groups of the second-hand culture**

We have placed each of the informants into different sub-groups according to their main consumption argument. The consumers discussed several arguments for consuming second-hand, but through the use of meaning condensation, it became clear that one argument was dominant and therefore we have categorized the consumers into this specific sub-group. Each

sub-group consists of people who, knowingly or not, identify with one another on the basis of a shared commitment, their experiences, emotions and engagement towards second-hand consumption. These sub-groups have emerged from the common meaning the consumers give to the second-hand consumption experience, through their common cultural ‘lens’ of viewing the world (McCracken, 1986; Schouten & McAlexander, 1995).

### **The economic difference**

Our findings show that people who consume second-hand because of economical difference, are characterised by being frugal and wanting to save money. They appreciate a good bargain and spend a good deal of time searching for goods they are looking for in the right price range. During our research, it became clear that these consumers often do not care that much about brands, but rather see the product for the functionality of it, not for the name on it. The informants also feel that products in today's market are overpriced and expensive. They do not see the point of paying enormous amounts of money for certain products, as the main reason behind a purchase is a need, and therefore they appreciate the possibility of second-hand consumption.

*“I shop second-hand products because it is practical and cheaper. For many it is essential that their things are new and modern, but for me functionality and price is more important.”*

Informant no. 2

The economic consumers we identified, argued that they started consuming second-hand goods because of a lack of monetary resources. Many experience that second-hand goods fill their needs the same way as new goods, but for a much lower price. However, the informants within this sub-group stated that today they do not consume second-hand products because they necessarily have to, but because it is in their interest not to waste money and to find good bargains.

*“I appreciate the possibility to consume within different price ranges, and because of my economic situation [as a student], I prefer to consume second-hand goods, as it is cheaper.”*

Informant no. 18



Our findings show that second-hand consumption is valuable for the consumers concerned with economic difference because it is in contrast to the consumption of new goods in terms of monetary difference. This means that the consumers are able to acquire used goods with the same functionality as newly produced goods at a fraction of the price. As the economic consumers often are frugal and find new goods overpriced, the opportunity to consume second-hand goods is meaningful to them in the sense of saving money and finding good bargains.

### **The environmental difference**

Our findings imply that consumers concerned with environmental difference are strongly against the immoderate and imprudent consumption that is seen in the world today. The common view among these consumers is that humans in general should utilize the resources that are already produced until they are ‘used up’, instead of throwing away things that are perfectly usable. These consumers want to live a more sustainable and environmentally friendly life, leading to a smaller impact on the world. By consuming second-hand goods who are still usable and valuable, consumers of second-hand goods link their contribution to a reduced impact on the environment by reducing the demand for new products (Yan et al., 2015).

The consumers are also very concerned with recycling. They think that one should be able to extend the life cycle of the resources already in existence by renovating and mending them when they start to wear down, rather than throwing them away and buying new ones. Consumers have in recent years become more concerned about waste-reduction strategies and activities, which include donations, recycling, reselling, reusing and repurposing goods, instead of just throwing them away (Bekin, Carrigan & Czmigin, 2007).

*“I began consuming second-hand because it is a way to contribute [positively] to the environment. I want to live as sustainable as possible, and therefore I stopped consuming new clothes. Now I buy clothes that are already used and only when I need something.”*

Informant no. 12

*“I am very concerned with using up the resources that I have gathered. I try to the best of my ability to only buy things that I can use up completely and then to be able to recycle it.”*

Informant no. 1

Most of these consumers are concerned with buying things that are of high-quality material, which will last for a long period of time. When consuming second-hand products, they are attentive that the products they end up buying are made of natural material, such as cotton or silk, rather than synthetic materials, such as polyester and elastane that are made out of plastic (Muzquiz, 2019).

*“When I occasionally buy some clothing, for instance on a flea market, it is very important to me that it is made out of a good and natural material for it to last for a long time.”*

Informant no. 12

For those consumers concerned with the environmental difference, second-hand consumption creates value as it differs from consuming newly produced goods in terms of using up and recycling the products already in existence. Hence, these consumers do not contribute to an increasing demand of new goods and they are in contrast to the current throw-away society. When consuming second-hand, the products are reused instead of being thrown away, which leads to a lesser amount of waste. The consumers also perceive themselves as selfless in the sense of contributing to the greater good with their sustainable consumption, and their lifestyle is highly influenced by their choice of consuming almost only second-hand goods. Consuming second-hand goods in contrast to new goods is perceived by these consumers as more environmentally friendly and is therefore a more valued way of consumption.

### **The ethical difference**

Our findings show that the consumers concerned with the ethical difference agree that it is extremely unfair and wrong how the resources of the world are used and distributed today, where rich, western countries are able to buy cheap products at the expense of other poorer countries and their citizens. This is especially with regard to fair wages and working conditions. Therefore, these consumers strive to reduce their consumption impact and they do not contribute to big, global companies exploiting less resourceful nations, companies and people.

*“It is scary how much we consume in Norway today, and I believe that there is an incredible inequitable distribution of the world's resources between us and other countries.”*

Informant no. 15

Most of these consumers link their consumption to the resistance from unethical businesses. They are strongly passionate and highly against the working conditions of the employees within the textile industry, and especially towards child labour within the industry, which unfortunately is still rather common (Moulds, n.d.). Several of the informants started to consume second-hand goods because they were enlightened about the textile industry and felt a disgrace towards consuming newly produced goods and supporting such an industry.

*“As I emerged myself in the textile industry the more I realized that we live at the expense of someone else. We are able to buy cheap goods because someone else does not get the wage that they deserve for the job that they perform. ... I think the conditions in the textile industry are so horrendous that I try to consume as little as possible, and preferably second-hand.”*

Informant no. 15

*“I remember seeing a documentary a few years back regarding the textile industry which really opened up my eyes. After that I lost the desire to consume new products and I gradually consumed more and more second-hand goods.”*

Informant no. 16

Consuming second-hand goods are a way for these consumers to differentiate themselves from other consumers, because they do not wish to support and contribute to the poor and unequal conditions within the textile industry. Buying new goods leads to an increasing demand in the industry enabling big companies to continue their ongoing unethical practices concerning fast fashion (Hitchings-Hales, 2018). By consuming already produced and used goods, these consumers are in contrast to the ‘normal’ consumer as they consume based on equality and moral rights, and as this contrast is meaningful to the consumers, value is created.

## **The nostalgic difference**

There are also consumers who consume second-hand based on nostalgic difference. According to our findings, these consumers are people with an interest in old things and clothes, which they often link to having a soul and a story. When a product has a story behind it, the consumers feel like the product has more value and is more unique. These products are commonly found in second-hand stores and differ from the products that you can buy in retail stores today, which are bulk made. Many of the sub-group members feel that second-hand shopping is like a treasure hunt and find searching through thrift shops and flea markets in a hunt for unusual, odd and authentic things, amusing and uplifting.

*“I am an ‘old lady by heart’, I like old things. I have always liked being at my grandmother's house and looking at all of her old stuff and clothes. ... Things often talk to me. I recently found an old vintage purse that gave me much more [value] than a brand-new purse would, because of the history behind it that I find interesting.”*

Informant no. 4

Our findings show that many of these consumers are characterised by a childhood of visiting thrift shops and flea markets together with close family members, often their mother or grandmother, who was interested in second-hand consumption and products. The consumers often inherit clothes and are not used to a lifestyle of abundance.

*“Me and my grandmother used to go to Fretex at least two times a month, which was our ‘thing’ ... The interest has really only grown since I was a child.”*

Informant no. 6

*“I have always found old things amusing. When I was little I used to go to auctions with my parents, and when I bought my apartment, I decided to buy almost all furniture and interior used because I find old things more charming with more soul and charisma.”*

Informant no. 9

The consumers concerned with nostalgic difference, find value in consuming second-hand goods as these goods are unique, old and they have a history as well as a ‘soul’. These factors give goods a deeper meaning, in comparison to the mass-produced goods in chain stores today. The consumers emphasize that, by consuming second-hand, they get a special

sentimental feeling that brings back memories from their past (Hirsch, 1992). This is a feeling they do not get when consuming new goods, and therefore consuming second-hand gives a value created by this difference that they consider to be meaningful. Several of the nostalgic consumers emphasise that they are more drawn to the style of previous decades, and by consuming second-hand they are able to recreate the past in the present.

### **The expressive difference**

The last sub-group we have identified within the second-hand consumption culture, is the consumers who are concerned with the expressive difference. These consumers are highly concerned with standing out in the crowd and being original, especially regarding their clothing and how they portray themselves. They often go treasure hunting when they are to consume products, looking especially for unique pieces, often old designer pieces of good quality which they link to being expressive. Hence, they often choose to consume second-hand fashion, meaning vintage and thrift store clothing, as these clothes are rarely found elsewhere.

*“It is important to me that my [style] is perceived as consistent. By consuming second-hand goods, I find clothing which is of high quality and of specific brands which others do not have. I want to stand out and express my identity by consuming second-hand.”*

Informant no. 3

*“I find it joyful when I find pieces of good quality, and styles that stand out in the crowd. I enjoy being in a thrift shop and I think second-hand consumption is like a treasure hunt.”*

Informant no. 13

These consumers do not necessarily have a set style, as they often change their style. However, they do especially search and look for original clothing that is not possible to buy in regular stores anymore, meaning that very few others have the same piece. They argue that they attempt to create their own style, and that their goal is to be unique in a society where it is almost impossible to be original.

*“I often change my style, and it is exciting when I find a piece that there is only one of. It makes it special and it has much more value to me when I know that not everyone else has the same piece.”*

Informant no. 10

For the consumers concerned with the expressive difference, consuming second-hand is a way of expressing themselves and standing out, through clothes and items that are unique. They value the opportunity to be original and not consume the fast fashion style, which is popular among youth today. Several of the informants elaborated that this kind of consumption and mentality had become a lifestyle. This brings the consumers value because by consuming second-hand, they differentiate themselves from others by being conspicuous which to them is meaningful. Many people throw away old items that for them are not valuable anymore. These items often end up in thrift stores where these consumers are browsing for these hidden treasures and vintage pieces, which for them, on the contrary, are highly valuable.

### **Meaningful differences of second-hand consumption**

The aim of this study is to examine how value differ between consumers of second-hand consumption. Inspired by Graeber’s (2001) theory of value as meaningful difference, our findings show that as the meaning dimensions are different between the varying sub-groups and as this difference is considered to be meaningful, value is created for the consumers. Our findings show that the second-hand culture is not homogeneous but rather a heterogeneous assemblage of sub-groups with different consumption arguments. Table 2 illustrates how the five identified sub-groups are in contrast to each other, both regarding the main differences between them, the meaning dimensions the consumers derive from these differences and on what level the value occurs on in the second-hand culture.

*Table 2: Heterogeneity between sub-groups of second-hand consumption*

<b>Sub-groups</b>	<b>Difference between the sub-groups</b>	<b>Meaning dimension</b>	<b>Level of value</b>
<b>Economic</b>	Monetary (2*), frugal (18), functional (2)	Saving money (18), bargains (2, 18)	Micro-individual
<b>Environment</b>	Recycling (1), reusing (12, 17)	Sustainability (1, 12, 17), lifestyle (12, 17)	Macro
<b>Ethical</b>	Moral rights (15), awareness (15, 16)	Equality (16), positive impact (15, 16)	Macro
<b>Nostalgic</b>	Yearning (4, 6), unique (11), recreating the past in the present (4)	Sentimental (4, 6), nostalgia (4, 8, 11), charm (6, 9), charisma (9)	Micro-social
<b>Expressive</b>	Unique (3, 7), standing out (3), originality (5)	Conspicuous (5), lifestyle (3, 14), identity (10, 13)	Micro-social

\* Numbers refer to the informant no.

What separates the sub-groups from each other is how much value differs between them, the meaning dimension that the consumers ascribe this difference, and on what level the value derived from this meaningful difference occurs. What differentiates the economic sub-group from the other groups are the consumers being frugal, and the monetary and functional aspects of second-hand consumption. The consumers derive meaning from this difference by being able to save money and make bargains, it is important for them that the goods are functional, and they do not care about brands or the aesthetic of the products. The environmental sub-group is in contrast to the other groups as the value difference revolves around recycling and reusing goods through second-hand consumption, where the meaning is derived from being sustainable and having a lifestyle which is environmentally friendly.

The ethical sub-group value moral rights and awareness regarding this, where the difference is meaningful as the consumers want to achieve equality within the industry, and when their consumption has a positive impact. The nostalgic sub-group differentiate from the other groups as they yearn for recreating the past in the present and to be unique, which create meaning when the second-hand goods have charm and charisma and form sentimental and nostalgic feelings. The expressive sub-group is in contrast to the other groups as the value difference revolves around being unique, original and standing out in the crowd, where the meaning is derived from having a conspicuous identity, which is reflected in their lifestyle.

Our findings also show that, in the second-hand culture (seen as the top dimension in Figure 2), value that is derived from the meaningful difference occurs on different levels (see Table 2). The economic difference occurs on a micro-individual level, meaning that it only affects the individual consuming second-hand and their personal economy. The nostalgic and expressive differences occur on a micro-social level, where the consumers are affected individually, yet still influenced by their social belonging to the group. On the other hand, the value derived from the environmental and ethical differences occurs on a macro level as the consumers are concerned about more than just themselves and their inner circle. They make conscious choices and are highly aware about the impact their consumption has on humans, the environment, and the society as a whole. This implies that one can differentiate the sub-groups of second-hand consumption in yet another way, separating them by the level of value; micro and macro. The consumers on the micro level consume second-hand for personal gain, while the consumers on the macro level do it for the greater good. Our data also show that some of the informants on the macro level perceive the consumers on the micro level as egocentric and ignorant as they mainly focus on themselves and do not contribute enough to the collective effort of saving the planet.

In this study we have categorized the informants into five separate sub-groups depending on our interpretation regarding their arguments for consumption. However, the reality is not that simple, as most of the informants discussed several meaning dimensions for consuming second-hand goods. While we have only categorized three informants under the environmental sub-group, as many as 10 of them mentioned environment as another dimension for their second-hand consumption in addition to their main argument. This suggests that the sub-groups are multiple, meaning that a connection to or a membership in one sub-group does not preclude a connection to or a membership in another group, implying that humans are more fluid rather than fixed in relation to groups (Canniford, 2011). Another surprising element is that many of our informants belong to the expressive sub-group, actually a third. This is not something we had expected as previous research mostly focuses on economic and environmental reasons for second-hand consumption (Ferraro et al., 2016; Yan et al., 2015).



## **Discussion**

This article establishes a new framework for understanding how value differs in the second-hand consumption culture, and the understanding of the concept of value in marketing through a socio-cultural perspective. From the study of Norwegian second-hand consumers, we discuss how these main contributions extend the second-hand literature and the marketing and consumer research.

### **Value heterogeneity in second-hand culture**

Heterogeneity in consumer cultures has previously been examined by several studies. However, each of these studies has had a tendency to limit their focus to the similarities within each culture and not focused on the impact of heterogeneity, and therefore excluded within-culture heterogeneity (Thomas, Price & Schau, 2013). It is not possible to only view second-hand consumption culture as a whole, as it, according to our findings, turned out to consist of several differences and values which the different consumers are concerned with within the culture. Therefore, our research contributes to how within-culture heterogeneity is present in the second-hand consumption culture by displaying the diversity of the consumers and the meaningful differences that these consumers value. Our perspective allows us to view the consumers in a social and cultural context, and as a result, we are able to understand the individual consumer in a holistic sense. This allows us to get a better grasp of the similarities and differences within this culture, which visualised this within-culture heterogeneity. The second-hand consumers are not only concerned with the difference in regard to consuming new goods, but also with the varying differences in value within the second-hand culture. Hence, through consuming second-hand goods the consumers do not only differentiate themselves from consumers of new goods, but also from each other, meaning that heterogeneity plays a large role also within the second-hand culture.

Prior research has expressed that there are different reasons why people consume second-hand and these studies have a tendency to focus on the reasons separately (Ferraro, 2016; Guiot & Roux, 2010). We take this a step further and aim to look deeper into the complex second-hand culture where we study the heterogeneity within the culture and how it is built up by several different sub-groups. Our study contributes to the existing research on second-hand by showing that it is not just the simple reasons for consuming second-hand that matter for the consumers, but the deeper meaning behind this kind of consumption, which creates value.

Our findings show that through grouping together the consumers who are concerned with the same value when consuming second-hand, we are able to identify five heterogeneous sub-groups within the second-hand consumption culture. From our research, it is clear that the sub-groups differentiate from each other to such an extent that they almost have their own culture. For instance, within the sub-group of environmental difference, consumers are concerned with sustainability and reusing of goods, whereas within the sub-group of expressive difference, these aspects are not in focus as the consumers are rather concerned with being original and conspicuous regarding their clothing and how they portray themselves. This shows that the second-hand consumption culture is far from as homogeneous as previous research might have suggested, but on the contrary the differences within the culture are so significant that there is no doubt that this culture is indeed heterogeneous.

### **Towards a socio-cultural conceptualisation of value**

Our research has discovered that when we define value as meaningful difference within the context of second-hand culture, we reveal a new form of knowledge relative to what has been researched in the past. Previous research within value has, in contrast to our research, focused mainly on the different types of value that exist and how these occur (e.g. Holbrook, 1999; Holt, 2004). Our study applies Graber's (2001) theory of value as meaningful difference as the rudiments when studying how value differs in the second-hand consumption culture. His conceptualisation of value allows us to understand value in second-hand consumption in a new light, allowing us to have a less reductionist perspective on value, as we do not reduce the concept of value to only concern, for instance, symbolic, functional or perceived value. While the separate value types can influence some aspects of the sub-groups, they do not necessarily cover the whole culture. Linking value (Cova, 1997), for instance, may be important in the sub-groups concerned with the expressive and nostalgic difference as for these consumers, the social link of consuming second-hand can be as important as the product itself. However, linking value may not be as important in the other sub-groups as these consumers may not be that dependent on the social aspect to obtain value from second-hand consumption.

By utilizing the perspective of value as meaningful difference, we interpret value in a holistic sense and do not focus as much on the individual value types. Our focus is on the meaning,

which enables another understanding of what value is in a socio-cultural perspective. As long as consumers believe that a difference between two or more concepts is meaningful, value occurs for these consumers. When we conducted the phenomenological interviews, we were open-minded about which meanings that were of importance for the informants, allowing us to view value holistically. Our study extends Karababa and Kjeldgaard's (2014) work in marketing on the concept of value as meaningful difference in a socio-cultural perspective, in that we have obtained an empirical understanding of how value as meaningful difference can be applied in marketing research.

## **Conclusion**

In this article we asked the following question: *How do value differ between consumers of second-hand consumption?* Our research has discovered that the second-hand consumption culture is considered differently as compared to ordinary consumption culture. By consuming second-hand goods, consumers try to distance themselves from the mainstream consumption pattern that exists in the world today. Based on a socio-cultural perspective our findings show that the second-hand consumption culture consists of five heterogeneous sub-groups based on the consumers' different consumption arguments. This means that within-culture heterogeneity is significantly present in these sub-groups of second-hand consumption culture as consumers are highly diverse and value different meaning dimensions when consuming. This research therefore contributes to understanding the consumption differences within the second-hand consumption culture and the meaningful differences resulting in value.

While a major part of value research today has focused on specific value types, for instance linking value (Cova, 1997), experiential value (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982) or identity value (Holt, 2004), our findings point to the importance of understanding value as meaningful difference. This enables us to have a more open-minded and less reductionist view on what value is. In the field of second-hand consumption, prior research has focused on the reasons behind a purchase and not reviewed the aspect of value when trying to understand the consumption culture. Therefore, in this study the focus has not been on reasons for consuming second-hand or specific value types, but rather on value as meaningful differences that exist between the varying sub-groups of second-hand consumption.

The findings of our research might also be utilized in a practical context. For instance, the owners of second-hand stores can employ this new knowledge to better understand their customers, what they prefer when consuming second-hand, and why they do it, and then run their stores accordingly. As shown in the findings, expressive consumers are concerned with being conspicuous and are not particularly frugal, implying that second-hand stores might set a higher price tag for vintage and unique goods as these consumers often have a higher willingness to pay. However, this study is based on the perspective of the consumers and not from the businesses point of view, which only gives a basis for the businesses to understand the consumers. Further research could therefore investigate how second-hand businesses can utilize this new knowledge to better comprehend their customers and thus change their way of doing business.

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# Appendix 1 - Interview guide

Theme	Questions	Follow-up questions
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation of us and the thesis</li> <li>- Inform about recorder and ask for permission to record the interview</li> <li>- Inform about the informants' possibility to not answer or withdraw from the interview</li> <li>- Inform about anonymity and confidentiality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It will be handled with pseudonyms</li> </ul>
About the interviewee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Age and gender?</li> <li>- Family?</li> <li>- Which education do you have?</li> <li>- What is your occupation?</li> <li>- What is your interest or hobbies?</li> </ul>	
Second-hand consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How much second-hand products do you consume?</li> <li>- Which categories of products do you shop second-hand?</li> <li>- Which role or function do these products have in your life?</li> <li>- How much resources do you use on second-hand consumption?</li> <li>- Where do you shop second-hand?</li> <li>- How often do you consume second-hand products?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are there some categories of products that you do not consume second-hand? If yes, why?</li> <li>- Online? Stores? Other?</li> <li>- Why do you prefer this platform?</li> </ul>
How they got into it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why do you consume second-hand products?</li> <li>- What was the reason behind you starting with second-hand consumption?</li> <li>- Have the reasons for your second-hand consumption changed since you started?</li> <li>- Do you feel some kind of pressure to buy second-hand products?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have you been influenced by someone to buy second-hand? Who and why?</li> <li>- From whom?</li> </ul>
Sub-cultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do you shop second-hand together with someone? Why? If yes, do you consider yourself as a group?</li> <li>- Do you feel like you belong to a social group/culture when you shop second-hand? If yes, which?</li> <li>- Do you get the impression that the different social groups/cultures have different motivations to buy second-hand?</li> <li>- What are your thoughts about other social groups/cultures regarding SHC?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do the ones you shop second-hand with do it for the same reasons as you?</li> <li>- Do you feel like this social group/culture have common values or motivation regarding SHC?</li> </ul>
Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What kind of feeling do you get from buying second-hand?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do you get another feeling when consuming second-hand</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is it important to you to buy second-hand? If yes, why?</li> <li>- Do you feel like consuming second-hand products align with your personal values?</li> <li>- What thoughts and feelings do you have towards the consumption of clothes, furniture, etc?</li> <li>- If there is a product you need and you cannot find it used, do you buy a brand new one or do you wait until you find it used? Why?</li> </ul>	<p>than new products?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If yes, please elaborate</li> </ul>
Possible challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do you experience some challenges with second-hand consumption?</li> <li>- Do you experience negativity from others when consuming second-hand products?</li> <li>- What do you think others think about you consuming second-hand goods?</li> <li>- In the indefinite future, do you see yourself consuming second-hand products? Why?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If yes, please elaborate</li> <li>- If yes, please elaborate</li> </ul>
Concluding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do you have something you would like to add?</li> <li>- Thank the interviewee for the participation and inform about the opportunity to contact us if there are something they would like to add</li> </ul>	