

Has the pandemic affected consumers' motivation and consumption habits towards second-hand clothing resale platforms?

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Background

In recent years, alternate consumption models for second-hand (SH) goods and the circular economy have become prominent. New retail channels and digital technology have fuelled online buying behaviour even before the pandemic (McKinsey, 2019); people, places, and goods started becoming more accessible, approachable, and affordable with the rise of globalisation and digitalisation (Cetrez & Van Dam, 2018). While the COVID-19 pandemic heavily affected the retail industry, e-commerce thrived, especially in the resale market, where circular business models for fashion are expected to grow to 23% of the global fashion market by 2030 (EMF, 2021). Nonetheless, during COVID-19, consumers had to increase spending on necessities, were restricted to homes and lost jobs. Additionally, there have been various discussions about how COVID-19 has generated new sustainable behaviours (Goffman, 2020). Although there is some research on SH resale and how the COVID-19 pandemic led to a change in consumer decision-making and online shopping behaviour (Mason et al., 2020), research is lacking if these effects have been long-lasting.

The Research Objectives

- Discuss critical theories exploring how COVID-19 may have shifted consumer behaviour towards second-hand clothing resale platforms.
- Examine through a questionnaire how consumer behaviour varies towards second-hand resale platforms post-COVID-19 due to sustainability, economic and hedonic motivators.
- Analyse and identify key motivators and influences of consumer behaviour towards second-hand resale platforms.
- Interpret findings, conclude and make recommendations to encourage consumer adoption of circular fashion platforms and education of environmental impacts and economic benefits of doing so.



Methodology & Sampling

A quantitative approach: An online questionnaire, designed using the web-based tool Qualtrics, consisting of 15 questions, including one free text question at the end. The questions were based on the key literature and modified to suit the context of the study to guarantee content validity.

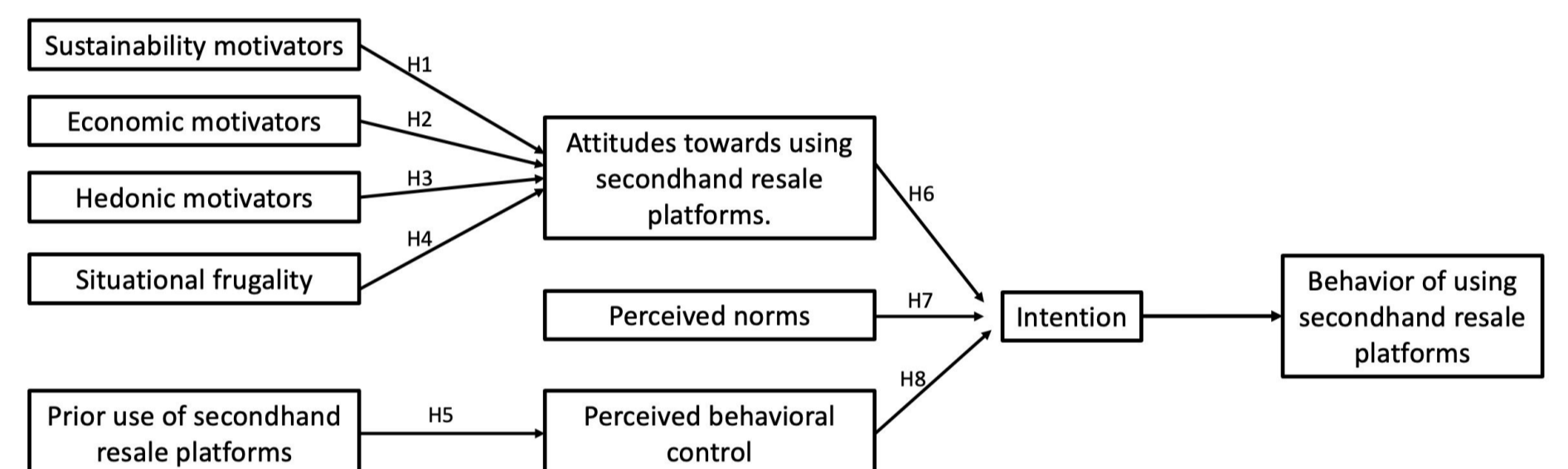
I considered doing interviews but opted against it because I wanted to get a broad range of consumer points of view from all ages, genders and employment statuses. Additionally, qualitative research did not seem appropriate as it often involves the interpretation of data that is not statistical.

Respondents MUST be 18+ years and have at least one account for a second-hand clothing resale platform.

The questionnaire was released on 15th April 2023. Data is currently being collected over several weeks through social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook, given that they are the UK's most popular social media platforms (Statista, 2022). Once I have enough responses from a range of ages, I will analyse the data through SPSS.

Research Framework

Adapted from Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior



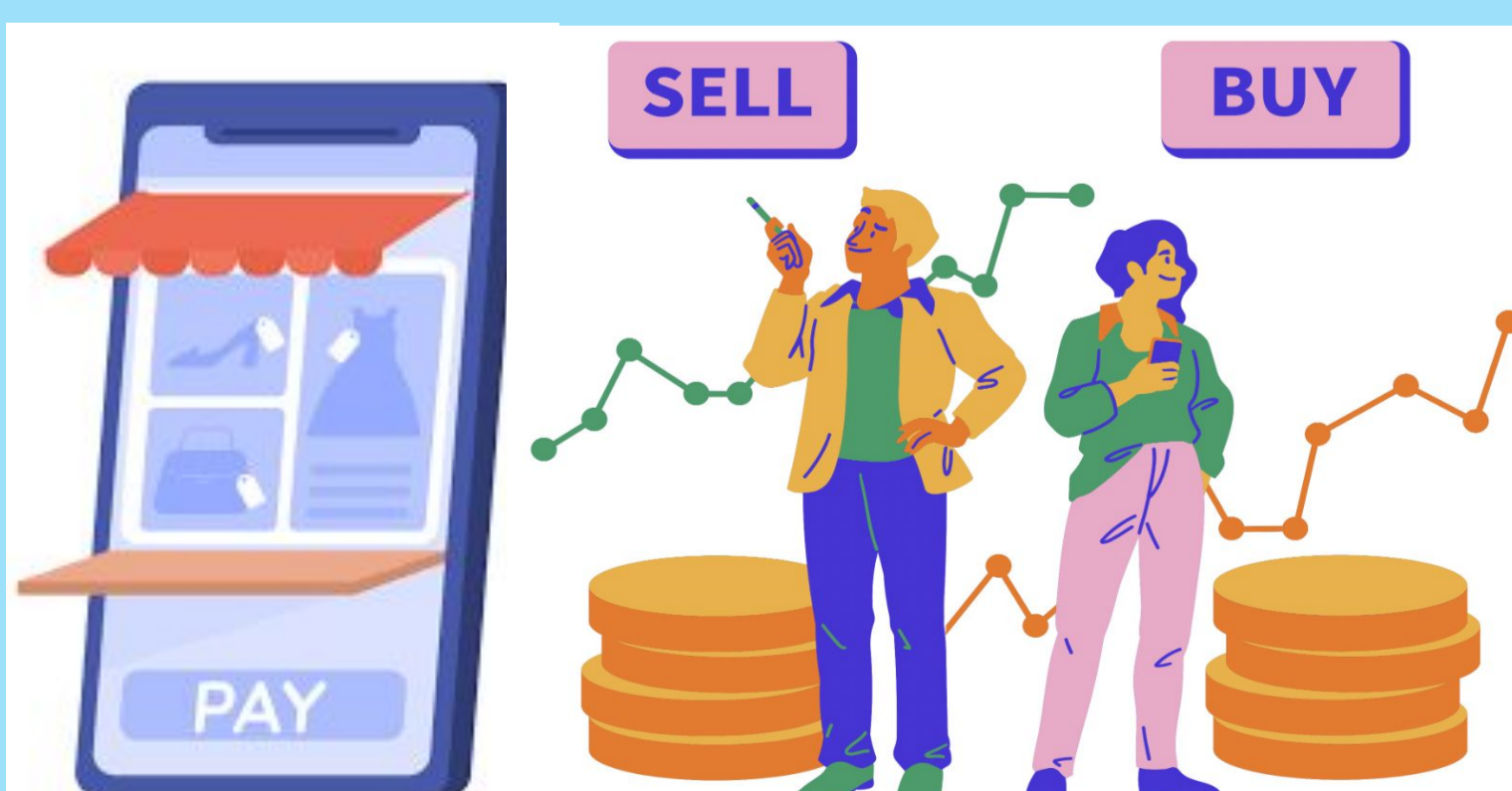
Examples of Hypotheses I will be testing:

- H1:** Sustainability motivators have a strong favourable impact on attitudes towards the behaviour of using second-hand resale platforms.
 H1.1 Environmental education during the pandemic has made consumers more sustainable long-term when purchasing/discarding clothes.
- H2:** Economic motivators have a strong favourable impact on attitudes towards the behaviour of using second-hand resale platforms.
 H2.1: COVID-19 made consumers rethink their spending habits; now, they make smarter spending decisions using second-hand resale platforms.
 H2.2: Lockdown allowed consumers to realise they could make money from unwanted items.

RUN ANALYSIS AGAINST DEMOGRAPHICS SUCH AS GENDER, AGE GROUP, EMPLOYMENT STATUS, AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS DURING THE PANDEMIC TO FIND TRENDS.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
During COVID-19 I became more environmentally aware, and now it is important to me my fashion is sustainable. H1.1:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
During COVID-19, I decluttered my wardrobes and sold them on secondhand resale platforms to make money from clothes I don't wear anymore. H2.1:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
During COVID-19, I decluttered my wardrobes and sold them on secondhand resale platforms to make money from clothes I don't wear anymore. H2.2:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

DO YOU BUY SECONDHAND CLOTHES ONLINE?



DO YOU SELL SECONDHAND CLOTHES ONLINE?

This is work in progress...

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