

**Sustainable Intentions or a New
Consumerism? How Perceived Value and
Self-Justification Shape Secondhand
Fashion Consumption Among Young
Consumers in the UK**

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***A project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the
award of the degree MA Fashion Marketing and Sustainability***

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Acknowledgement

I would also highly like to thank everyone who has been a helpful support throughout the journey to my dissertation.

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Abstract

In recent years, secondhand fashion has been on the rise and widely embraced by the public. It has been regarded as a sustainable alternative to fast fashion, gaining increasing popularity among consumers. As a result, many digital P2P (peer-to-peer) platforms have emerged in recent years, such as Vinted and Depop. These platforms promote sustainability by extending the lifespan of fashion items and reducing textile waste among younger consumers, redefining the way consumers access secondhand fashion. Nevertheless, due to the easy access and low prices offered by these platforms, studies have revealed a similar buying pattern observed in fast fashion purchasing. The environmental benefits of secondhand fashion on these platforms thus remain unclear. Therefore, to understand the buying behaviour and psychological mechanisms of consumers of secondhand fashion, this study explores how purchase motivations, perceived values, self-licensing and justification influence their purchasing intentions, focusing particularly on young consumers in the UK. This study adopts a mono-qualitative methodological approach and uses semi-structured interviews as the main research method to gain an in-depth understanding of the study area.

Research findings demonstrate the complex nature of secondhand fashion and the correlations between different factors of purchase motivation and perceived values. Consumers adopt internalised and externalised justifications to self-justify their hedonic consumption behaviours. The research finds that while purchase motivations and perceived values drive purchasing intentions, these factors, such as cost-effectiveness and sustainability, are in turn often being used as means of self-rationalisation for excessive buying behaviour. Digital secondhand fashion platforms typically do not replace fast fashion consumption, but often add to it. They have subtly transformed self-licensing and justification into the norm, allowing consumers to engage in hedonistic consumption while still appearing to be environmentally responsible. The originality of this study lies in its extended understanding of the correlations between purchase motivations, perceived values, and self-licensing and justification within the context of second-hand fashion consumption. This study sheds new light on these areas by delving into previously little-explored psychological mechanisms and setting out more relevant factors relating to the consumers' self-justification strategies in the context of online secondhand fashion consumption.

Key words: Secondhand fashion, Digital P2P platform, Circular fashion, Purchase motivation, Perceived values, Self-licensing and justification, Sustainability, UK young consumers

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	8
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	13
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN	26
CHAPTER 4: FINDING AND ANALYSIS.....	38
CHAPTER 5: Discussion and Conclusion.....	61
Reference List.....	69
Appendix.....	83

List of Figures

Figure 1. The Research Onion by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2023) p.131.....	28
Figure 2. Coding for Purchase Motivation theme.....	42
Figure 3. Coding for Perceived Value theme.....	48
Figure 4. Coding for Self-Licensing and Justification theme.....	53

List of Tables

Table 1. Interview participants' table.....	34
Table 2. Interview topic guide.....	35
Table 3. Data Structure Table.....	40-41
Table 4. Table of key findings.....	59

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Globally, the fashion industry has been seen as one of the industries that has the most negative impact on the environment (Pal & Gander, 2018; Vehmas et al., 2018). While clothing and footwear is the eighth largest category in terms of household expenditure in the EU (Eurostat, 2018a), it is ranked fourth in terms of its impact on the environment (WRAP, 2017). Due to its heavy energy consumption and substantial water usage during textile production, the fashion sector has been seen as one of the most resource-intensive consumer industries (Mazanec and Harantová, 2024). It contributes to up to 10% of global CO₂ emissions and produces the same quantity of greenhouse gases (GHGs) per year as the economies of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom combined (UNCC, 2023). The fashion industry is widely regarded as one of the sectors with the most negative environmental impact (Vehmas et al, 2018).

Meanwhile, the world's per capita textile consumption almost doubled from 5.9 kg in 1975 to 13 kg in 2018, due to the rise of fast fashion and consumers' desire for cheap, trendy apparel (Mazanec and Harantová, 2024). While global clothing production doubled, the usage duration of a garment before it is discarded has decreased significantly by 36%, compared to previous decades (Negash and Akhbar, 2024). Consequently, vast quantities of textile waste are produced, with only a small proportion being reused or recycled. The rest end up in landfills or incinerators, further promoting climate change and resource depletion (Evans et al., 2022; Pal & Gander, 2018). It has been revealed that £140 million worth of wearable clothing is disposed of in landfill sites in the UK every year (WRAP, 2012).

Given the damaging environmental impact posed by the fashion industry, coupled with short product life cycles and the culture of overconsumption accelerated by fast fashion, a shift towards a more sustainable purchasing pattern is imperative (Prisco *et al*, 2025; Radhakrishnan, 2020; Kaur et al, 2023). In response to these challenges, secondhand fashion has emerged as a sustainable alternative. Buying and selling secondhand clothing has been shown as beneficial for society and the environment as a whole, as it helps to extend the life cycle of garments, reduce textile waste and support a circular fashion economy (Negash and Akhbar, 2024; Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). WRAP (2017) indicates that a 10% increase in second-hand clothing purchases could result in a 4% reduction in water usage and a 3% decrease in carbon emissions per tonne of clothing.

Secondhand clothing was primarily purchased out of economic necessity, especially by lower-income groups in the past (Hwang and Griffiths, 2017). Today, however, secondhand fashion is increasingly embraced by consumers as a conscious and stylish choice. In fact, McKinsey (2019) anticipates that the secondhand fashion market could overtake fast fashion over the next decade. ThredUp (2023) estimates the global secondhand apparel market will grow to approximately \$350 billion by 2027, with online peer-to-peer (P2P) platforms playing a significant role in this expansion.

The advancement of E-commerce and digital innovation has largely facilitated the shift towards online secondhand fashion purchase (Tu et al., 2022). Online platforms such as Depop, Vinted, and eBay have significantly changed how consumers engage with secondhand clothing by offering greater convenience, and social interaction compared to traditional charity or thrift shops (Mazanec and Harantová, 2024). These platforms reflect the broader societal trend towards collaborative consumption, appealing particularly to younger consumers (Generation Z and Millennials) who are digitally connected and environmentally conscious (Palomo-Domínguez, Elías-Zambrano and Álvarez-Rodríguez, 2023).

The consumers have a variety of intentions when it comes to purchasing secondhand fashion goods, and their perceived value of these goods ultimately impacts their purchasing behaviour (Tu et al., 2022). Understanding these motivations is critical. Although many users state sustainability as their main reason for buying secondhand, critics argue that some consumers use sustainability as a justification for continued or increased hedonistic consumption (Palomo-Domínguez, Elías-Zambrano and Álvarez-Rodríguez, 2023). The appeal of nostalgia and the uniqueness of secondhand finds, the thrill of bargain hunting and discovering unexpected items, coupled with the trend of thrifting on online P2P platforms (Beard, 2008; Reiley & DeLong, 2011; Dominguez et al., 2023), has significantly encouraged consumption behaviour that increasingly linked to impulsive and indulgent consumption (Parguel et al., 2017). These conflicting factors raised questions about the true motivations behind secondhand fashion purchases among young consumers.

Previous studies have shown an association between consumer motivations and perceived value. To understand the motivations behind secondhand fashion consumption, it is important to examine both dimensions, as consumer motivations have been found to hold significant influence over perceived value in various study contexts (Aycock et al., 2023; Aycock, 2021). Based on the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) theory, which explains how individuals actively select media to satisfy specific psychological or social needs (Katz et al., 1974), this study examines the motivations and perceived value of young consumers when purchasing secondhand fashion items on peer-to-peer (P2P) platforms, with a view to understanding the factors

that lead to impulsive and indulgent consumption and how consumers justify such behaviours. Therefore, self-licensing and justification theory has been adopted. Festinger (1957) defined self-justification as the cognitive strategy consumers use to rationalise their actions in order to bring them into line with personal or social norms. Combined, these theories provide a holistic framework for exploring consumer motivations and perceived values, as well as the psychological strategies consumers use to justify behaviours that may oppose sustainable initiatives.

1.2 Rationale

The rise of online P2P secondhand fashion platforms has led to a significant shift in the attitudes of consumers towards secondhand fashion (Parguel et al., 2017). With its easy access, integrated payment system and a range of engaging features for users, it enables individuals to buy and resell clothing at ease (Mazanec and Harantová, 2024). However, doubts remain over the extent to which online secondhand platforms facilitate sustainable shopping, as studies have shown an increasing pattern in buying habits similar to those of fast fashion, due to the affordability and convenience of such platforms (Dekhili et al. 2025). It therefore raises concerns about consumers' true purchasing motivations and perceived values, alongside an increasing tendency towards hedonic purchasing behaviour.

Existing literature about secondhand fashion consumption has typically focused on three main areas: environmental benefits within circular economy discussions (Fletcher, 2014; Niinimäki and Hassi, 2011); motivations behind secondhand purchasing, including economic benefits, ethical considerations, nostalgia, and identity (Guiot and Roux, 2010; McNeill and Venter, 2019); and the role of digital platforms in facilitating collaborative consumption and building community (Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2012; Hamari et al., 2016).

However, gaps remain. Specifically, there is limited research on how motivations and perceived values differ across different dimensions within the context of online secondhand platforms. Additionally, the role of self-justification, that is, how consumers rationalise their purchasing despite conflicting sustainability intentions, has not been thoroughly explored. Most existing research assumes sustainable attitudes naturally lead to sustainable behaviour, neglecting the potential disconnect, which is also known as cognitive dissonance, between what consumers claim and what they do.

This dissertation addresses these gaps by exploring how motivations, perceived values and self-justification shape the secondhand fashion consumption behaviour of young UK

consumers on digital platforms. The study will offer insights into whether secondhand buying on these platforms truly supports sustainability or inadvertently promotes a new form of consumerism

1.3 Research Question

How do the motivations and perceived values of young consumers of digital secondhand fashion platforms in the UK shape their consumption behaviours, most notably their tendency towards impulsive and hedonistic consumption? And how do these consumers justify such practices?

1.4 Aim and Objectives

Aim:

To identify the motivations and perceived values that influence the purchasing behaviour of young consumers (aged 18–34) on digital secondhand fashion platforms in the UK, with an emphasis on hedonistic behaviour such as impulsive and indulgent consumption, and to explore how consumers justify these practices.

Specifically, the research objectives are:

1. To critically review the literature on consumers' motivations and the perceived value of secondhand fashion purchases, as well as cognitive dissonance and self-justification theories in this context.
2. To explore the key motivations for young consumers in purchasing secondhand fashion via digital platforms such as Vinted, Depop, and Vestiaire Collective.
3. To examine the perceived value (e.g. functional, environmental, social, emotional) that consumers associate with secondhand fashion purchases through these platforms.
4. To investigate how consumers justify their purchasing behaviour, particularly in relation to unsustainable buying behaviours such as impulsive and indulgent consumption.

1.5 Intended Contribution

1.5.1 Theoretical Contribution

This study adds to existing literature on secondhand fashion and sustainable consumption by exploring factors and correlations between purchase motivations, perceived values, and self-justification mechanisms, particularly in the context of digital P2P platforms. It aims to deepen

the theoretical understanding of the psychological mechanisms influencing consumer behaviour beyond traditional motivational approaches.

1.5.2 Managerial Contribution

From a practical perspective, findings from this study can help secondhand fashion platforms, brands promoting sustainability, and policymakers better understand how young consumers behave and why. By identifying what drives or discourages genuine sustainable practices, the research can guide more effective platform design, marketing strategies, and sustainability initiatives.

1.6 Research Design Overview

Based on a qualitative approach, this study will conduct semi-structured in-depth interviews with UK young consumers (aged 18–34) who regularly use P2P secondhand fashion platforms. Participants will be purposefully chosen to represent diverse motivations and backgrounds. Thematic analysis of interview data will combine deductive and inductive approaches, guided by theories of motivations (Guiot and Roux, 2010), perceived values (Sheth et al., 1991; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001) and self-justification and cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957; Sykes and Matza, 1957).

This method will capture detailed insights into consumer attitudes, values, and behaviours, revealing how these intersect with daily practices and interactions on digital platforms. Ethical guidelines, such as informed consent and confidentiality, will be rigorously followed throughout the research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to identify the motivations and perceived values that influence the purchasing behaviour of young UK consumers (aged 18–34) on digital secondhand fashion platforms, and to examine how they justify their hedonically driven buying practices.

This chapter presents a literature review of the topic of focus, beginning with an overview of environmental challenges resulting from current fashion consumption culture, together with the role of secondhand fashion in the circular economy and online platforms. It then moves on to discuss the motivations behind the consumption of second-hand fashion and how consumers' perceived values affect their purchase intentions, with an emphasis on hedonic value. As certain drivers could lead sustainable intentions to result in contradictory practices — such as impulsive and indulgent consumption — discussions about these behaviours, together with cognitive dissonance and self-justification theories, are presented to address this phenomenon.

2.2 Sustainable fashion

2.2.1 *Secondhand Fashion*

The issue of environmental sustainability continues to be a concern for the entire global community (Chen, 2011). The global fashion industry, projected by Statista (2024) to reach £684.97 billion in 2025, has faced criticism due to environmental degradation and the excessive production of textile waste (Koay et al., 2022).

Unlike the conventional, almost completely linear model of producing, consuming, and disposing of garments (Negash and Akhbar, 2024), circular fashion emerges as a more sustainable paradigm advocating for the reuse and recycling of clothing. As an important part of the circular economy, secondhand fashion has emerged as a notable trend in recent years. The concept evolves around the growing consumer interest in purchasing clothing and accessories previously owned by others (Machado et al., 2019). According to Guiot & Roux (2010, p384), secondhand shopping is defined as 'the acquisition of second-hand objects through methods and places of exchange that are generally distinct from those for new products'.

Several studies have addressed the impact of second-hand fashion, with most concluding that it leads to significant environmental gains by providing a sustainable, circular alternative that extends the lifecycle of garments and mitigates the need for new production (Babel et al., 2019; Mazanec & Harantová, 2024). This is beneficial for society and the environment as a whole, as it helps conserve the energy and labour originally utilised in production and transport while

still providing consumers with quality, affordable items of clothing (Negash and Akhbar, 2024; Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). WRAP (2017) indicates that a 10% increase in second-hand clothing purchases could result in a 4% reduction in water usage and a 3% decrease in carbon emissions per tonne of clothing. Meanwhile, McKinsey (2019) anticipates that the secondhand fashion market could overtake fast fashion over the next decade.

In the UK, secondhand fashion has become a well-established consumer trend, with about 40% of UK consumers buying secondhand goods in 2022 and another 30% selling their used items on the secondhand market (Statista, 2025). supporting data regarding UK secondhand market (e.g. market size etc) Given the extensive adoption and considerable economic impact of the secondhand economy, the UK serves as an excellent reference point for this research. This makes it a compelling setting in which to analyse the factors that drive sustainable and circular consumption.

However, despite the significant growth of secondhand fashion, there remain notable barriers and concerns about this trend. Laitala and Klepp (2018) noted that consumers may have negative perceptions of secondhand shopping, viewing it as time-consuming, inconvenient, expensive, unappealing and difficult to locate suitable items. Mazanec and Harantová (2024) also highlighted the concerns about hygiene, out-of-date styles and poor quality that some consumers have about secondhand fashion. A more effective approach is therefore crucial in today's digital world to encourage and facilitate second-hand fashion consumption and sustainable consumer behaviour.

2.2.2 The rise of P2P Secondhand Platforms

Purchasing and reselling secondhand items through online platforms has been regarded as an effective means of fostering more sustainable consumption practices (Kim et al., 2021). This emerging trend is fueled by advanced digital technologies and a sharing business model that brings together suppliers and consumers, with the underlying concept of creating value from underused resources (Lee, et al., 2018). According to Fors et al. (2023, p1), such a peer-to-peer (P2P) economy was defined as 'an economic model in which peers interact on a digital platform with the intention to rent, share, buy or sell products or services'.

In the last few years, this trend has seen digital P2P platforms such as Vinted, Depop and Vestaire Collective play a transformative role in the secondhand fashion market. They often facilitate features such as item listings, customer reviews, instant messengers and integrated payment systems (Evans et al., 2022), enabling people to buy and sell items directly (Mazanec

and Harantová, 2024). With its 65 million users and presence in 16 countries, Vinted is a good example that reflects the popularity and volume of P2P secondhand fashion platforms (Mazanec and Harantová, 2024).

2.2.3 Consumer behaviour

As digitally savvy generations, P2P platforms have significantly helped to normalise secondhand shopping for young consumers (Mazanec & Harantová, 2024). Mintel (2024) suggested that the young consumers group is mainly made up of Gen Z and young Millennials, aged from 18 to 34. They have exhibited a strong preference for online secondhand fashion (Mazanec & Harantová, 2024).

Studies have found that environmental issues and sustainability were highly concerned by young consumers (McKinsey, 2019; Nielsen, 2015). However, although they demonstrated positive attitudes of sustainable fashion, it does not necessarily translate into actual consumption behaviours. This inconsistency is known as the attitude-behavior gap (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002), which is particularly evident in the overconsumption of fast fashion among this group (Gupta & Gentry, 2018). Their fashion consumption habit has been largely influenced by social media and the constantly changing trends on it (Koning et al. 2024). These socially driven consumption habits with reinforced peer influence have led to consumption patterns that are driven by quantity rather than quality, and it has been argued that consumers on digital secondhand fashion platforms have replicated such fast fashion models (Charnley et al., 2022; Fook & McNeill, 2020). Therefore, Armstrong et al. (2015) contended that sustainability intentions were often found to coexist with hedonic consumptions, but rarely dominate. Considering the rising popularity of P2P secondhand fashion platforms and consumers' increasingly intricate purchasing behaviour, it is essential to study the drivers behind these patterns and their correlation with consumers' perceived values, which jointly affect their purchasing intentions.

2.3 Motivations and Perceived Value for Online Secondhand Fashion Consumption

2.3.1 Motivations for Online Secondhand Fashion Consumption

The Uses and Gratification (U&G) theory explains how individuals actively select media to fulfil specific psychological or social needs (Katz et al., 1974). In the study of secondhand fashion consumer behaviours, it has provided a robust theoretical framework to examine the motivations and perceived value of young consumers. Motivation refers to the reason behind behaviours that fulfil an individual's desires or goals (McClelland, 1985). A substantial body of study has examined the motivations of second-hand shoppers (e.g., Halicki et al.; 2024;

Aycock et al., 2023; Ek Styvén & Mariani, 2020). While various motivational factors have been identified, Guiot and Roux (2010) suggested three main categories of motivation for secondhand purchasing, namely critical, economic, and hedonic motivations. It has provided a robust foundation for this study.

2.3.1.1 Critical Motivation

Critical motivation derives from the criticism of the fashion industry's unsustainable states, notably its environmental damage, heavy energy consumption, overproduction, and unethical labour practices (McNeill & Moore, 2015; Mazanec & Harantova, 2024). As consumers' environmental consciousness has grown, they have started to actively seek more sustainable ways to shop (Machado et al, 2019). In the field of fashion, such demands have translated into a preference for sustainable practices, such as buying secondhand items and taking part in circular fashion (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Tu, Hsu & Creativani, 2022). Critical motivation to consume secondhand goods reflects consumers' increasing sustainable awareness and the wish to act against the mainstream fast fashion consumption and separate from the linear consuming system (Ferraro et al., 2016). In fact, Zaman et al. (2019) stated that environmental consideration is an important factor in online second-hand shopping.

2.3.1.2 Economic Motivation

In the field of secondhand consumption, economic motivations have been widely discussed. Its financial benefits, which were initially linked to the notion of enabling low-income individuals to shop fashion at a much lower cost (Hamilton, 2009), have been seen as a key consumption motive (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Guiot & Roux, 2010). Economic motivation, as suggested by Guiot and Roux (2010), include the desire to pay less, the pursuit of a fair price, bargain hunting, and the feelings of gratification with a good deal.

For young consumers, who often have limited purchasing power and are more price-conscious, economic motivation has been seen as a particularly prominent driver in secondhand fashion consumption (Aycock, 2021). Additionally, digital P2P platforms such as Vinted and Depop further enhance consumer appeal through price filtering, bargaining functions and direct comparison of similar items (Dominguez, Zambrano and Rodriguez, 2023; Negash and Akhbar, 2024). Consumers also view secondhand fashion as a way to acquire high-priced luxury goods or rare vintage items, in which economic motivation played a significant role due to the potential savings (Dominguez, Zambrano and Rodriguez, 2023; Charnley et al., 2022).

2.3.1.3 Hedonic Motivation

Hedonic motivation encompasses the emotional value and unique consumption experience that secondhand shopping brings to consumers, such as the thrill of the hunt and enjoyment when obtaining rare items (Babin, Darden and Griffin, 1994; Guiot and Roux, 2010). This motivation is particularly prominent among younger generations of consumers, who view secondhand shopping as an entertainment activity (Aycock, 2021; Ogel, 2022). P2P secondhand fashion platforms often offer consumers a wide range of brands and products, providing the pleasure of browsing, thrifting, and the thrill of discovering unexpected items (Guiot and Roux, 2010). Such a process is usually associated with hedonic motivation for consumers, according to Guiot and Roux (2010). In fact, studies have cited hedonic motivation as one of the main drivers of secondhand shopping (Turunen et al, 2015; Guzzetti et al, 2021; Ferraro et al., 2016)

However, studies have cited that hedonic motivation also brings contradictions: while purchasing secondhand fashion items aligns with sustainable values, it may simultaneously fuel impulsive and excessive consumption, becoming an important driver that transcends economic and ethical motives (McNeill & Moore, 2015) and further exacerbating the attitude-behaviour gap (Kaur, Gupta and Lata Bajpai Singh, 2023; Karstens, 2020).

2.3.2 Consumer Perceived Value

Studies have revealed that consumer motivations are closely associated with perceived value (Aycock et al., 2023). One of the most widely accepted definitions of perceived value is that of Zeithaml (1988), who defined it as 'the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given' (p. 14). Perceived value is a subjectively structured evaluation for consumers at various times and in various cultures. It is also a series of interrelated variables that influence consumers before, throughout and after the consumption process (Sanchez et al, 2006). Consumers' perceived value of a product or service stems from their assessment of its perceived quality against the perceived sacrifice. If the perceived value exceeds the perceived sacrifices, the product or service is deemed to have positive perceived value, which enhances consumers' willingness to purchase (Hsu, 2015).

In the context of second-hand fashion, these subjective evaluations form the core of consumption motivation and significantly influence young consumers' purchase intention (Charnley et al., 2022; Aycock et al, 2023). These subjectives are influenced by functional, emotional, and social ethical factors (Guiot and Roux, 2010; Halicki et al., 2024). Digital

secondhand fashion P2P platforms enhance perceived value by emphasising style choices, improving accessibility, and increasing user control, thereby expanding and elevating the willingness and participation of consumers across different income levels and age groups (Evans et al., 2022; Aycock, 2021).

The five dimensions of perceived values suggested by Sheth et al. (1991) provides a broad framework in which different attributes could be weighed differently depending on the decision level and type of product or service. Based on this theoretical framework, each perceived value—functional, social, epistemic, conditional, and emotional—will be discussed in relation to purchase motivations for secondhand fashion consumption. Emotional value will be discussed last, as it is often associated with hedonic motivations (Halicki et al., 2024; Guiot and Roux, 2010), which are frequently linked with impulsive or indulgent behaviours that often lead to self-justification, a topic that will be covered in the next section.

2.3.2.1 Functional Value

Functional value emphasises the rational motivations behind consumption, particularly in terms of the perceived utility of products by consumers, such as cost-performance ratio, quality and ease of use (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). The economic benefits and cost-performance ratio of secondhand fashion items served as a primary driving force for consumers, especially during periods of economic downturn. Consumers often perceive secondhand fashion as a more cost-effective alternative to new items (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Tu, Hsu, and Creativani, 2022). Aycock (2021) also found that economic motivation is a significant factor in perceived value, especially among Gen Z and Millennial consumers. Moreover, while cost-effectiveness and functionality are highly valued (Evans et al., 2022; Guiot & Roux, 2010), secondhand fashion is economically appealing to consumers due to its close association with unique styles and premier quality, providing consumers with more tangible benefits (Negash and Akhbar, 2024). However, It has been argued that the satisfaction of securing a good bargain can potentially lead to excessive spending and impulsive buying (Johar & Mukhopadhyay, 2009, Zhou & Wong, 2004).

2.3.2.2 Social Value

The social value in secondhand fashion consumption is closely linked to the social recognition and peer influence consumers gain from choosing secondhand fashion items (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001; Guiot and Roux, 2010). Guiot and Roux (2010) emphasised that, driven by social value, social interaction significantly influences consumers' purchasing decisions in the secondhand fashion market. Digital secondhand fashion platforms increase consumer interest by fostering active communities and enhancing engagement through community interaction

(Dominguez, Zambrano, and Rodríguez, 2023). Lou et al. (2022) observed that social values significantly increase young consumers' willingness to purchase because they seek a sense of community belonging and social recognition through sustainable fashion.

Additionally, platforms like Vinted and Depop effectively blend e-commerce with social media by allowing users to follow, like, and emulate fashion influencers (Evans et al, 2022). Notably, peer influence plays a key role, with young consumers particularly susceptible to trends driven by influencers (Ackcock, 2021). However, social values may introduce performative elements into sustainable behaviour, as some consumers may participate in such practices to seek social attention or recognition rather than out of genuine moral conviction (McNeill and Moore, 2015).

While social networks promote social values among people to adopt socially responsible behaviour (Brady, Schlozman, & Verba, 1999), Ali and Mandurah (2016) examined the role that personal values play in this dimension. Personal value refers to the alignment between consumer behavior and the moral principles or environmental attitudes they uphold (Sheth et al., 1991; Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). Consumers are influenced by their personal values when it comes to second-hand shopping, as it allows them to express their ethical and sustainable stance (Tu, Hsu and Creativani, 2022). However, personal values can also increase consumption of secondhand fashion products due to a sense of moral responsibility towards the environment, which in turn can be used to justify excessive or impulsive consumption (Mazar and Zhong, 2010).

2.3.2.3 Epistemic value

According to Sheth et al. (1991, p. 162), epistemic value is defined as 'the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity to arouse curiosity, provide novelty, and/or satisfy a desire for knowledge'. Epistemic value is correlated with the need to avoid boredom and reach beyond repetitive options. For secondhand fashion, epistemic value signifies the extent to which customers see secondhand garments as unique, novel, or rare (Kim et al., 2021). In fact, Ferraro et al. (2016) demonstrated that fashionability is an important orientation in secondhand fashion consumption, showing that 83% of secondhand shoppers are driven by the fashionability of the garments. This includes placing value on aspects such as their nostalgic appeal and the fashion-forwardness or uniqueness of secondhand items. Other research also indicated that fashion motivation is associated with the need for uniqueness, the pursuit of fashion trends, and the construction of a distinctive personal style (Beard, 2008; Reiley & DeLong, 2011). Fashion-conscious consumers are increasingly turning to online secondhand platforms in search of unique, durable and trendy pieces (Zaman et al., 2019).

Aycock et al. (2023) suggested that fashion motivation influences consumers' perceived value when shopping on P2P secondhand fashion platforms. Epistemic value is therefore gained from finding distinct, unique pieces that may no longer be in production.

2.3.2.4 Conditional value

Conditional value refers to 'the perceived utility acquired by an alternative as the result of the specific situation or set of circumstances facing the choice maker. An alternative acquires conditional value in the presence of antecedent physical or social contingencies that enhance its functional or social value' (Sheth et al., 1991, p. 162). When it comes to secondhand fashion, consumers often consider value in a particular ethical and environmental contexts, such as reusing and recycling materials or buying pre-owned items.

According to Aycock et al. (2023), there is a potential association between critical motivation and conditional value, which can be viewed in two ways. The first dimension involves rejecting traditional consumerism, which views purchasing new products as wasteful and indicative of excessive resource use. In this light, purchasing secondhand is considered as a way of circumventing the conventional commercial system, proactively opposing mass consumption, and reclaiming the autonomy of consumers (Mano & Elliott, 1997). The second dimension focuses on ethical and environmental consideration. Consumers are motivated by the desire to reduce the initial extraction of natural resources, eliminate the waste and unnecessary production, and encourage the reuse of unwanted items (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Dobscha & Ozanne, 2001; Schor, 1998; Negash and Akhbar, 2024).

2.3.2.5 Emotional Value

Emotional value in secondhand shopping refers to the emotional perceptions that consumers may experience when shopping for and using products, owing to factors including the wide range of goods available, the thrill of treasure hunting, the quality and authenticity of products, social interaction, and the sense of nostalgia (Chi and Kilduff, 2011; Guiot and Roux, 2010). It is usually associated with hedonic value in secondhand fashion consumption, according to Guiot and Roux (2010).

Hedonic value encompasses the experiences and emotional satisfaction gained during the shopping process, including psychological pleasure and satisfaction (Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994; Guiot & Roux, 2010). Aycock (2021) pointed out that hedonic value has a significant impact on consumer perceived value, especially on the purchasing intention of Gen Z and millennials on digital secondhand fashion platforms.

Since secondhand fashion shopping has been increasingly seen as a form of entertainment and a part of the lifestyle of young consumers (Guiot and Roux, 2010; Halicki, et al, 2024), consumers often experience satisfaction, excitement, and stimulation during the buying process (Halicki et al, 2024). Factors such as the pleasure of browsing through the naturally non-standardised selection of secondhand goods, the chance to bargain and the experience of 'treasure hunting' are all important drivers of secondhand fashion consumption and contribute to the perceived emotional value of the goods. In addition, Dominguez et al. (2023) pointed out that P2P platforms such as Vinted and Depop provide users with a more engaging and integrated experience through features like gamification elements, personalised recommendations, and interactive user interfaces. These features provide a fun and engaging shopping environment, greatly improving consumers' emotional involvement (Evans et al, 2022).

2.4 Unsustainable Consumption Behaviour and Self-Justification

Although the motivations behind sustainable consumption vary, certain drivers, such as hedonistic and fashionability factors, can transform sustainable intentions into unsustainable practices. This contradiction sheds light on the attitude–behaviour gap and opens up the discussion about cognitive dissonance and self-justification theories. This sub-section looks at existing research on unsustainable consumer behaviour in the secondhand fashion context, and explores the psychological mechanisms such as cognitive dissonance and self-licensing that allow consumers to reconcile inconsistencies between their attitudes and behaviour. The aim is to lay the groundwork for the third research question of this thesis, enabling the findings to be compared with those from existing literature.

2.4.1 Non-sustainable purchasing behaviour in secondhand fashion

2.4.1.1 Impulsive & Indulgent Consumption

Despite the current advocacy of secondhand fashion as being environmentally friendly and embodying sustainability values, research indicates that consumer behaviour in this domain often mirrors the impulsive and indulgent consumption patterns, which is often observed in fast fashion practices (Parguel et al., 2017). Impulsive purchases refer to sudden and immediate decisions to buy a product without any prior intention to purchase that particular product or fulfil a specific buying task (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). According to Niinimäki (2018), impulsive buying is associated with consumers' desire to experience emotional gratification through continuous shopping. Over time, consumers develop an emotional 'addiction' to this behaviour, which is now commonly observed in fashion consumption (Niinimäki, 2018).

Studies indicated that hedonic motivations are closely linked with the promotion of indulgent consumption (Halicki et al., 2024; Guiot and Roux, 2010). Like impulsive consumption, indulgent consumption is a type of purchasing behaviour driven by hedonistic, materialistic or recreational factors, often resulting in unnecessary purchases made purely for pleasure (Parguel et al., 2017). Within the realm of secondhand fashion, it has been identified that a behavioural tendency towards indulgent consumption is prevalent (Parguel et al., 2017). Although consumers intend to follow sustainable consumption practices, their actual actions increasingly align with indulgent consumption patterns associated with fast fashion, such as frequent consumption and trend-following (Koay et al., 2022; McNeill and Moore, 2015; Halicki et al., 2024). Such inconsistency between consumers' expressed ethical intentions and their actual purchasing behaviours has created what is known as the attitude-behaviour gap (Kaur et al., 2023).

Venkatesh et al. (2012) and Park et al. (2012) both highlighted the hedonic part of shopping on digital platforms, which often lead to a more frequent purchase pattern. Park et al. (2012) claimed that web browsing triggers feelings of enjoyment directly. Also, factors such as the easy accessibility of goods, savings and discounts, wide selection of products and the gamified 'treasure hunt' experience offered by digital secondhand fashion platforms make them particularly effective in generating emotional response and stimulating impulse purchases (Koay et al., 2024; Guiot and Roux, 2010). Furthermore, Parguel et al. (2017) stated that although P2P secondhand fashion platforms can promote a culture of reuse, they often result in greater impulse buying and consequently more indulgent consumption..

2.4.2 Cognitive Dissonance

In general, people aim to avoid unnecessary spending, but making impulsive purchases conflicts with this goal and is often a trigger for cognitive dissonance. According to Festinger (1957), cognitive dissonance arises when individuals experience a conflict between their beliefs or values and their actual behaviour. This inconsistency creates psychological discomfort that prompts individuals to reduce the dissonance (Festinger, 1957). This phenomenon is frequently observed among consumers who prioritise environmental protection and sustainable development but engage in unsustainable consumption practices, such as excessive secondhand fashion shopping driven primarily by hedonic motivations. Parguel et al. (2017) suggested that two consumer attributes can lead to substantial consumption-related goal conflicts and, consequently, the need to reduce cognitive dissonance: materialism and environmental consciousness.

The cognitive dissonance resulting from the juxtaposition of sustainable ideals with indulgent consumption behaviours is particularly prevalent among younger generations of consumers (Koay et al., 2024). While they typically possess a sound understanding of sustainable development principles, these consumers are often swayed by novelty, fashion trends, and emotional gratification, leading to a state of internal conflict (Karstens & Bao, 2020). To mitigate this dissonance, consumers rationalise their excessive consumption by emphasising the ethical benefits of purchasing second-hand fashion products (Parguel et al., 2017). OnP2P platforms, by substituting fast fashion with secondhand fashion, these platforms enable consumers to derive a sense of environmental responsibility. Consequently, the act of purchasing secondhand fashion products has become less directly associated with environmental protection and more about providing a 'justifiable' explanation for consumption behaviours, thereby alleviating the guilt associated with overconsumption (Karstens & Bao, 2020; Kaur et al., 2023).

2.4.3 Self-Licensing and justification

Self-licensing theory suggests that people's behaviour can be explained by understanding how they feel psychologically licensed to act, and that this licence can be derived from the justifications people give for their behaviour (Miller and Effron, 2010). It is usually regarded as an individual psychological process (Mazar and Zhong, 2010). Indulgent consumption and 'hedonically complex' choices involve both thought and decision-making, consumers must evaluate whether to resist or go through with their purchases (Dholakia, 2000). To resolve this, decision makers seek justifications to solve the conflict and justify their choices (De Witt Huberts et al., 2012). According to Kaur et al. (2023), justification refers to the rationale consumers construct to rationalise their consumption behaviours, which may conflict with their values. Consequently, people are more likely to behave in ways that can easily be justified (Shafir et al., 1993).

It is argued that the theory of self-licensing posits that the practice of moral behaviour psychologically permits subsequent indulgent actions (Witt Huberts et al., 2011). Licensing effects are closely linked to indulgent behaviour such as impulse buying (Mukhopadhyay and Johar, 2009). Consumers leverage the inherent sustainability of second-hand fashion to rationalise each subsequent indulgent action. For example, while purchasing secondhand fashion products is inherently a sustainable and environmentally beneficial behaviour, they are good to induce self-licensing as they offer consumers a strong justification which weakens consumption constraints and makes subsequent indulgent purchases seem more acceptable (Parguel et al., 2017; Koay et al., 2024). Potentially, it can enable consumers to engage in excessive consumption (Witt Huberts et al., 2011). Consequently, the choice of secondhand

fashion itself becomes a powerful tool for rationalising indulgent consumption behaviours (Aycock, 2021).

2.4.3.1 Self-licensing on second-hand P2P platforms

It has been argued that P2P secondhand fashion platforms such as Vinted and Depop particularly foster indulgent consumption rather than restraint, as consumers leverage the sustainability of secondhand goods to lower psychological barriers to consumption, thereby rationalising such behaviour and justifying impulsive purchases (Parguel et al., 2017; Halicki et al., 2024).

Peugeot et al. (2015) stated that consumers often view secondhand purchases on P2P platforms as environmentally positive, as they extend the lifespan of products and contribute to a 'zero-waste' society. However, their true motivations are not entirely ethical, as frugality often sits alongside the desire to buy more. This is sometimes justified by the idea that items can be easily sold after a few uses. Likewise, Bardhi and Arnould (2005) demonstrated that, in an offline context, thrift and hedonic motives, seemingly conflicting, can coincide during a purchasing decision. Consumers may justify their indulgent or unnecessary buying with the moral rationale of thrift (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005).

Therefore, Parguel et al. (2017) concluded that, as secondhand shopping is regarded as economical and sustainable, this positive perception can legitimise excessive consumption. P2P platforms, which are often seen as virtuous in terms of environmental benefits, create an ideal environment in which consumers justify indulgent or otherwise materialistic purchases through self-licensing. Consequently, they can reduce the cognitive dissonance experienced by both materialistic and environmentally conscious consumers, leading to an increase in indulgent consumption (Parguel et al., 2017).

2.5 Summary and Research Gaps

Although circular fashion helps to prolong the product lifecycle and reduce waste, the motivations, perceived values and consumption behaviours of secondhand fashion consumers have raised questions about its suitability as a sustainable development model (Koay et al., 2022; McNeill and Moore, 2015). Research shows that secondhand fashion fulfils the moral beliefs of sustainability among consumers, but at the same time it gives rise to impulsive and indulgent consumption (Aycock, 2021; Guiot and Roux, 2010). This contradiction has intensified due to the rise of digital P2P platforms in recent years (Evans et al., 2022), which arguably makes the shopping behaviour itself the source of hedonic motivation (Babin et al., 1994; Ogel, 2022). Although consumers' intentions are to follow

sustainable consumption patterns, their actual actions have increasingly engaged in unsustainable practices, thereby weakening the sustainable development message initially conveyed by secondhand fashion (Koay et al., 2022; McNeill and Moore, 2015; Halickiet al., 2024).

2.5.1 Research gaps

Despite growing attention in the academic community towards sustainable consumption behaviours and secondhand fashion, there are still notable gaps in existing academic papers (Negash and Akhbar, 2024; Mazanec and Harantová, 2024). There are two key aspects to this gap. Firstly, existing studies predominantly focus on the general consumer population, with a notable lack of research on the young consumer group in the UK. There is a dearth of exploration into their secondhand purchasing behaviours, attitudes, and motivations (Mazanec and Harantová, 2024; Evans et al., 2022; Halicki et al., 2024). There is a lack of targeted research on how young UK consumers balance their sustainable value with their desire for fashion trends, especially on digital secondhand fashion platforms that have a significant impact on purchasing intention and consumption habits (Aycock, 2021).+ lack of research using qualitative approach: The qualitative approach is also missing in the online second-hand shopping context. To fill this gap, this study bridges the literature on second-hand purchase motivations and perceived value in the online shopping context.

Secondly, most existing research literature prioritises real-world drivers or moral motivations, such as financial difficulties or environmental sustainability. There has been limited exploration of the hedonic value and its complex implications in relation to secondhand fashion consumption (Guiot and Roux, 2010; Tu et al., 2022; Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). Specifically, this gap lacks research on the interaction between hedonic value and self-licensing, and how current young consumers use their moral beliefs in sustainable behaviour to justify their impulsive or indulgent consumption (Witt Huberts et al., 2011; Parguel et al., 2017).

This study aims to specifically focus on the young consumer group in the UK and examine their secondhand fashion consumption behaviour from the perspectives of perceived values and self-licensing, thereby filling the gaps in the current research. Moreover, this study also investigates how digital P2P platforms facilitate impulsive and indulgent consumption behaviour through hedonic value and sustainable awareness.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

This chapter details the research design and the methodological choices used to follow the research aim and the research objectives of this thesis. The study design was closely connected to the main research questions, which explores the way in which perceived value and self-licensing affected secondhand fashion consumption by younger consumers in the UK. Research design is an overall strategy that involves systematically and rigorously answering the research questions by structuring the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). A research design has been developed based on the best practices to ensure consistency among the researcher's perspective, research strategy, and data collection methods, thereby maximising the validity and credibility of the research results (Saunders et al., 2023).

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Overview and research onion

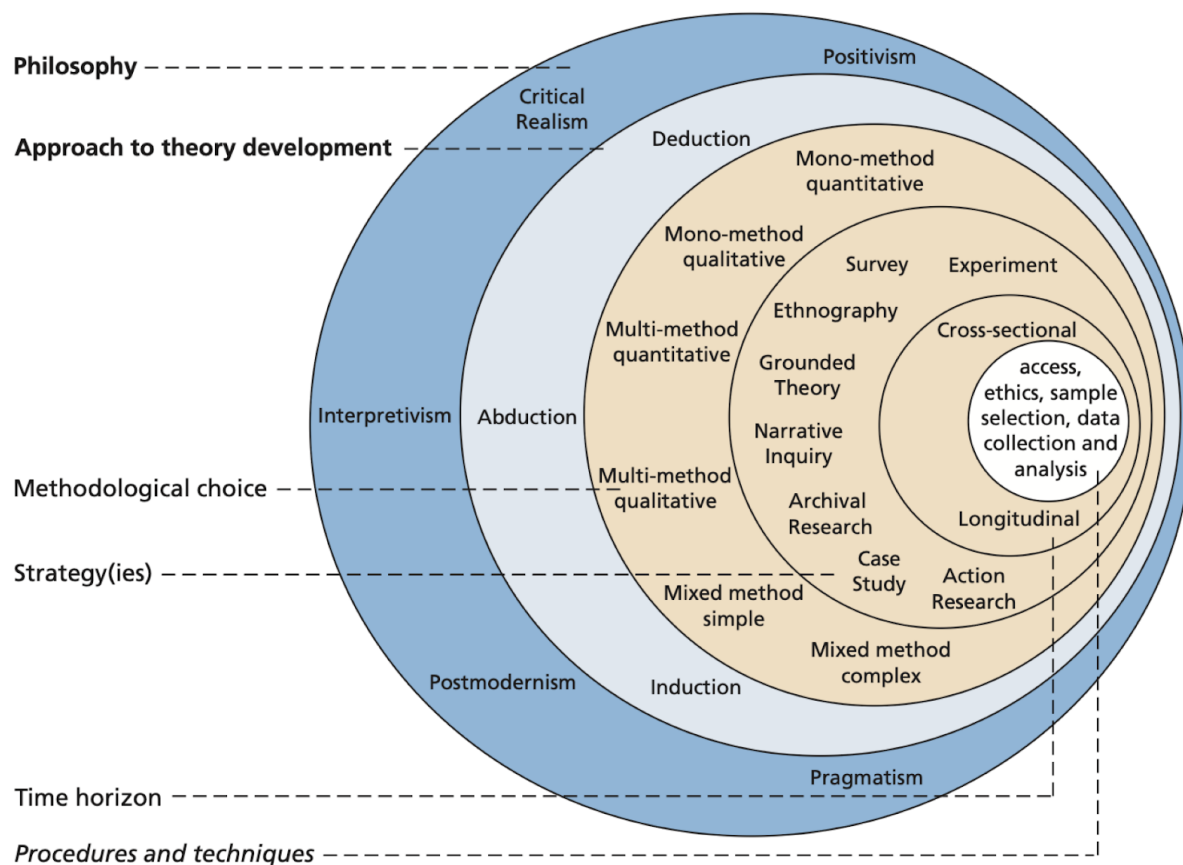


Figure 1. The Research Onion by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2023) p.131

The research design followed The Research Onion framework proposed by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2023), which provided a systematic framework for method selection. The Onion Model clearly demonstrates the stages of the research design process, from philosophical assumptions to method decisions and ultimately the practical aspects of data collection and analysis (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021). This paper systematically set out the decisions made for each layer of the Onion Model, along with the rationale behind them.

3.2.2 Philosophy

Research philosophy is the overarching set of beliefs concerning the nature of knowledge and its development in a research context. It influences how the researcher approaches the topic and forms the basis of the chosen research strategy (Saunders et al., 2023). The philosophy underlying this research was interpretivism, which values the subjective meaning and lived experience that people attribute to their actions and social worlds (Bryman, 2016). Interpretivism believes human behaviour to be influenced by context, culture, and individual

meaning, and so requires an approach capable of revealing the complexities, rather than summarising them as numerical data (Saunders et al., 2023). Since this paper concerns the motivations, value perceived, and self-licensing of young fashion consumers in secondhand fashion, interpretivism was believed to be suitable since it allowed the investigation of individual interpretation and meaning-making processes.

It is argued that interpretivist research accepts the social construction of reality and the researcher and participants collaboratively construct meaning through interplay (Creswell and Poth, 2018). For this study, the interpretivist stance allowed the researcher to go beyond surface-level behaviours to unveil participants' justification and reasoning behind the purchases of secondhand fashion, particularly in regard to sustainability and hedonic motivations. These subjective issues cannot be fully resolved through empirical observation or simply through quantitative methods, because these approaches place more emphasis on universality and objectivity rather than richness and completeness (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Moreover, interpretivism is in line with the objectives of this research, aiming to investigate psychological mechanisms such as self-licensing, which essentially involve the processes of individual perception and self-justification.

3.2.3 Research Approach

This research employed an abductive approach, which involves integrating inductive and deductive approaches by constantly shifting between theory and data (Dubois and Gadde, 2002). In contrast to the inductive approach, which develops theory from data alone, and the deductive approach, which tests hypotheses derived from pre-existing theory, abduction enables researchers to use empirical observations to refine and develop their theoretical knowledge (Saunders et al, 2023). This approach was considered appropriate for this dissertation because the self-licensing, justification, and perceived value concepts already existed in existing literature but needed to be examined further in the particular instance of secondhand fashion consumption by young consumers in the UK.

Furthermore, abduction was best suited to this research since it provides the opportunity to formulate ideas regarding consumer behaviour which may not find full expression in existing theory. For example, although self-licensing has been adequately examined in sustainable consumption, its application in the context of digital secondhand fashion platforms was understudied (Mazar and Zhong, 2010). The abductive approach provided the opportunities for participants in the narrative to make unexpected findings or encounter contradictions, thereby facilitating the refinement of theories and the accumulation of practical knowledge (Timmermans and Tavory, 2012). By using adductive reasoning, the research design can

accommodate the complex and sometimes conflicting nature of consumer motivations, enabling researchers to explore the relationship between hedonic value and sustainable intentions.

3.2.4 Methodological Choice

This study used a mono-qualitative methodological approach, meaning data were gathered from one qualitative approach rather than mixed methods. Qualitative research was deemed most suitable since it allowed an in-depth examination of the meaning, motivation, and personal experience of participants (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the main data-gathering method since they allowed flexibility in probing participants' views while ensuring consistency throughout (Bryman, 2016).

The choice of the mono-method over the mixed-methods approach was made because of the interpretivist stance of the research, which values depth of understanding over broadness or generalisability (Saunders et al., 2023). Also, a qualitative approach was particularly well-suited to this research because the investigation did not seek to generate universally generalisable insights, but rather to identify the specific, contextualised meanings that young people in the UK attribute to second-hand fashion (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021). The decision was also in line with recommendations in consumer research to adopt methodological approaches that favour depth of understanding over sample size or representation when examining complex behaviours such as sustainable and hedonic consumption (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018).

3.2.5 Research Strategy

Regarding research strategy, this study used a narrative inquiry approach. This involves gathering and examining participants' narratives in order to gain insight into how people create meaning from experience (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). Narrative inquiry suited this research particularly well, as it allowed the examination of how young consumers justify secondhand fashion purchases through personal narratives and the extent to which these narratives reveal the broader cultural discourse on sustainability, consumption and values. It has been suggested that narrative inquiry offers a valuable approach to consumer research, as it recognises the temporal and experiential aspects of behaviour, providing a better understanding of consumption decisions within the frame of daily life (Riessman, 2008). For this study, narrative research enabled participants to describe their motives, value perceptions, and self-justification in their own words, thus emphasising the subjective and contextual attributes of secondhand fashion consumption.

Also, by focusing on personal stories, the narrative approach suited the interpretivist paradigm that underpinned the research, as it recognised that reality is constructed through language and narrative (Creswell and Poth, 2018). In addition, it allowed a way of contextualising individual consumer behaviour within the overall sustainability paradox, in which respondents held both sustainable aspirations and hedonic motivations (Jackson, 2005).

3.2.6 Time Horizon

The study adopted a cross-sectional time frame, which means data were collected in one instant and not longitudinally. Cross-sectional research designs are appropriate when, in a study, the fieldwork must be completed within a small time frame (Saunders et al., 2023), , such as the duration of a dissertation project. This was largely due to practical considerations, since the project was bound by the timetables of the institutions and was not feasible to trace participants' behaviors over a long time-span. A cross-sectional design did, however, allow the researcher to capture a snapshot of the behaviours and attitudes of young UK consumers in 2025 and develop observations of the rapidly changing cultural and market environment at that time. Although longitudinal designs can reveal behavioural changes over time, a cross-sectional approach was deemed appropriate here, as the research focused on exploring the meanings and justifications behind participants' current consumption practices, rather than tracking behavioural evolution (Bryman, 2016). This design also reflected common practice in qualitative consumer research, where depth and richness of data take precedence over temporal coverage (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021).

3.2.7 Summary of Research Design

Overall, the research design was guided by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill's (2023) research onion model and was built upon an interpretivist philosophy. An abductive research approach was taken to further the theory-data nexus, and a mono-qualitative methodology involving semi-structured interviews was adopted to ensure a focus on depth and meaning. Narrative inquiry was selected as the approach to research to facilitate the capture of participants' consumption narratives, and finally, the study utilised a cross-sectional time horizon due to practicalities. Conjointly, these design decisions allowed the researcher to examine the subtle psychological dynamics of motivations, perceived value and self-justification behind secondhand fashion consumption by young UK consumers.

3.3 Research methods

3.3.1 Instrument development

Grounded in an interpretivist epistemology, the most applicable naturalistic research approaches include ethnography, qualitative interviews and focus groups (Saunders et. al., 2016). However, Chrysochou (2017) posited that focus groups are most frequently observed in studies where researchers seek to elucidate the cognitive and emotional responses of consumers to newly developed products or concepts. In a social disciplinary context, qualitative interviews are regarded as the primary research method in this field (Bryman 2016).

Qualitative interviews have been shown to exhibit greater flexibility in comparison to participant observations; furthermore, their capacity to elicit more in-depth insights from each individual is often greater than that of focus groups (Bryman, 2016).

For the present study, in-depth insights are essential to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour, given that existing literature suggests sustainable behaviour is highly multifaceted (Marteau, 2017). By conducting qualitative interviews, the various factors affecting the gaps between consumers' motivations, perceived values, and their behaviour can be explored. Therefore, in-depth interviews were considered the most suitable method of gathering data for this study.

Accordingly, a set of semi-structured interviews were conducted for this study. A semi-structured interview falls between structured and unstructured interviews, combining pre-prepared questions with the flexibility to explore emerging topics in greater depth (Bryman, 2016; Kallio et al., 2016). This balance was important given that the psychological constructs of perceived value, self-licensing and justification are so multifaceted. Semi-structured interviews allowed respondents to describe their experiences in their own terms while ensuring that discussions remained focused on the research aims and objectives. However, it is important to establish trust between interviewers and participants in order to avoid risks such as participants withholding information during the interview process (Morris, 2015).

The interview questions were developed based on the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Questions aimed at retrieving understanding of four three aspects: secondhand fashion purchasing motivations, perceived values and self-licensing and justifications. Open questions such as *'Tell me about your most recent secondhand fashion item purchased?'* and *'How do you justify purchasing or refrain from purchasing secondhand products?'* prompted narration from individuals, which enabled examination of motivations at a deeper level. Furthermore, such open-ended application of questioning also allowed the participants to present their consumption stories without the constraining structures (Riessman, 2008). Two pilot interviews were carried out with the target audience members, confirming that the questions

were interactive, understandable, and capable of producing rich data. Small refinements of language were implemented to maximize understanding and put the participants at ease reporting their behaviours (Bryman, 2016).

3.3.2 Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected via online interviews held at Zoom and Tencent Meeting, taking place in August 2025. Online interviews were selected because they are easily accessible, eliminating geographical barriers and allowing access from anywhere in the UK (Salmons, 2020). A typical interviewing session lasted between 40 and 60 minutes, which was considered an appropriate timeframe as it allowed sufficient time to delve into the participants' accounts while giving the interviewer the flexibility to probe further where necessary.

All interviews were recorded with the participants' knowledge and consent, and were then transcribed in full. During the transcription process, pauses and emphases were allowed to be retained, providing a space for strict analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The online interview platforms provided a convenient and comfortable environment for communication, as most participants were familiar with interacting on such platforms. This helped promote openness and authenticity (Archibald et al., 2019).

Before the start of each interview, participants were made aware of the general content and purpose of the study, as well as the confidentiality procedures. Participants were informed about their right to skip any questions they did not feel comfortable with and to terminate the interview at any time. This helped build confidence and trust among the respondents, enabling them to maintain a positive relationship with the interviewer and facilitating open and honest discussion (Saunders et al., 2023).

3.3.3 Sampling Strategy and Participant Recruitment

This study employed non-probability sampling to select participants who met the following criteria: aged between 18 and 34, residing in the UK, and having experience of buying second-hand fashion items from digital platforms such as Vinted or Depop. This specific group of people was deliberately chosen as they represent Generation Z and younger Millennials, who currently make up the most active user base of digital second-hand fashion platforms (ThredUp, 2023).

Recruitment took place via social media, university mailing lists, and snowball sampling, where existing participants referred others who met the criteria. Snowball sampling was particularly

effective in accessing niche communities of secondhand fashion users (Noy, 2008). Eight participants were recruited, which was deemed sufficient to reach data adequacy while remaining manageable for a dissertation. Participants came from different educational and professional backgrounds but possessed experience with secondhand fashion websites. This helped ensure that findings were grounded in real experience but congruent with research goals. A summary of the participant information can be found in the Participant Table below.

Participant	Gender	Generation	Interview Date	Participant Occupation
P1	Female	Miliennials	2025-08-17	Project Manager
P2	Female	Gen Z	2025-08-17	Student
P3	Female	Gen Z	2025-08-18	Student
P4	Female	Gen Z	2025-08-19	Sales
P5	Male	Gen Z	2025-08-21	Student
P6	Female	Gen Z	2025-08-25	Student
P7	Male	Miliennials	2025-08-20	Sales
P8	Male	Gen Z	2025-08-25	Events coordinator

Table 1. Interview participants' table

3.3.4 Data Analysis Procedures

Once the data had been successfully collected, Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-stage procedure was followed for the analysis. Firstly, after completing the full transcription and reading it through several times, the author gained high familiarity with the data, which enabled discovery of emerging trends in the data. The codes were then collated into potential themes to ensure they accurately captured the underlying patterns. Finally, these themes were labelled and defined in order to establish their scope and meaning before being presented in the data findings analysis chapter.

During this process, thematic analysis was employed, as this is the most common method for identifying and interpreting qualitative data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). It was considered appropriate to explore the motivations and descriptions of young shoppers regarding secondhand fashion, providing a structured yet flexible framework for this study (Nowell et al., 2017).

Also, the coding approach was abductive, which was commensurable with research design. Abduction enabled back-and-forth movement across theoretical constructs and empirical data so that comprehensible explanations emerged without being bound by prevailing frameworks (Timmermans and Tavory, 2012). This ensured that theories like perceived value, self-

licensing and justification informed the analysis, but emerging themes also arose from the constant interpretation of theory and lived experience (Saunders et al, 2023).

Topic	Purpose
Introduction	To establish positive relationships with participants and gain an understanding of their general and secondhand shopping habits.
Motivation & Perceived value	To examine the motivations drive participants to shop secondhand and how they perceive the value of secondhand purchases.
Consumption Behaviour	To gain an understanding of participants' buying habits and whether secondhand consumption serves as an add or a substitute in overall consumption.
Self-licensing and justification	To investigate how participants use secondhand shopping to self-regulate and justify their consumption.
Conclusion and closing	Any additional comments and thank the participants for taking part in the interviews.

Table 2. Interview topic guide

3.3.5 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are key aspects of all research. Due to the nature of qualitative search, which is generally concerned with individuals' beliefs, experiences and value systems seen from their own perspective, the methods used are more subjective than those used in quantitative research (Brink, 1993). It is argued that the researcher's subjectivity can easily colour their interpretation of the data (Brink, 1993).

Validity in a research study refers to the accuracy and truthfulness of the findings (Le Compte and Goetz 1982), it concerns internal validity and external validity (Arslan, 2022; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In this thesis, internal validity, defined as the extent to which research findings correspond with reality (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), was enhanced through prolonged engagement, persistent observation and member checking (Arslan, 2022). Prolonged engagement was achieved by dedicating ample time to each interview session (40–60 minutes), enabling rapport and trust to be established with the participants. This encouraged them to openly share their stories and experiences, thereby mitigating the risk of superficial or dishonest responses. Also, persistent observation and member checking was incorporated throughout the interview process. Participants were invited to clarify and elaborate on their

responses to ensure interpretations accurately reflected their intended meanings instead of researcher perceptions. Also, the use of vague terms and ambiguous questions was avoided to reduce the risk of misunderstanding, as suggested by Bryman (2016).

In a qualitative study, external validity primarily relates to transferability, meaning the extent to which the findings can be applied to other contexts or participant groups that share fundamental similarities with the original research setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles et al., 2014). To ensure transferability, it is essential to provide detailed descriptions of the research context, participants and study conditions. This allows readers to make informed judgements about the transferability of research findings to different settings (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Arslan, 2021). Thick description is a commonly used technique in this regard (Arslan, 2022). In this thesis, thick description was employed to provide a thorough explanation of the research setting concerning secondhand and circular fashion, as well as the demographic and behavioural attributes of Gen Z and young Millennial participants relating to digital secondhand fashion consumption. This thorough description enabled the applicability of the findings to be tested in similar groups or settings. Further, non-probability sampling employed in this study involved the inclusion of individuals directly related to the research topic (Arslan, 2022). This purposeful and context-specific selection provided a more nuanced, insight-driven dataset and thereby enhanced the transferability.

Moreover, reliability in research aims to establish whether the outcome of a study would be consistent if it were repeated using the same procedures (Bryman, 2016), and this requires minimising potential errors and biases through rigorous documentation (Yin, 2012, p.49). However, achieving exact replication is problematic in qualitative research. Anonymity makes it difficult to do so, and since the researcher is the main source of data collection, their interpretations inevitably influence the outcomes (Dubois & Gadde, 2014; (Bryman, 2016). Nonetheless, this research has carefully documented each stage of the process to enhance reliability, from the sampling strategy, interview guide to analytical choices. All interviews were also fully transcribed and coded systematically, coding decisions were revisited multiple times to ensure coherence and alignment with the dataset. These records of methodological and analytical processes help to enhance transparency, allowing future researchers to evaluate different aspects of the approach or replicate the study.

3.3.6 Limitation of the Research Design

The research design had several limitations. Firstly, the small sample size (8 participants) restricted generalisability. However, the interpretivist approach of qualitative research places greater emphasis on the depth of the study rather than its breadth (Creswell and Poth, 2018).

The purpose of this study was not to obtain generalisable statistics, but rather to understand the purchasing behaviour of young consumers in the UK in depth. As Mason (2010) suggested, smaller samples are suitable for qualitative research where the aim is to reveal depth and complexity rather than scope. In this case, focusing intensively on eight participants provided sufficient information to highlight recurring themes while preserving the unique nature of each participant's narrative.

Also, participants might be dishonest during the interview. For example, they might claim that their purchasing behaviour is more sustainable than it actually is, or that their purchasing behaviour differs from the sustainable behaviour they mentioned. Hence, to counteract this scenario, confidentiality of this interview was stressed before it was conducted, and the questions were framed in such a way that no leading question was posed.

3.4 Research Ethics

This study strictly adhered to the UAL Code of Practice for Research Ethics, fully safeguarding the rights and dignity of the participants (University of the Arts London, 2020). Firstly, the Research Ethics Approval form signed by the supervisor of this study (Appendix A) was obtained. Prior to the interviews, all participants were provided with an information sheet outlining the aims of the study, data handling procedures, confidentiality measures, and their right to withdraw at any time. This was to ensure that they were able to make an informed decision about participating, with a full understanding of what was involved. Consent forms were then signed and are provided in Appendix B. Anonymity was maintained by refraining from collecting personal identifiers other than consent forms, and by using pseudonyms in the transcript and findings (Wiles et al., 2008).

Also, data security was assured by encrypting and storing digital recordings and transcripts on UAL OneDrive, which is only accessible to authorised users. Data was stored only for the duration of the project and will be deleted safely after three months from the submission date of the dissertation, including all devices and recycle bins.

Overall, strictly adhering to ethical guidelines has enhanced the credibility and integrity of this study. By emphasising transparency, confidentiality and participant autonomy, this study adheres to the University of the Arts London's (2020) Code of Practice on Research Ethics and other best practices in qualitative research.

CHAPTER 4: FINDING AND ANALYSIS

This study aims to explore the motivations and perceived values that influence the purchasing behaviours of young UK consumers (aged 18–34) on digital P2P secondhand fashion platforms, with an emphasis on hedonistic buying practices and how they justify these behaviours. To achieve the research aims and objectives, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with eight respondents who had experience purchasing secondhand fashion items through digital P2P platforms. Through the empirical findings, three aggregated themes directly corresponding to research questions were identified: purchase motivation, perceived value, and self-licensing and justification mechanism. The empirical findings under each dimension are presented and analysed in this chapter.

4.1 Data Structure Table

After processing and analysing the empirical data, the research findings were presented in a Data Structure Table (Table 3). It demonstrates the development of the empirical data, from first-order coding to second-order themes, ultimately leading to the aggregate dimension, namely purchase motivations, perceived value and self-licensing and justification. These themes serve to address the main research questions, while also reflecting the overall framework of the current study.

1 st Order Coding	2 nd Order Themes	Aggregate Dimension
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low prices • Low affordability • Increased shop frequency 	Cost-effectiveness	Purchase motivations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy browsing • Enjoyable and sense of pleasure • Good deal 	Thrill of hunt	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniqueness • Reflect personal style • Vintage fashion • History and meaning • Different from high street style, 	Uniqueness and fashionability	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable awareness • Second life and reduced waste 	Sustainability intentions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media / influencers • Celebrity /rend inspiration • Social media advertise 	Social media and influencer impact	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease of use • Personalised recommendation • Easy to pay • Discounts 	Platform-driven motivations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and low price • Value for money 	Functional value	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senses of satisfaction, feel special and enjoyable • Nostalgia, meaning and history • Feeling of fun, happy, joy, creativity 	Emotional value	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-expression • One-of-a-kind • Individuality and scarcity 	Fashion value	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider secondhand as a more environmentally friendly option • Longer lifespan, less waste 	Environmental and sustainable value	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical concerns: Oppose the labour and environmental issues of fast fashion 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social identity • Community belongingness 	Social value	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impulsive consumption • Indulgent consumption • Migration of fast fashion consumption patterns 	Indulgent consumption	Self-licensing and Justification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived future use • Fear of missing out • Self-pleasing • Resell opportunities 	Internalised Justification	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental benefits • Economic reasoning • Platform attachment • Platform recommendations • Algorithm drives impulsive buying 	Externalised Justification	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional way of purchase 	Additional way to shop	

Table 3. Data Structure Table

4.2 Purchase Motivation

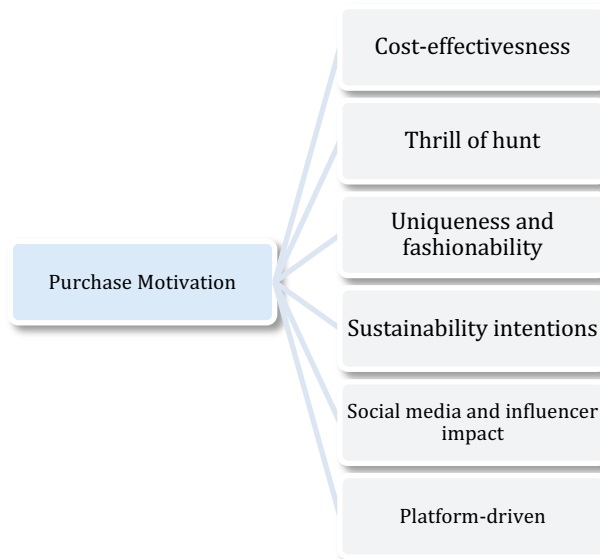


Figure 2. Coding for Purchase Motivation theme

The purchase motivation mainly reflects the true reasons behind the actual purchasing behaviour of the participants. The research findings suggest that the purchase intentions of participants are influenced by economic, aesthetic, emotional, social and sustainability, as well as platform-driven factors in relation to secondhand fashion.

4.2.1 Cost-effectiveness

One of the mostly emphasised motivations for young participants to purchase secondhand fashion through digital platforms such as Vinted, Depop, and Vestiaire Collective is the low price. For five out of eight participants, cost was the initial reason that prompted them to get involved in secondhand fashion. The secondhand goods on these platforms are usually sold at prices significantly lower than new items, and this price advantage has significantly stimulated their purchasing desire. Thus, cost-effectiveness has become a prominent purchasing motivation among them:

P2: "My initial motivation for buying secondhand fashion items on those digital P2P platforms such as eBay was to save money. And this is the most important reason, because the price is so affordable."

P8: "I care about the low price because it's already secondhand. That's why I'm seeking the low price... If I can find something good, cheaper, and of good quality, that's more important than whether it's sustainable or not."

This finding confirms the existing research, which shows that young people generally believe that secondhand items are more cost-effective compared to brand new items (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Tu, Hsu, and Creativani, 2022). The low price not only enables participants to obtain fashionable goods at a lower cost, but also prompts them to frequently search for discounts and special offers on the platforms, creating a 'treasure hunt' style of shopping experience. This frequent searching and purchasing behaviour not only meets their consumption needs, but also brings a sense of achievement and satisfaction.

4.2.2 The thrill of hunt

Hedonic motivations were frequently mentioned among the participants. All of those interviewed stated that hedonic motivation was an important factor in purchasing secondhand clothes online. Many participants regarded the secondhand purchase experience as a fun-filled treasure-hunting process. Whether it's scrolling through endlessly long listings for fun or the prospect of finding a rare vintage piece at a bargain price, they are motivated by the thrill of the hunt and the excitement of the unknown find. For example, P3 described this feeling as:

"I feel that the thrill of hunting is something I get easily from browsing secondhand items, because it's like you find something wonderful or valuable among old things."

While P1 also stated the feeling of excitement when discovering something unexpected:

"It's all about timing and luck — sometimes you find designs and craftsmanship that are no longer available anywhere else. When I come across something special, it's a real thrill."

The psychological pleasure gained from this treasure hunting process undoubtedly increased consumers' appreciation of secondhand fashion. In addition, P6 mentioned that, during the buying process, the bidding stage on the P2P platforms also adds to the experience. The 'race-like' experience intensified the buying process and provided stimulation and excitement:

"I'm scrolling through Vinted...I'll scroll for so long, like my brain is going foggy, and then if you find something you really like that's, like a good price, and you put a bid on it, and they accept it, it's like, I hope they accept my bid and not someone else's, it's like a bit of a race. So I feel like that's probably also a motivator."

These findings show that under hedonic motivations the most highlighted aspect was the fun, enjoyment and stimulation associated with the treasure hunting process. The findings are in

line with existing research, indicating that hedonic motivation has a significant impact on the purchasing behaviour of young consumers (Guiot & Roux, 2010).

Also, the participants explained that scrolling through vast amounts of online listings had become an entertaining part of their daily lives. This aligns with literature suggesting that secondhand fashion shopping has become an integral part of the lifestyle of young consumers (Guiot and Roux, 2010; Halicki, et al, 2024).

4.2.3 Uniqueness and fashionability

Apart from economic motivation, another motivational factor that has been repeatedly emphasised by participants was the uniqueness of the secondhand fashion items. Young consumers nowadays seek out individuality and exclusivity in their purchasing decisions (Liang and Xu, 2018). When it comes to fashion, they like to express their personality and taste by wearing items of clothing that are unique. Digital secondhand fashion platforms, which offer a wide range of unstandardised items, have been seen as a great way to set themselves apart from mainstream trends. It has been confirmed the participants:

P1: "If you want something trendy or unique, I usually consider buying secondhand first, because I feel... secondhand pieces often carry more meaning and history."

P3: "An item that is secondhand might attract me due to its unique features or history...If there's something written on it saying it's an item that is now scarce, or what I would call an old style from a certain season, it increases my desire to purchase them."

This pursuit of uniqueness leads participants to invest time and effort on secondhand platforms, searching for items that can showcase their individuality. For example, P5 stated that the digital secondhand fashion platforms are often the best place to obtain past season designer pieces and build a unique wardrobe.

4.2.4 Sustainability intentions

Environmental and ethical considerations were mentioned in most interviews, but the level of importance assigned to them varied significantly among respondents. For some respondents, sustainability was the main reason for purchasing secondhand goods. They saw it as a much better alternative to buying fast fashion. For example, P6 claimed that they intended to purchase fashion items with a longer lifespan and tried to avoid fast fashion to a greater extent:

“I love clothes and fashion and buying clothes, but I don't want to buy lots of fast fashion and new things, for sustainability reasons, but also for quality reasons. I think if I'm buying Primark or Zara or H&M, like, they're not gonna last long... the quality and the price is better on secondhand places as well.”

Similarly, P7 regarded secondhand shopping as an inherently environmentally friendly behavior:

“Buying secondhand inherently aligns with a more sustainable for the wider environment, being inherently more eco-friendly”

On the contrary, five out of eight participants regarded sustainability as a secondary benefit that came after other motivations. For example, P8 prioritised cost and quality over environmental impact:

“To be honest, it's not very important to me personally. I know a lot of people talk about sustainability now, but for me, my main motivation is still the price and the value.”

This divergence confirms a recent research finding that among young consumers, sustainability intentions often coexist with hedonism and economic drives, but rarely dominate (Armstrong et al., 2015). However, it is worth mentioning that participants driven by environmental awareness can still engage in purchasing behaviours that contradict this intention due to factors such as product affordability and convenience. This pattern has often been seen as a prime example of the sustainability paradox (Joy et al., 2012).

4.2.5 Social media and influencer impact

In the current digital era, social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have become important channels for the dissemination of the latest trends and information among young people. Although the extent of the impact varies from one person to another, the findings have shown that social media and influencer recommendations have had certain impact on young consumers' purchasing motivations. By sharing their outfits and shopping experiences, influencers stimulate their followers' desire to purchase. It was stated by P2 that:

“I think the trends and the fashion inspiration have a significant influence on me, especially on the social media and the blogger recommendations.”

The participant emphasised the direct and immediate influence the influencers had on her:

“Sometimes I see them wearing some secondhand items and I would think, wow, this one is so good. So I will immediately do the research for the similar style or the exact items (on the P2P platforms).”

In addition, P1 pointed out that advertising recommendations on social media would reinforce her addiction to it, as big data algorithms would prompt her to keep browsing and increase her spending:

“Whenever I’m scrolling Instagram Stories... I spend way too much time browsing, but I can’t help it because it’s exactly my style.”

By contrast, P4 played down the impact of influencers, believing that they would have little influence over her. Nevertheless, she admitted that she would follow some sellers' social media updates:

“Influencers don’t influence me much. I like some influencer’s style, but I wouldn’t wear the same clothes. Social media does influence me a little though, like browsing Depop, saving pages I like, and following about 30 sellers. But it’s not the main factor.”

Overall, the findings have shown that social media has amplified participants' desire for secondhand fashion. As suggested by Palomo-Domínguez et al. (2023), the role of social media influencers has been firmly established as valid opinion leaders for young consumers, particularly Generation Z, when it comes to fashion. Although it is not the sole determining factor, social media and influencers have played a significant role in shaping the purchasing motivations of young consumers in online secondhand fashion consumption.

4.2.6 Platform-driven motivations

Finally, the digital secondhand fashion platform also served as an important motivational factor for young consumers to engage in secondhand consumption. Most participants believed that platforms like Vinted and Depop are user-friendly with a wide range of products and an easy payment process, making them highly efficient trading platforms.

Interestingly, P6 received a notification from Vinted about a new listing being added while she was in the middle of the interview process. The participant commented that:

“I feel like I would not shop as much on Vinted if I wasn’t always just kind of scrolling on my phone. The last notification I got was a Vinted one, while we were sitting here,

I was like...So, yeah, it's a bit of everything, but I would also say very much convenient."

P5: *"So I have the ability to just sit on my phone or sit on my computer at home and like, scroll through a bunch of websites or whatever."*

P4 also shared that the platform's algorithm would provide personalised recommendations based on users' historical search records. This has significantly increased the chance of users coming across items that align with their personal preferences:

"My Instagram algorithm follows what I look at, so it recommends secondhand clothing shops sometimes. Some of them are like clickbait, I click on them, then end up browsing more."

While the personalised recommendations have reduced the decision-making costs for users by directly tapping into their preferences and providing continuous exposure, it also stimulated their desire to purchase. P1 confessed that the continuous push and convenience of the platform often lead to excessive consumption:

"They know exactly what I like and keep showing the recommendations to me. I'll open them thinking I don't need anything, and five minutes later I'm debating buying stuff I never even planned to get."

It is clear that the 'whenever, wherever' approach of digital platforms has not only made it easier for consumers to purchase secondhand fashion items, but has also significantly increased their buying frequency through personalised recommendations and push notifications. This has made young, digitally savvy consumers even more prone to excessive consumption.

4.3 Perceived Value

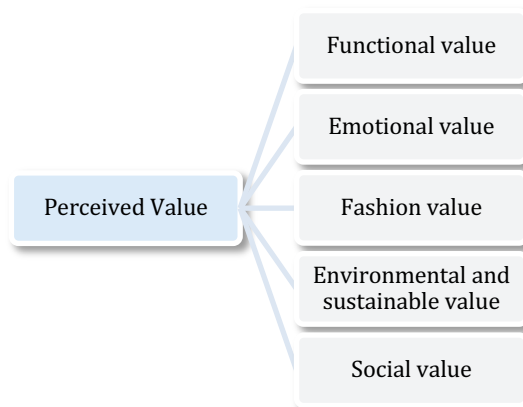


Figure 3. Coding for Perceived Value theme

4.3.1 Functional Value

For many participants, functional value (such as price, quality, durability, etc.) forms the basis of their perceived value towards secondhand fashion. Almost all participants emphasized the economic value they gained from buying secondhand items on digital platforms. They were able to find low-priced items of good quality, which is seen as one of the most decisive factors in gaining economic value. As such, some participants stated that:

P6: *“I think, yeah, the quality and the price is better in secondhand places as well.”*

P7: *“Because if I’m going to buy secondhand, it would be a slightly more expensive brand. And I use that app (Vestiaire Collection) because it has quality assurance.”*

P8: *“...but for me it’s more practical...It’s more about saving money and finding good quality items.”*

Also, the participants’ perceived economic value has been significantly enhanced by being able to purchase premium brands at a fraction of their usual price:

P6: *“I think one that really stands out is a top that I bought on Vestiaire at the beginning of the year. It’s a brand that I have known and loved for years ... and I’ve always wanted a piece from them ... And I think it was just before Fashion Week in February, I found this top from the brand on Vestiaire, and it was super cheap. Not super, like, I think I’ve still paid £100, but compared to what it would be...”*

Furthermore, while prices on secondhand platforms tend to be low anyway, consumers were able to secure even greater savings through promotions offered by the platforms, which again greatly enhanced their perceived economic value:

P6: *“...especially on Vinted, when things are so cheap, and there’s the ‘bundle’ feature, where if you buy more than one thing, they give you a discount, and then the shipping’s cheaper. So I’ll be, like, ‘oh well, it makes sense to just buy, like, three things,’ and then suddenly I’ve got five things in my basket, and I didn’t plan on buying any of them.”*

These findings suggest that functional value, especially economic value, plays a fundamental role in consumers’ perceived value of secondhand shopping. They are able to get more for less. When combined with premier quality and unique styles, this offers consumers more tangible benefits. And such benefits have been further enhanced through the platforms’ bargaining functions and promotions. However, participants have demonstrated that this economic value has led to excessive consumption. This aligns with the existing research that the satisfaction of securing a good bargain can potentially lead to excessive spending and impulsive buying (Johar & Mukhopadhyay, 2009, Zhou & Wong, 2004).

4.3.2 Emotional Value

For many participants, secondhand purchasing brings not only practical value, but more importantly, the emotional value associated with it. In this regard, the emotional value of an item often extends beyond the item itself to the process of acquiring it, which is often linked to enjoyment and a sense of satisfaction:

P6: *“...I was thinking about it for ages, I didn’t want to impulse buy something...and then when I finally bought it, it was, like, so satisfying that it’s a piece that I kind of had my eye on for so long, and I knew that Fashion Week was coming up, and I knew I could wear it then, and now, like, every time I wear it still, I’m still so happy with it. And if I bought it new, I don’t think I would feel like that.”*

P1: *“Yeah, I feel like buying them just makes me happy, it’s emotional value.”*

Also, a sense of nostalgia was often mentioned by participants. For example:

P7: *“To me, secondhand pieces often carry more meaning and history.”*

P4: *“I also prefer secondhand because I like the look of old clothing slightly distressed, with character. “*

These findings support the work of Armstrong et al. (2015) that hedonism and personal meaningfulness were the main sustainable consumption motivators of the younger consumers. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, participants experienced emotions of

excitement and satisfaction when they found something unexpected or took part in the bidding process during a purchase. It could be argued that it is not only the material gain or winning the bid that participants derived pleasure from, but also the excitement and psychological gratification derived from the process itself, making it intrinsically satisfying. However, such a feeling of hedonism does often result in further browsing and purchasing activities, which would mean the positive emotion could unintentionally cement consumption practices.

4.3.3 Fashion Value

Finally, participants also emphasized the fashion value of secondhand items during the interviews. For majority consumers, the uniqueness and fashionability of secondhand items helped to enhance their personal identity and distinguish themselves from others / enabled them to adapt the trends and styles in a way that affirms their individuality, as stated by the participants:

P1: *"I hate wearing the same thing as everyone else... when I find a vintage piece that reflects my personal aesthetic, I can style it in unique ways."*

P5: *"I think individual style is a more important thing. I do really like vintage or secondhand clothing, especially secondhand designer pieces. It's a lot harder to find and source, and that also adds to it, because if no one else is wearing what I'm wearing, I think I'm, like, cooler than someone else. "*

This also confirms the research of Cervellon et al. (2012), that secondhand fashion enables consumers to stand out from mainstream fast fashion, helping them to develop a personal style based on uniqueness and taste. Also, consumers may perceive that acquiring unique, vintage or 'cool' sustainable items gives them a sense of taste prestige. Thus, fashion value also helped them complete the narrative of their personal style, which is often closely linked to their personal values that emphasise individuality and personal identity. This was highlighted by P6:

"You're just naturally not going to be wearing the same as everyone else, and you can kind of adapt a trend that you really like into your own personal style more, and kind of be a bit more unique that way."

Therefore, it could be argued that the pursuit of uniqueness is one of the most important factors contributing to the perceived fashion value for young consumers. By embracing personal

values such as self-expression and individuality, it has provided consumers with a deeper emotional connection and symbolic value.

4.3.4 Environmental and Sustainable Value

During the interviews, 5 out of eight participants stated that they purchased secondhand items because it aligned with their environmentalist beliefs and could help reduce waste and overproduction in the society. For example, P4 stated that:

“...I think sustainability is quite important because you’re not throwing clothes away. It’s about avoiding waste.”

Such environmental beliefs were often associated with consumers’ social values, as participants felt they were making a positive contribution to society. They may seek social approval by making ‘ethical’ decisions, presenting themselves as environmentally and socially accountable:

P1: “Giving items a second life and reducing waste makes me feel like I’m doing something positive for the environment and society.”

Moreover, participants pointed out the ethical benefits of buying secondhand:

P4: “It also helps the environment, and I don’t support exploitative labor.”

This finding is consistent with current research suggesting that secondhand consumption enables consumers to establish a moral identity in this process (Joy et al., 2012). However, such environmental and sustainable value was not given the greatest importance when compared to other values, such as functional and hedonic value.

4.3.5 Social Value

It was learned from the interviews that participants also gained social value from digital secondhand fashion consumption. Lou et al. (2022) found that social values can greatly increase young consumers’ willingness to buy secondhand, as they seek a sense of community and social approval through sustainable fashion. Young consumers are motivated by the desire to belong to communities that value sustainability, individuality, and self-expression, for example:

P6: “...but for me especially, kind of being in the fashion industry, and a lot of friends are the same...I feel like if I showed up somewhere in, like, a full Shein outfit, I would

get shunned, I would get kicked out. So, I do feel like sometimes if I'm going to a fashion event in sustainability, or even when I started going to Uni I was always checking my outfit, being like, is any of this fast fashion? Like someone asked me about my outfit, would I feel comfortable (to tell them about it)?"

Peer influence was also found within this dimension, for example:

P3: "Initially, perhaps due to my initial aversion to secondhand items, I might have felt somewhat concerned about them because they are secondhand. However, later on...these kinds of things are becoming the mainstream trend, then I find myself becoming less bothered by their past history."

As existing research suggested, the social value in secondhand fashion consumption is closely linked to the social recognition and peer influence (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001; Guiot and Roux, 2010). Such tendency is also reflected in participants' high levels of social media and influencer reliance. This behaviour reflects a social value pursuit, as buying items recommended by influencers helps consumers signal their belonging to certain communities.

As an important aspect of social value, the role of personal values cannot be overlooked. Researchers have suggested that consumers are influenced by their personal values when it comes to secondhand shopping, as it allows them to express their ethical and sustainable stance (Tu, Hsu and Creativani, 2022). More importantly, it enhances young consumers' self-expression by allowing them to curate unique styles instead of following mainstream trends, contributing to their sense of individuality. As Palomo-Domínguez et al. (2023) suggested, fashion consumption satisfies young consumers' need for esteem:

P8: "So, if I find something unique, I feel like it's part of expressing myself and my style, especially if not many people have it. "

4.4 Self-Licensing and Justification

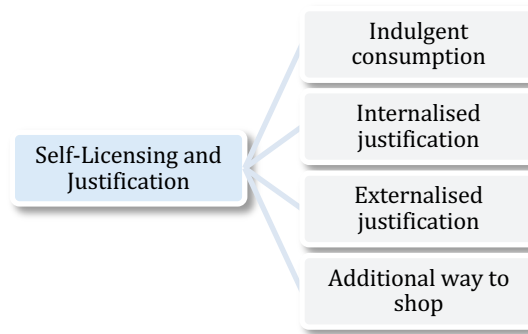


Figure 4. Coding for Self-Licensing and Justification theme

The research found that participants often employed various self-licensing strategies to rationalise their purchasing behaviour on digital secondhand fashion platforms. Although secondhand fashion has been generally regarded as a sustainable purchasing behaviour, interviews revealed that UK young consumers often use it to disguise their actual purchasing motives, presenting it as an environmentally friendly and ethical choice to rationalise their behaviour. This also highlights the tension between sustainable intentions and hedonism.

4.4.1 Indulgent consumption

Interestingly, although the participants tend to avoid fast fashion brands by choosing secondhand fashion, many of them admitted that their shopping habits were still similar to those of the fast fashion cycle. P2 reflected that:

“People won't realise they are buying too much because of the low price. Yeah. And as they think they might be able to sell it later. So they think I buy now but I will sell later. And then that's no big deal. Mhm. So I think this will just motivate people to keep buying because of the discount or something else. Yeah. So those are attracting people to buy more but they don't like it. It is contributing to overconsumption but people just don't realise it.”

P3 also stated in the interview:

“Everyone's purchasing frequency, and then the quantity of purchases may be increasingly converging with that of fast fashion”

P2: “And also it is because they are both on trend and cheaper than the new style, um, in making it easy to buy. However, this can also lead me to buy more than I

intend, even though the items that are secondhand and the price they are not that high. I often buy a lot. “

This also confirms the previous research by Charnley et al. (2022), that digital secondhand fashion platforms often replicate the fast fashion model, promoting purchasing behaviours based on quantity rather than quality, despite their claims of sustainability. Thus, beneath the guise of sustainability, it encourages quantity-oriented purchasing behaviours.

4.4.2 Internalised justification

4.4.1.1 Perceived future use

It was found that, in order to rationalise their current purchasing behaviour, participants would envisage how they might use the product in the future. During the interview, P2 stated that:

“I can’t not buy these items because even though I don’t need them right now, maybe in the future I will need them.”

This indicates that young consumers use envisioning the future as a way of gaining self-licensing and justification, thus helping them to alleviate the guilt associated with making unnecessary purchases that they feel they cannot justify at the time. By overestimating its potential usage, they created the necessity for these secondhand purchases, allowing consumers to neutralise the tension between long term sustainability ideals and current indulgent consumption.

4.4.1.2 Self pleasing

Hedonism related self-justification was also mentioned by the participants. P1 stated that:

“...It’s just a matter of perspective. If it’s there pleasing yourself, that’s hardly wasteful, is it?”

The findings indicate that the value of the purchase was not judged by its actual usefulness, but by the emotional fulfilment it provided to the participants. By framing such behaviour as a means of maintaining self-care and emotional well-being, consumers were able to make a mental shift that acted as a form of cognitive re-labelling. This approach minimised the importance of material excess and instead emphasised the emotional gains, building a moral and psychological safeguard against the potential feelings of guilt that can arise from hedonic consumption.

4.4.1.3 Fear of missing out

Due to the nature of secondhand items, such as their limited availability and low prices, when participants were presented with a 'one-time-only' unique buying opportunity, they often felt a sense of urgency, such as stated by P1:

“It gives me this sense of urgency, like, ‘If I don’t buy now, I’ll miss out.’... if a vintage store has a sale like ‘£10 per shirt’ and there are tons of colours and patterns, I’ll immediately start thinking about how rare it is to find these deals. Even if I only planned to buy one or two items, I’ll end up buying five or six, just because it feels like a good bargain and I don’t want to regret missing it out later.”

The participants believed that if they didn’t act straight away, they would miss the opportunity and regret it later. By stressing the rarity of the opportunity, the prospect of missing out became more compelling than the rational evaluation of whether the purchase is necessary for now. The situation called for quick decision making. By proceeding with the purchase, which is usually associated with impulsiveness and hedonism, consumers justified their actions as a rational response to the sense of urgency they felt, since an opportunity missed can seem irreversible.

4.4.2 Externalised justification

4.4.2.1 Environmental benefits

From the findings, one particularly prominent justification used by participants was environmental benefits and sustainability (3 out of 8). Participants believed that buying second-hand items, even in high quantities, was acceptable because such behaviour was essentially considered sustainable. This was acknowledged by the participants:

P1: “While uniqueness and price are my main drivers, I also feel good knowing I’m contributing to sustainability in some way.”

P3: “I’ve always wanted to say that secondhand is a very environmentally friendly existence. So if I keep buying like this, I’m actually adding to the pile of clothes I already have, and it’s also creating a cycle of buying more and more.”

P7:” ...(secondhand) doesn’t reach such a large volume, and it may only be produced once during its production, but many hands will trade through it.”

It can be observed that participants use the sustainable characteristics of secondhand fashion to justify their indulgent purchasing behaviour. This also confirms the existing moral licensing effect as proposed by Khan and Dhar (2006). Consumers use the seemingly good secondhand fashion consumption behaviour to rationalise their guilt over excessive purchasing. Although consumers hold sustainable beliefs, their frequent purchasing patterns resemble those of fast fashion consumers.

4.4.2.2 Economic reasoning

It was found that young consumers also use economic reasoning to justify their indulgent consumption of secondhand fashion items. Participants frequently emphasised that value for money, bargains and low prices were central to their purchasing decisions, for example:

P2: "...They were cheaper, so I would think this is no big deal. Only spend a little. So normally I end up ordering things that I didn't intend to buy."

P6: "*Because it's like, 'oh, it's secondhand, it's cheap, so it doesn't really matter if I buy more,' and then they just buy loads and loads, which kind of defeats the purpose a bit...*"

Such economic reasoning fosters a sense of 'mindful consumption', projecting the consumer as a thoughtful, rational shopper rather than an impulsive overspender. This is particularly evident when participants compare the cost of their secondhand buys with that of equivalent new items, perpetuating the idea that excessive consumption is financially efficient and therefore acceptable.

4.4.2.3 Resell opportunities

Majority (7 out of 8) participants emphasised that the resale opportunities on the digital secondhand fashion platforms significantly helped them rationalise their potentially excessive consumptions. P5 stated that reselling would make him less afraid of buying too much because he could always sell them later:

"If I don't like it that much, I can just resell it for a similar sort of price... if I know I can get a return of some sort of value on an item I buy, I'm like, less scared to buy it."

Other participants also mentioned in the interviews that the resale mechanism of the digital secondhand fashion platform made it easier for them to rationalise their purchases:

P8: *“If I buy something and later I don’t like it, I know I can just resell it on the platform. So it feels less risky, which sometimes makes me buy more easily.”*

P6: *“Like if I really like something but I’m not 100% sure, I’ll sometimes think, ‘well, if I don’t wear it, I can just resell it on Vinted’, so I’ll buy it. And I have resold a lot of things, so it does kind of work, but it also makes me buy more than I probably would otherwise.”*

Findings suggest that the majority of participants have a strong reliance on reselling on platforms. The reselling mechanism of digital secondhand fashion platforms provides an effective way of dealing with unwanted items while gaining economic value. Most participants were found to be very familiar with the platforms' reselling procedures and policies. Only a small number of people believed that reselling is not an easy task.

4.4.2.4 Platform-driven temptation

Participants often attributed their indulgent consumption to the various platform-driven temptations designed to encourage it, such as notification alerts, personalised recommendations and algorithmic suggestions. P3 stated that:

“As long as it's online shopping, I think everyone is basically influenced by some recommendations or related content. If you follow certain searches, then I think as long as you click on them, you will be attracted and it is very likely that will increase your purchase intention.”

Similarly, P4 mentioned in the interview that the platform's algorithm would constantly recommend the type of products she liked, accompanied by clickbait content to attract her to keep clicking on the platform's push notifications:

“My Instagram algorithm follows what I look at, so it recommends secondhand clothing shops sometimes. Some of them are like clickbait, I click on them, then end up browsing more.”

It can be argued that while the simultaneous behaviour-triggering mechanism of digital platforms prompts continuous user participation, it also fosters a desire to purchase through constant stimulation. In these platforms, low prices, scarcity, and personalised recommendations jointly enhance consumer engagement, thereby strengthening habitual shopping behaviours. P2 has acknowledged this in the interview:

“While the initial intentions are environmentally friendly and sustainable, however, in practice these platforms also inadvertently promote the overconsumption”

4.4.5 Additional way to shop

Despite the participants frequently using the secondhand platforms, they generally regarded them as additional shopping channels rather than a complete alternative to purchasing new products. P7 explained that:

“I think it's a coexistence because it can be simply understood as my preference for buying secondhand items. However, purchasing new things might make more sense to me in terms of being decisive. If I know that I want something new, then I will go out and buy it. But when it comes to buying secondhand items, it doesn't necessarily mean I have to do so today. However, if I come across one, I will purchase it. So there is more uncertainty. I might or might not buy, but purchasing new things maybe like is part of my plan for this month, I will definitely go and buy it. There is no contradiction in these views on the two matters.”

Participants also stated that the demand for purchasing new items and secondhand items is different. Therefore, purchasing secondhand fashion is more of an additional purchasing channel:

P3: *“I think it is an additional way for me to shop because my needs for new items and secondhand items are different. So I think both of them are attractive to me at the moment.”*

P2: *“... because they are cheaper, I am more likely to place an order than if I were buying new clothes, so that I can count it as an additional purchase rather than a simple substitution.”*

This indicates that although secondhand shopping can reinforce the concept of sustainable consumption, it may not necessarily reduce the overall consumption volume, which confirms the existing research conclusion of McNeill and Venter (2019). It can be argued that the digital secondhand fashion platforms often do not replace fast fashion consumption, but rather add to it, resulting in participants increasing additional consumption in their overall spending.

4.5 Overview of finding

Through the findings, three aggregated themes directly corresponding to research questions were identified and discussed. Findings have revealed the complex nature of online secondhand fashion purchasing behaviour, especially the correlation between different motivations and perceived values, and their impact on the young consumers' hedonic buying behaviour and how they justify it. Key findings are summarised below:

Category	Summary of key findings
Purchase Motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost-effectiveness is the primary motivation for secondhand fashion purchasing, followed by the thrill of treasure hunting, although these two factors are often associated with hedonic value which plays a key role in facilitating impulsive and indulgent consumption. • Uniqueness and fashionability are important purchase motivations and they are closely tied to social and personal values, as it enables self-expression and individuality, which are important to young consumers. • Sustainability, both in consumer motivation and perceived values, is not the dominant factor - more often presented as a secondary additional benefit or a rationalisation for excessive purchases. • Social media influencers are less effective at influencing secondhand fashion purchasing motivation, but the social value offered by social media, such as a sense of community and peer approval, is highly valued by consumers.
Perceived Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic value: offers consumers an immediate and tangible benefit, thus have great significant to young consumers • Hedonic motivation and emotional value create a heightened emotional state that is often closely linked to indulgent consumption behaviour • Fashion value is deeply tied to personal and social value because it helps construct personal identity for young

	<p>consumers and allows them to express their ethical and sustainable stance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmentally and socially conscious consumers may find added value in buying secondhand fashion online, as their choices adhere to sustainable and ethical principles. • There is a close connection between social value and sustainable value, sustainable value enables consumers to establish a moral identity in the society
<p>Self-Licensing and Justification</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are two types of self-justification strategies: internalised and externalised justification • Internalised justifications: perceived future use, self-pleasing and fear of missing out were found to be the most commonly adopted justifications by the participants. • Externalised justifications: Environmental benefits, Economic reasoning, Resell opportunities, Platform-driven temptation • Compulsive and indulgent buying was particularly associated with the rationalisations of sustainability • Resale opportunities were used as a strong justification for problematic consumption behaviour • Externalised justification factors give consumers a sense of being 'pushed' into buying due to platform features such as notification and personalised recommendations • Digital secondhand fashion platforms have subtly transformed self-licensing and justification into the norm, allowing consumers to engage in hedonistic consumption while still appearing to be environmentally responsible. • Digital secondhand fashion platforms often do not replace fast fashion consumption, but rather add to it, resulting in participants increasing additional consumption in their overall spending. • While purchase motivations and perceived values drive purchasing intentions, they are in turn often being used as

	means of self-rationalisation for excessive buying behaviour, such as low prices and sustainability factors.
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Table 4. Table of key findings

CHAPTER 5: Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

This study, in combination with the existing research, conducted a critical and in-depth analysis of the psychological mechanism behind the consumption behaviours of UK young consumers on digital secondhand fashion platforms. It focused on exploring their purchase motivations, perceived value, and self-licensing and justification factors. Based on the empirical research, this chapter further discusses the findings presented in Chapter 4 in reference to the research questions and compares them to extant literature, structured to follow the order of research questions. It then goes on to provide managerial implications.

5.1.1. Purchase Motivation of Secondhand Fashion

Through primary research, it was found that cost-effectiveness, thrill of hunt, and uniqueness and fashionability were the three most important motivations for young consumers in the UK. Notably, sustainability intentions fall behind these motivations. Other factors, such as social media and influencer impact, as well as platform-driven motivations, also drive young consumers to buy secondhand fashion online.

Research findings suggested that cost-effectiveness was the core motivation for all participants when it came to secondhand fashion purchasing. This is consistent with the previous research which indicated that economic factors were identified as one of the main driving forces of secondhand shopping (Guiot and Roux, 2010). This motivational factor is particularly significant among young consumers, as the low prices of secondhand items help them to maintain their high consumption demands while keeping within a limited budget. This is also in line with the work proposed by Xu et al. (2014).

The second most crucial motivation for young consumers was found to be the thrill of treasure hunting. During the interviews, all participants emphasised the excitement and other positive emotions associated with the shopping experience, particularly when they found unexpected items at good prices. This corresponds with Guiot and Roux's (2010) view on the value of treasure hunting in second-hand fashion shopping. However, this treasure-hunting process is closely tied to hedonic value, which often plays a key role in facilitating impulsive and indulgent consumption (Liu et al., 2024; Kim-Vick and Yu, 2022). This has also been confirmed by the research findings.

Furthermore, another key motivation lies in the uniqueness and fashionability of secondhand fashion. Participants frequently stressed that secondhand clothing enables them to develop their personal style and express their individuality, while also setting them apart from mainstream aesthetics and mass-produced fast fashion. This aligns with the viewpoint proposed by Cervellon et al. (2012) and Ferraro et al. (2016), that uniqueness and fashionability are the key factors driving secondhand fashion consumption.

Notably, although there is an increasing environmental awareness and intention to be sustainable among the general public, its impact on consumers' motivation to buy secondhand is still considerably lower than the previous factors. This also confirms the previous research, that although consumers may claim to have environmental awareness, this awareness rarely becomes the main driving force for actual purchasing behaviour (Joy et al., 2012). During the interviews, it was discovered that sustainability is more often presented as a secondary additional benefit or a rationalisation for excessive purchases, rather than the main motivation.

In addition, Social media and influencers also impact consumer motivation to some extent, although not as greatly as the previously mentioned factors. This could be due to the uniqueness of secondhand items, which is seen as the main driving force for young consumers. So relatively, influencer recommendations were mainly used as a reference point for shopping rather than as something to follow closely. This finding shows divergence from existing studies by Koning et al. (2024) that consumption is largely influenced by constantly changing trends on social media (Koning et al. 2024). However, community belongingness on social media were found to play an important role in this regard. Communication and interaction with other community members was seen as an important motivator for young consumers. Therefore, It could be argued that social media influencers are less effective at influencing secondhand fashion purchasing motivation, but the social value offered by social media, such as a sense of community and peer approval, is highly valued by consumers.

Finally, participants also mentioned platform-driven motivations, particularly the convenience of P2P platforms, reselling opportunities, and gamification features. The findings showed that, while these features of P2P platforms enhanced consumer engagement, they also facilitated excessive consumption through hedonic motivation.

5.1.2 Perceived value and its impact on impulsive behaviour

A key finding of the research was the complex nature of online secondhand fashion, which highlighted the crucial role of perceived value in secondhand fashion consumption. Studies

suggested that consumer motivations are closely associated with perceived value (Aycock et al., 2023). Based on the framework suggested by Sheth et al. (1991), functional value, emotional value, fashion value, environmental and sustainable value, and social value have been identified from the research findings.

As one of the most salient and frequently mentioned values, functional value has played a key role in influencing consumer's secondhand buying decision. The findings highlighted the distinctive combination of good quality and low prices that often associate with secondhand items, an aspect that was highly valued by the participants. Affordability, low prices and the perception of value for money were also repeatedly emphasised by participants as part of the economic value they gained from secondhand purchases. Compared to other values such as sustainability and social values, functional value, especially economic value, offers consumers an immediate and tangible benefit, thereby becoming a particularly compelling factor in enhancing consumers' buying intention. These findings are in line with existing studies by Evans et al. (2022) and Guiot & Roux (2010).

As part of the economic motivations, Guiot and Roux (2010) suggested the feeling of gratification that comes with a good deal. In fact, such emotional value has been repeatedly highlighted by participants regarding their whole buying process. Firstly, the wide range of products offered on P2P secondhand platforms has been seen as a pleasure for consumers to browse through. The treasure-hunting approach, with the occasional unexpected finds, has infused the process with excitement and satisfaction. Moreover, the 'race-like' experience involved in bidding and bargaining intensifies the buying process and provides stimulation and excitement. After purchasing a premium quality item with a good price, the participants would be left with long-term enjoyment and a sense of achievement. According to existing studies, such a process is usually associated with hedonic value (Guiot and Roux, 2010; Aycock, 2021). However, while it has a significant impact on the purchasing intention of young consumers, it also creates a heightened emotional state that drives impulsive behaviour. As a result, participants were found with behaviours such as constantly browsing, impulsive buying, and stockpiling items. This also confirms the attitude-behavior gap that has always existed in sustainable consumption (McNeill and Moore, 2015; Kaur et al., 2023).

Furthermore, as uniqueness and fashionability has been found to be one of the most prominent motivational factors among the participants, fashion value, which was also associated with epistemic value based on the definition provided by Sheth et al. (1991), has also been highlighted. Fashionability and uniqueness were found to be the most valuable in this regard, because they enabled consumers to enhance their personal identity and express their individuality. This also confirmed what existing studies have pointed out that the unique

characteristics are increasingly becoming the core value of secondhand fashion (Ferraro et al., 2016). Thus, it could be argued that fashion value is deeply tied to personal and social value because it helps construct personal identity for young consumers. However, the complexity of social values both facilitates and complicates sustainable consumption in return.

Apart from the fashion value, the findings also revealed a link between personal value and sustainable value. Mano and Elliott (1997) suggested that buying secondhand fashion provides consumers a means of opposing the traditional commercial system and regaining consumer autonomy. However, this point was not identified in the research findings. Alternatively, participants believed that secondhand fashion was a socially approved, sustainable and environmentally friendly option that benefits society. By taking part in this practice, they gained a positive sense of responsibility and social value. This finding is consistent with current research suggesting that secondhand consumption enables consumers to establish a moral identity in this process (Joy et al., 2012). Therefore, it can be stated that environmentally and socially conscious consumers may find added value in buying secondhand fashion online, as their choices adhere to sustainable and ethical principles.

5.1.3 Self-licensing and justification

This study also examined the impact of cognitive dissonance reduction, self-licensing and justification mechanisms of the young consumers. Research findings revealed that impulsive and indulgent consumption is frequently associated with their consumption patterns. This is in line with the findings of Parguel et al. (2017) that consumer behaviour in secondhand fashion purchasing often mirrors the impulsive and indulgent consumption patterns observed in fast fashion practices.

However, as the purchasing intention was usually, or at least partly, associated with sustainability, and as consumers tend to avoid unnecessary spending, these hedonic consumption practices conflicted with their values and beliefs. This phenomenon could be explained by cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957), which was discussed in Chapter 2. For these young consumers, the conflict therefore revolves around acknowledging the implications of excessive consumption and justifying the decision to make further secondhand purchases. To overcome this conflict, consumers seek justification to rationalise or reframe their problematic behaviour into more socially or morally acceptable actions. These behaviours can be understood with the self-licensing theory (Khan & Dhar, 2006). Through the research findings, a range of self-justifications for hedonic consumption behaviour have been identified. They have been categorised by the researcher as internalised and externalised justifications.

In terms of internalised justifications, perceived future use, self pleasing and fear of missing out were found to be the most commonly adopted justifications by the participants. Fundamentally, each justification enables consumers to reconcile the tension between their sustainability awareness and their impulse to buy. For example, by presenting the purchase of an item that is not immediately needed as a form of forward thinking rather than being impulsive, consumers perceive it as a rational and sensible decision. Also, by linking the purchase to individuals' emotional needs, dissonance is alleviated through the elevation of psychological gratification such as self caring, making the purchase seem like a true necessity. Similarly, by emphasising the limited buying opportunity of a secondhand item, the participants were able to normalise their indulgent behaviour, considering it a rational decision rather than a result of lack of self-control.

Existing studies on self-licensing and justification on digital secondhand platforms mainly focus on the sustainability related rationalisations of consumers (Parguel et al., 2017). This is in line with one of the key findings of this study, under the category of externalised justifications. The sustainable and environmental attributes, combined with attractive low prices of secondhand fashion, are often used by consumers to justify their hedonic purchasing behaviour. These are consistent with previous research showing that consumers view sustainable behaviour as a form of ethical credit (Parguel et al., 2017), which then excuses impulsive consumption behaviour. The economic motivation itself was also turned into a strong reasoning in justifying such behaviour in this regard.

Additionally, this study expanded upon existing literature by revealing how the attributes of digital secondhand fashion platforms were used by consumers as an externalised justification for their consumption behaviour. Firstly, the resale opportunities on digital secondhand fashion platforms have offered consumers new flexibility, as they no longer see their purchases as final since items can be resold through these platforms later. While this has been seen as a psychological safety net for consumers, it has also been used as a strong justification for problematic consumption behaviour.

Moreover, participants often attributed their indulgent consumption to the various platform-driven temptations designed to encourage it, such as notification alerts, personalised recommendations and algorithmic suggestions. This externalised justification has been seen as a way of shifting accountability, convincing consumers that they were pushed into buying instead of making a conscious decision. As the P2P platform continuously encourages consumers to make purchases or sales on the platform to achieve circular fashion, it makes consumers believe that as long as they engage in transactional behaviour on the platform, they have achieved the goal of circular economy. While previous studies have typically

regarded self-licensing as an individual psychological process (Mazar & Zhong, 2010), this research revealed that the digital secondhand fashion platforms subtly transformed self-licensing and justification into the norm, allowing consumers to engage in hedonistic consumption within an ostensibly sustainable framework.

5.2 Conclusion

This study looked at the motivations and perceived values of buying secondhand fashion from digital P2P platforms among young UK consumers (aged 18–34). With a particular focus on impulsive and indulgent consumption, it also examined how consumers rationalise their behaviour through self-licensing and justification. In order to answer the research questions and address the aims and objectives set out at the beginning of this study, both primary and secondary research has been conducted.

Firstly, a review of secondhand fashion and the prevalence of digital secondhand fashion platforms have been provided to set the context for the research to be conducted. Key literature regarding the existing key concepts and frameworks of the motivations and perceived values of consumers in secondhand fashion was then discussed, providing a basis of understanding the current views held by academics. Impulsive and indulgent consumption behaviour, as well as the attitude-behaviour gaps in fashion consumption were highlighted. It then pointed out the need to explore the literature on cognitive dissonance, self-licensing and justification in order to gain insight into prevailing academic perspectives. Holistically, this literature review was able to address the first objective of this study, while forming the basis of the research design and subsequent research.

In order to further address the other three research objectives, which concern the key motivations, perceived value and the self-justification mechanism of young consumers in secondhand fashion consumption, eight semi-structured interviews have been conducted. The research design was closely connected to the main research questions. The findings from the interviews were then analysed and discussed. The data provided insights into the drivers and perceived values of young consumers, as well as the correlations between these factors. The attitude-behaviour gap and the unsustainable consumption patterns often associated with it was also confirmed, highlighting the strong necessity for self-justifying behaviour.

5.2.1 Originality and Contribution

This study integrated the purchase motivations, perceived values, and self-licensing and justification behaviours of consumers in the context of digitalised secondhand fashion

consumption. It provided original insights and academic contributions to the fashion industry based on existing literature and research findings. Firstly, this study added to the current understanding of the motivations and perceived values of secondhand fashion consumption on P2P platforms. Existing research mainly focuses on offline secondhand purchasing scenarios or treats factors such as economy, sustainability, and uniqueness as separate research directions (Guiot and Roux, 2010; Ferraro et al., 2016). However, this study proposed more relevant factors and revealed the correlations between functional, social, epistemic, conditional, and emotional values in the context of digital secondhand fashion platforms and secondhand shopping behaviour.

Also, this study extended the understanding and details of the existing studies of self-licensing and justification, particularly in the context of secondhand fashion consumption. An array of reasonings, either internalised and externalised, have been examined. It provided a holistic review of the psychological mechanisms behind the consumer's hedonic consumption behaviour. Previous studies have mainly focused on sustainability-oriented justifications, while other areas, particularly those related to how motivations and perceived values correlate with self-justifications, have been understudied. This study has provided new insights and perspectives into these areas, delving into previously underexplored psychological mechanisms and putting forward more relevant factors related to the self-licensing and justification of consumers.

5.2.3 Research limitation

Although this study has endeavoured to fill the gaps in the existing research fields, some limitations remain. Firstly, the findings and conclusions of this study were drawn based solely on the interview contents from the eight participants, in the age group of 18-34. Although it provided rich perspectives, it limited the universality of the research conclusions for the general UK young consumers. It is suggested that, for future research, expanding the sample size and increasing its diversity would greatly enhance the universality of the research results for current young UK consumers.

Also, as the research results relied on semi-structured interviews, it carried a certain risk of social expectation bias. Participants may exaggerate their sustainable awareness and behaviours, or their actual consumption behaviours may differ from what they expressed during the interview. For future research, the observation period can be extended to track participants' actual behaviours and compare them with their statements, thereby obtaining more critical and accurate research results.

Thirdly, due to the time constraint of the dissertation, only qualitative research was adopted to conduct in this study. It has made this study more focused on depth rather than breadth, resulting in the findings being more focused on personal subjective opinions and experiences rather than the more standardised statistics usually gained from quantitative research results. In future research, if a mixed-method research design is adopted, the research results of this article can be verified and the research scope expanded, thereby making the data results more universal and persuasive. Finally, due to the completion effectiveness of the dissertation, the cross-sectional time frame only captured the attitudes and behaviours of consumers within a specific period. Given the rapid update and iteration of the fashion industry, the research results may change after the effectiveness ends.

5.2.4 Further Research Areas

For future research, it is suggested that the purchasing behaviour of consumers on digital secondhand fashion platforms be measured by more quantified data, in order to determine whether it has led to a significant reduction in the overall consumption of clothing or instead caused an increase in total consumption. This will allow for a more direct assessment of its environmental impact. Therefore, a clearer understanding can be gained as to whether secondhand fashion truly supports the sustainable development goals, or if it has become a way to increase the already heavy burden on the fashion industry by leveraging its sustainable features.

Also, the research subject group can be expanded. For example, examining the differences in motivation, perceived value, self-licensing and justification among consumers of different age groups, such as those more sophisticated consumer group. This will reveal the attitudes and actual behaviours of consumers from different backgrounds towards sustainability and consumption behaviour.

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Appendix

Appendix A. Ethics Approve Form

Educational Ethics Approval Form

IMPORTANT: UAL staff, please refer to the Educational Ethics Code of Practice and associated flowchart which indicates if the use of this form is required.

Declaration to be completed by the student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have read the Educational Ethics Code of Practice • I have accessed the Ethics of Making https://ethics.arts.ac.uk website and applied the learning to my work • I have reviewed the ethics resources on Academic Support Online to help me consider the ethical parameters of the Code of Practice • I have discussed my work with my unit leader <p>Please use these resources to inform your answers to questions 1 to 7 in the boxes below.</p>	Please tick: Yes ✓ Yes ✓ Yes ✓ Yes ✓
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Applicant name:	Haiting Situ
Course Title:	Fashion Marketing and Sustainability
Unit Title:	Masters Project

If you are a tutor applying on behalf of a student or student group, please give your name here:	
Tutor name:	Shuyu Lin

1. The code of practice sets out four key areas for ethical consideration. Which one or more of these ethical principles does this application for ethical consideration relate to?	
a. An ethics of care is supported by the Educational Ethics subcommittee as a positive ethic that is the University's responsibility to foster in relation to students, educational content, educational process including material resources, and in students' relations with anyone who participates or interacts with their work.	✓Yes / No

<p>b. The principle of social justice obliges the student to identify the risks and benefits of participation in creative or investigative practice. Any risks to persons participating should be weighed against any potential benefits – to the participants or the student, and also the wider benefits to society of the knowledge gained. As with the principle of respect for persons, there is a need to promote equality and racial justice and protect vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>✓Yes / No</p>
<p>c. Respect for persons recognises the capacity and rights of all individuals to make their own choices and decisions. It refers to the autonomy and rights to self-determination of all human beings, acknowledges their equality, dignity, freedom and rights. An important component of this principle is the need to provide special protection to vulnerable persons, both students and in student activity involving others.</p>	<p>✓Yes / No</p>
<p>d. Beneficence is the principle of acting for the good and wellbeing of others. It requires students to serve the interests of others. In so doing, students comply with the principle of neither doing, nor permitting, any foreseeable harm as a consequence of creative or investigative practice. This is the principle of non-maleficence, it is the principle of doing no harm.</p> <p>The specific duties of promoting equality and good relations are assumed under these principles, as defined by the Equality Act 2010.</p>	<p>✓Yes / No</p>

2. Please provide a 100-word summary of the ethical issues that relate to the work /enquiry that is planned. Please relate it directly to one or more areas of the code and resources above.

This project mainly concerns the principles of social justice, respect for persons, and beneficence. As the research requires participants to reflect on their secondhand fashion consumption, it is crucial to respect their autonomy and ensure they participate voluntarily by providing informed consent and the right to withdraw. Confidentiality and data protection is also an essential principle of respect for persons. Any potential risks, such as concerns about sharing sensitive information, will be carefully managed. Following the principle of beneficence, the research will be conducted in such a way that no foreseeable harm will be caused.

Does your work or enquiry require you to work with participants, or reuse personal data that has been obtained elsewhere? If people are participating directly, please ensure they fill in the participant information and consent template (Ask your Course Leader to provide these). If not, go to Questions 6 to 9.

3. Who will the participants be? Please tick the boxes as appropriate.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Students at the University
-------------------------------------	----------------------------

	Staff at the University
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other. Please specify: young people aged between 18-34 live in the UK

4. What will participants be asked to do and/or how will their personal information be used? Explain in terms appropriate to a layperson.

Participants will be asked to take part in a one-to-one interview that will last about 30 to 45 minutes. During the interview, they will be asked to talk about their experiences and views related to buying second-hand fashion on P2P platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop.

5. What potential risks to the interests of participants do you foresee and what steps will you take to minimise those risks?

A participant's interests include their physical and psychological well-being, their commercial interests e.g. IP; and their rights of privacy and reputation. Please note that compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR is a legal obligation.

There are no significant risks or disadvantages associated with participating in this study. However, if the participants feel uncomfortable answering any question, they are free to skip it. And they may withdraw at any time without providing an explanation. All the information will be collected confidentially.

6. Does your project involve children or minors (anyone under the age of 18) or vulnerable adults (e.g. a person with a learning disability)?


No. Go to Question 6.

Yes. Please be aware that a project involving children or vulnerable adults is likely to require you to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Please discuss this with your unit or course leader. Please be aware that a DBS check normally takes 4 weeks but can take longer.

7. What potential risks do you foresee to yourself and what steps will you take to minimise those risks? E.g. does your work raise issues of personal safety, impact on vulnerabilities for you (or anyone with whom you are collaborating), especially if taking place outside working hours or off University premises?

Although the research poses minimal risk, I will take steps to ensure my personal safety, especially when conducting interviews outside of university premises. In-person interviews will take place in safe public locations. Online interviews will be held via secure platforms in private. All data will be stored securely, and I will adhere to the university's ethical guidelines to ensure the research process is safe and respectful throughout.

8. Are there other areas of ethical concern? How do you plan to manage these ethical considerations?
N/A

9. I confirm my responsibility to deliver the project in accordance with the Code of Practice on Educational Ethics of the University of the Arts London (the University)	
<p>If I am using personal data: I will only store it on UAL-managed systems and will use the Participant Information and Consent Template to collect personal data. I will ensure I follow the data protection principles at all times.</p>	
Print name of applicant:	Haiting Situ
Signature of applicant:	
Date:	27/08/2025

10. I support this project and have reviewed it with the applicant.	
Print name of Tutor:	Dr Shuyu Lin
Signature of Tutor:	
Date:	28/08/2025

Please submit this form and the relevant attachments to your Unit Leader/Course Leader/Programme Director.

Appendix B. Interview Consent Form

B.1 Participant 1 Interview Consent Form

ual:

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Project Title: ***Sustainable Intentions or a New Consumerism? How Perceived Value and Self-Justification Shape Secondhand Fashion Consumption Among Young Consumers in the UK***

Student Lead: Haiting Situ

Email address: h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

Phone number: +44 7713969483

Dear [REDACTED],

You are invited to participate in a research project for my postgraduate thesis. The project aims to examine the purchasing behaviour of young consumers (aged 18–34) on peer-to-peer (P2P) second-hand fashion platforms in the UK. The study will focus on the psychological and behavioural mechanisms associated with second-hand fashion consumption on these platforms, namely motivation, perceived value and self-justification. The study will assess whether using such platforms fosters sustainable consumption in line with circular fashion practices, or whether it leads to excessive consumption in the name of sustainability.

Specifically, the research objectives are:

1. To explore the key motivations for young consumers in purchasing secondhand fashion on P2P platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop.
2. To provide insights on how different drivers influence their frequency and repetitive use behaviour of secondhand fashion consumption on these platforms.
3. To examine the perceived value (e.g. economic, environmental, social, hedonic) that consumers associate with secondhand fashion purchases through these platforms.
4. To investigate how consumers justify their purchasing behaviour, particularly in relation to sustainability and circular fashion narratives.

Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate.

ual:

Why have you been approached?

You have been invited to participate in this research study because you are between the ages of 18 and 34, currently live in the UK, and have experience using P2P secondhand fashion platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop. Your knowledge and experience as a user of these platforms are valuable to this research study.

If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?

You will be asked to take part in a one-on-one semi-structured interview lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The interview can be conducted online (via Zoom, Teams, or other suitable platforms) or in person. You will be asked questions about your second-hand fashion shopping habits, your motivations and attitudes towards second-hand fashion consumption, particularly on digital P2P platforms.

What are the possible risks or disadvantages?

There are no significant risks or disadvantages associated with participating in this study. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any question, you are free to skip it. You may withdraw at any time without providing an explanation.

What are the benefits associated with participation?

By participating, you will help us to gain a better understanding of consumer behaviour in the second-hand fashion market. It could also provide valuable insights for future sustainability strategies and the design of more consumer-friendly platforms. You will also have the opportunity to reflect on your own purchasing patterns and share your opinions in a safe, respectful setting.

What will happen to the information I provide?

All shared information will be treated with strict confidentiality. The interview will be audio-recorded with your consent and transcribed for analysis. Your identity will be kept anonymous, all data will be stored securely and will only be accessible to the researcher and academic supervisor. All of your information will be used solely for academic purposes and destroyed in accordance with data protection regulations upon completion of the project.

What are my rights as a participant?

- The right to withdraw from participation at any time

ual:

- The right to request that any recording cease
- The right to have any data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant.
- The right to be de-identified in any photographs intended for public publication, before the point of publication
- The right to have any questions answered at any time.

Whom should I contact if I have any questions or want to withdraw my consent?

Haïting Situ - h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

PRIVACY NOTICE

Your personal data will be processed by UAL on its managed systems for research purposes with your explicit consent.

Your personal data will be anonymised and deleted on your request or after the project end date.


You can find more information about UAL and your privacy rights at www.arts.ac.uk/privacy-information.

CONSENT TEMPLATE

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet
2. I agree to participate in the research project as described
3. I agree to the items checked below:

- to be interviewed
- that my voice will be audio recorded
- to take part in a focus group
- that my photo / a film of me will be taken
- to be observed and for field notes to be taken

ual:


 that information obtained may be published in an anonymised form.

4. I acknowledge that:

- (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
- (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
- (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
- (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

Participant's Consent

'I agree to the above as indicated and give my explicit consent under GDPR Art.6(1)(a) and Art.9(2)(a) for my personal data to be processed by UAL as indicated on this form, including any special category data I may choose to provide'

Participant:  Date: 17.08.2025
(Signature)

Participants should be given a copy of this after it has been signed.

B.2 Participant 2 Interview Consent Form

ual:

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Project Title: ***Sustainable Intentions or a New Consumerism? How Perceived Value and Self-Justification Shape Secondhand Fashion Consumption Among Young Consumers in the UK***

Student Lead: Haiting Situ

Email address: h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

Phone number: +44 7713969483

Dear [REDACTED],

You are invited to participate in a research project for my postgraduate thesis. The project aims to examine the purchasing behaviour of young consumers (aged 18–34) on peer-to-peer (P2P) second-hand fashion platforms in the UK. The study will focus on the psychological and behavioural mechanisms associated with second-hand fashion consumption on these platforms, namely motivation, perceived value and self-justification. The study will assess whether using such platforms fosters sustainable consumption in line with circular fashion practices, or whether it leads to excessive consumption in the name of sustainability.

Specifically, the research objectives are:

1. To explore the key motivations for young consumers in purchasing secondhand fashion on P2P platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop.
2. To provide insights on how different drivers influence their frequency and repetitive use behaviour of secondhand fashion consumption on these platforms.
3. To examine the perceived value (e.g. economic, environmental, social, hedonic) that consumers associate with secondhand fashion purchases through these platforms.
4. To investigate how consumers justify their purchasing behaviour, particularly in relation to sustainability and circular fashion narratives.

Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate.

ual:

Why have you been approached?

You have been invited to participate in this research study because you are between the ages of 18 and 34, currently live in the UK, and have experience using P2P secondhand fashion platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop. Your knowledge and experience as a user of these platforms are valuable to this research study.

If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?

You will be asked to take part in a one-on-one semi-structured interview lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The interview can be conducted online (via Zoom, Teams, or other suitable platforms) or in person. You will be asked questions about your second-hand fashion shopping habits, your motivations and attitudes towards second-hand fashion consumption, particularly on digital P2P platforms.

What are the possible risks or disadvantages?

There are no significant risks or disadvantages associated with participating in this study. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any question, you are free to skip it. You may withdraw at any time without providing an explanation.

What are the benefits associated with participation?

By participating, you will help us to gain a better understanding of consumer behaviour in the second-hand fashion market. It could also provide valuable insights for future sustainability strategies and the design of more consumer-friendly platforms. You will also have the opportunity to reflect on your own purchasing patterns and share your opinions in a safe, respectful setting.

What will happen to the information I provide?

All shared information will be treated with strict confidentiality. The interview will be audio-recorded with your consent and transcribed for analysis. Your identity will be kept anonymous, all data will be stored securely and will only be accessible to the researcher and academic supervisor. All of your information will be used solely for academic purposes and destroyed in accordance with data protection regulations upon completion of the project.

What are my rights as a participant?

- The right to withdraw from participation at any time

ual:

- The right to request that any recording cease
- The right to have any data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant.
- The right to be de-identified in any photographs intended for public publication, before the point of publication
- The right to have any questions answered at any time.

Whom should I contact if I have any questions or want to withdraw my consent?

Haïting Situ - h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

PRIVACY NOTICE

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Your personal data will be anonymised and deleted on your request or after the project end date.

You can find more information about UAL and your privacy rights at www.arts.ac.uk/privacy-information.

CONSENT TEMPLATE

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet

2. I agree to participate in the research project as described

3. I agree to the items checked below:

- to be interviewed
- that my voice will be audio recorded
- to take part in a focus group
- that my photo / a film of me will be taken
- to be observed and for field notes to be taken

ual:

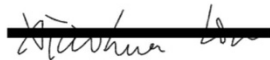
● that information obtained may be published in an anonymised form.

4. I acknowledge that:

- (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
- (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
- (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
- (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

Participant's Consent

'I agree to the above as indicated and give my explicit consent under GDPR Art.6(1)(a) and Art.9(2)(a) for my personal data to be processed by UAL as indicated on this form, including any special category data I may choose to provide'



Participant: _____ Date: 18.08.2025
(Signature)

Participants should be given a copy of this after it has been signed.

B.3 Participant 3 Interview Consent Form

ual:

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Project Title: ***Sustainable Intentions or a New Consumerism? How Perceived Value and Self-Justification Shape Secondhand Fashion Consumption Among Young Consumers in the UK***

Student Lead: Haiting Situ

Email address: h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

Phone number: +44 7713969483

Dear [REDACTED],

You are invited to participate in a research project for my postgraduate thesis. The project aims to examine the purchasing behaviour of young consumers (aged 18–34) on peer-to-peer (P2P) second-hand fashion platforms in the UK. The study will focus on the psychological and behavioural mechanisms associated with second-hand fashion consumption on these platforms, namely motivation, perceived value and self-justification. The study will assess whether using such platforms fosters sustainable consumption in line with circular fashion practices, or whether it leads to excessive consumption in the name of sustainability.

Specifically, the research objectives are:

1. To explore the key motivations for young consumers in purchasing secondhand fashion on P2P platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop.
2. To provide insights on how different drivers influence their frequency and repetitive use behaviour of secondhand fashion consumption on these platforms.
3. To examine the perceived value (e.g. economic, environmental, social, hedonic) that consumers associate with secondhand fashion purchases through these platforms.
4. To investigate how consumers justify their purchasing behaviour, particularly in relation to sustainability and circular fashion narratives.

Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate.

ual:

Why have you been approached?

You have been invited to participate in this research study because you are between the ages of 18 and 34, currently live in the UK, and have experience using P2P secondhand fashion platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop. Your knowledge and experience as a user of these platforms are valuable to this research study.

If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?

You will be asked to take part in a one-on-one semi-structured interview lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The interview can be conducted online (via Zoom, Teams, or other suitable platforms) or in person. You will be asked questions about your second-hand fashion shopping habits, your motivations and attitudes towards second-hand fashion consumption, particularly on digital P2P platforms.

What are the possible risks or disadvantages?

There are no significant risks or disadvantages associated with participating in this study. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any question, you are free to skip it. You may withdraw at any time without providing an explanation.

What are the benefits associated with participation?

By participating, you will help us to gain a better understanding of consumer behaviour in the second-hand fashion market. It could also provide valuable insights for future sustainability strategies and the design of more consumer-friendly platforms. You will also have the opportunity to reflect on your own purchasing patterns and share your opinions in a safe, respectful setting.

What will happen to the information I provide?

All shared information will be treated with strict confidentiality. The interview will be audio-recorded with your consent and transcribed for analysis. Your identity will be kept anonymous, all data will be stored securely and will only be accessible to the researcher and academic supervisor. All of your information will be used solely for academic purposes and destroyed in accordance with data protection regulations upon completion of the project.

What are my rights as a participant?

- The right to withdraw from participation at any time

ual:

- The right to request that any recording cease
- The right to have any data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant.
- The right to be de-identified in any photographs intended for public publication, before the point of publication
- The right to have any questions answered at any time.

Whom should I contact if I have any questions or want to withdraw my consent?

Haïting Situ - h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

PRIVACY NOTICE

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Your personal data will be anonymised and deleted on your request or after the project end date.

You can find more information about UAL and your privacy rights at www.arts.ac.uk/privacy-information.

CONSENT TEMPLATE

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet
2. I agree to participate in the research project as described
3. I agree to the items checked below:

- to be interviewed
- that my voice will be audio recorded
- to take part in a focus group
- that my photo / a film of me will be taken
- to be observed and for field notes to be taken

ual:

that information obtained may be published in an anonymised form.

4. I acknowledge that:

- (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
- (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
- (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
- (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

Participant's Consent

'I agree to the above as indicated and give my explicit consent under GDPR Art.6(1)(a) and Art.9(2)(a) for my personal data to be processed by UAL as indicated on this form, including any special category data I may choose to provide'

Participant: _____ Date: 18/08/2025
(Signature)

Participants should be given a copy of this after it has been signed.

B.4 Participant 4 Interview Consent Form

ual:

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Project Title: ***Sustainable Intentions or a New Consumerism? How Perceived Value and Self-Justification Shape Secondhand Fashion Consumption Among Young Consumers in the UK***

Student Lead: Haiting Situ

Email address: h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

Phone number: +44 7713969483

Dear [REDACTED],

You are invited to participate in a research project for my postgraduate thesis. The project aims to examine the purchasing behaviour of young consumers (aged 18–34) on peer-to-peer (P2P) second-hand fashion platforms in the UK. The study will focus on the psychological and behavioural mechanisms associated with second-hand fashion consumption on these platforms, namely motivation, perceived value and self-justification. The study will assess whether using such platforms fosters sustainable consumption in line with circular fashion practices, or whether it leads to excessive consumption in the name of sustainability.

Specifically, the research objectives are:

1. To explore the key motivations for young consumers in purchasing secondhand fashion on P2P platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop.
2. To provide insights on how different drivers influence their frequency and repetitive use behaviour of secondhand fashion consumption on these platforms.
3. To examine the perceived value (e.g. economic, environmental, social, hedonic) that consumers associate with secondhand fashion purchases through these platforms.
4. To investigate how consumers justify their purchasing behaviour, particularly in relation to sustainability and circular fashion narratives.

Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate.

ual:

Why have you been approached?

You have been invited to participate in this research study because you are between the ages of 18 and 34, currently live in the UK, and have experience using P2P secondhand fashion platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop. Your knowledge and experience as a user of these platforms are valuable to this research study.

If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?

You will be asked to take part in a one-on-one semi-structured interview lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The interview can be conducted online (via Zoom, Teams, or other suitable platforms) or in person. You will be asked questions about your second-hand fashion shopping habits, your motivations and attitudes towards second-hand fashion consumption, particularly on digital P2P platforms.

What are the possible risks or disadvantages?

There are no significant risks or disadvantages associated with participating in this study. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any question, you are free to skip it. You may withdraw at any time without providing an explanation.

What are the benefits associated with participation?

By participating, you will help us to gain a better understanding of consumer behaviour in the second-hand fashion market. It could also provide valuable insights for future sustainability strategies and the design of more consumer-friendly platforms. You will also have the opportunity to reflect on your own purchasing patterns and share your opinions in a safe, respectful setting.

What will happen to the information I provide?

All shared information will be treated with strict confidentiality. The interview will be audio-recorded with your consent and transcribed for analysis. Your identity will be kept anonymous, all data will be stored securely and will only be accessible to the researcher and academic supervisor. All of your information will be used solely for academic purposes and destroyed in accordance with data protection regulations upon completion of the project.

What are my rights as a participant?

- The right to withdraw from participation at any time

ual:

- The right to request that any recording cease
- The right to have any data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant.
- The right to be de-identified in any photographs intended for public publication, before the point of publication
- The right to have any questions answered at any time.

Whom should I contact if I have any questions or want to withdraw my consent?

Haiting Situ - h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

PRIVACY NOTICE

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Your personal data will be anonymised and deleted on your request or after the project end date.

You can find more information about UAL and your privacy rights at www.arts.ac.uk/privacy-information.

CONSENT TEMPLATE

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet

Yes

2. I agree to participate in the research project as described

Yes

3. I agree to the items checked below:

Yes

to be interviewed

that my voice will be audio recorded

to take part in a focus group

that my photo / a film of me will be taken

to be observed and for field notes to be taken

ual:

📄 that information obtained may be published in an anonymised form.

4. I acknowledge that:

- (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
- (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
- (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
- (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

Participant's Consent

'I agree to the above as indicated and give my explicit consent under GDPR Art.6(1)(a) and Art.9(2)(a) for my personal data to be processed by UAL as indicated on this form, including any special category data I may choose to provide'

Participant: _____ Date: 19/08/25
(Signature)

Participants should be given a copy of this after it has been signed.

B.5 Participant 5 Interview Consent Form

ual:

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Project Title: ***Sustainable Intentions or a New Consumerism? How Perceived Value and Self-Justification Shape Secondhand Fashion Consumption Among Young Consumers in the UK***

Student Lead: Haiting Situ

Email address: h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

Phone number: +44 7713969483

Dear [REDACTED],

You are invited to participate in a research project for my postgraduate thesis. The project aims to examine the purchasing behaviour of young consumers (aged 18–34) on peer-to-peer (P2P) second-hand fashion platforms in the UK. The study will focus on the psychological and behavioural mechanisms associated with second-hand fashion consumption on these platforms, namely motivation, perceived value and self-justification. The study will assess whether using such platforms fosters sustainable consumption in line with circular fashion practices, or whether it leads to excessive consumption in the name of sustainability.

Specifically, the research objectives are:

1. To explore the key motivations for young consumers in purchasing secondhand fashion on P2P platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop.
2. To provide insights on how different drivers influence their frequency and repetitive use behaviour of secondhand fashion consumption on these platforms.
3. To examine the perceived value (e.g. economic, environmental, social, hedonic) that consumers associate with secondhand fashion purchases through these platforms.
4. To investigate how consumers justify their purchasing behaviour, particularly in relation to sustainability and circular fashion narratives.

Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate.

ual:

Why have you been approached?

You have been invited to participate in this research study because you are between the ages of 18 and 34, currently live in the UK, and have experience using P2P secondhand fashion platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop. Your knowledge and experience as a user of these platforms are valuable to this research study.

If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?

You will be asked to take part in a one-on-one semi-structured interview lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The interview can be conducted online (via Zoom, Teams, or other suitable platforms) or in person. You will be asked questions about your second-hand fashion shopping habits, your motivations and attitudes towards second-hand fashion consumption, particularly on digital P2P platforms.

What are the possible risks or disadvantages?

There are no significant risks or disadvantages associated with participating in this study. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any question, you are free to skip it. You may withdraw at any time without providing an explanation.

What are the benefits associated with participation?

By participating, you will help us to gain a better understanding of consumer behaviour in the second-hand fashion market. It could also provide valuable insights for future sustainability strategies and the design of more consumer-friendly platforms. You will also have the opportunity to reflect on your own purchasing patterns and share your opinions in a safe, respectful setting.

What will happen to the information I provide?

All shared information will be treated with strict confidentiality. The interview will be audio-recorded with your consent and transcribed for analysis. Your identity will be kept anonymous, all data will be stored securely and will only be accessible to the researcher and academic supervisor. All of your information will be used solely for academic purposes and destroyed in accordance with data protection regulations upon completion of the project.

What are my rights as a participant?

- The right to withdraw from participation at any time

ual:

- The right to request that any recording cease
- The right to have any data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant.
- The right to be de-identified in any photographs intended for public publication, before the point of publication
- The right to have any questions answered at any time.

Whom should I contact if I have any questions or want to withdraw my consent?

Haiting Situ - h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

PRIVACY NOTICE

Your personal data will be processed by UAL on its managed systems for research purposes with your explicit consent.

Your personal data will be anonymised and deleted on your request or after the project end date.

You can find more information about UAL and your privacy rights at www.arts.ac.uk/privacy-information.

CONSENT TEMPLATE

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet
2. I agree to participate in the research project as described
3. I agree to the items checked below:

- to be interviewed
- that my voice will be audio recorded
- to take part in a focus group
- that my photo / a film of me will be taken
- to be observed and for field notes to be taken

B.6 Participant 6 Interview Consent Form

ual:

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Project Title: ***Sustainable Intentions or a New Consumerism? How Perceived Value and Self-Justification Shape Secondhand Fashion Consumption Among Young Consumers in the UK***

Student Lead:

Email address:

Phone number:

Dear [REDACTED],

You are invited to participate in a research project for my postgraduate thesis. The project aims to examine the purchasing behaviour of young consumers (aged 18–34) on peer-to-peer (P2P) second-hand fashion platforms in the UK. The study will focus on the psychological and behavioural mechanisms associated with second-hand fashion consumption on these platforms, namely motivation, perceived value and self-justification. The study will assess whether using such platforms fosters sustainable consumption in line with circular fashion practices, or whether it leads to excessive consumption in the name of sustainability.

Specifically, the research objectives are:

1. To explore the key motivations for young consumers in purchasing secondhand fashion on P2P platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop.
2. To provide insights on how different drivers influence their frequency and repetitive use behaviour of secondhand fashion consumption on these platforms.
3. To examine the perceived value (e.g. economic, environmental, social, hedonic) that consumers associate with secondhand fashion purchases through these platforms.
4. To investigate how consumers justify their purchasing behaviour, particularly in relation to sustainability and circular fashion narratives.

Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate.

ual:

Why have you been approached?

You have been invited to participate in this research study because you are between the ages of 18 and 34, currently live in the UK, and have experience using P2P secondhand fashion platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop. Your knowledge and experience as a user of these platforms are valuable to this research study.

If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?

You will be asked to take part in a one-on-one semi-structured interview lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The interview can be conducted online (via Zoom, Teams, or other suitable platforms) or in person. You will be asked questions about your second-hand fashion shopping habits, your motivations and attitudes towards second-hand fashion consumption, particularly on digital P2P platforms.

What are the possible risks or disadvantages?

There are no significant risks or disadvantages associated with participating in this study. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any question, you are free to skip it. You may withdraw at any time without providing an explanation.

What are the benefits associated with participation?

By participating, you will help us to gain a better understanding of consumer behaviour in the second-hand fashion market. It could also provide valuable insights for future sustainability strategies and the design of more consumer-friendly platforms. You will also have the opportunity to reflect on your own purchasing patterns and share your opinions in a safe, respectful setting.

What will happen to the information I provide?

All shared information will be treated with strict confidentiality. The interview will be audio-recorded with your consent and transcribed for analysis. Your identity will be kept anonymous, all data will be stored securely and will only be accessible to the researcher and academic supervisor. All of your information will be used solely for academic purposes and destroyed in accordance with data protection regulations upon completion of the project.

What are my rights as a participant?

- The right to withdraw from participation at any time

ual:

- The right to request that any recording cease
- The right to have any data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant.
- The right to be de-identified in any photographs intended for public publication, before the point of publication
- The right to have any questions answered at any time.

Whom should I contact if I have any questions or want to withdraw my consent?

Haïting Situ - h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

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Your personal data will be anonymised and deleted on your request or after the project end date.

You can find more information about UAL and your privacy rights at www.arts.ac.uk/privacy-information.

CONSENT TEMPLATE

1. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the information sheet

2. I agree to participate in the research project as described

3. I agree to the items checked below:

to be interviewed

that my voice will be audio recorded

to take part in a focus group

that my photo / a film of me will be taken

to be observed and for field notes to be taken

ual:

that information obtained may be published in an anonymised form.

4. I acknowledge that:

- (a) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied (unless follow-up is needed for safety).
- (b) The project is for the purpose of research. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
- (c) The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
- (d) The security of the research data will be protected during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

Participant's Consent

'I agree to the above as indicated and give my explicit consent under GDPR Art.6(1)(a) and Art.9(2)(a) for my personal data to be processed by UAL as indicated on this form, including any special category data I may choose to provide'

Participant:



(Signature)

Date:

25-08-2025

X

Participants should be given a copy of this after it has been signed.

B.7 Participant 57 Interview Consent Form

ual:

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Project Title: ***Sustainable Intentions or a New Consumerism? How Perceived Value and Self-Justification Shape Secondhand Fashion Consumption Among Young Consumers in the UK***

Student Lead: Haiting Situ

Email address: h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

Phone number: +44 7713969483

Dear [REDACTED],

You are invited to participate in a research project for my postgraduate thesis. The project aims to examine the purchasing behaviour of young consumers (aged 18–34) on peer-to-peer (P2P) second-hand fashion platforms in the UK. The study will focus on the psychological and behavioural mechanisms associated with second-hand fashion consumption on these platforms, namely motivation, perceived value and self-justification. The study will assess whether using such platforms fosters sustainable consumption in line with circular fashion practices, or whether it leads to excessive consumption in the name of sustainability.

Specifically, the research objectives are:

1. To explore the key motivations for young consumers in purchasing secondhand fashion on P2P platforms such as Vinted, eBay and Depop.
2. To provide insights on how different drivers influence their frequency and repetitive use behaviour of secondhand fashion consumption on these platforms.
3. To examine the perceived value (e.g. economic, environmental, social, hedonic) that consumers associate with secondhand fashion purchases through these platforms.
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If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?

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What are the possible risks or disadvantages?

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What are the benefits associated with participation?

By participating, you will help us to gain a better understanding of consumer behaviour in the second-hand fashion market. It could also provide valuable insights for future sustainability strategies and the design of more consumer-friendly platforms. You will also have the opportunity to reflect on your own purchasing patterns and share your opinions in a safe, respectful setting.

What will happen to the information I provide?

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What are my rights as a participant?

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Haïting Situ - h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

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✘ that information obtained may be published in an anonymised form.

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Participant: ~~LEZNSUAN~~  Date: 22/08/25
(Signature)

Participants should be given a copy of this after it has been signed.

B.8 Participant 8 Interview Consent Form

ual:

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Project Title: ***Sustainable Intentions or a New Consumerism? How Perceived Value and Self-Justification Shape Secondhand Fashion Consumption Among Young Consumers in the UK***

Student Lead: Haiting Situ

Email address: h.situ0220241@arts.ac.uk

Phone number: +44 7713969483

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Appendix C. Interview Question & Transcript

C.1 Interview Question

Address motivation, perceived value, self-licensing and justification directly

Q1: Secondhand shopping and P2P platforms

1. How often do you buy fashion items? And how often do you purchase second-hand fashion items?
2. Have you used digital second-hand fashion platforms? And if so, which platform(s) do you use?

Q2: Motivations & Perceived value

1. What usually motivates you to purchase secondhand fashion items on those digital P2P platforms? (e.g. saving money, environmental friendly/sustainability, uniqueness, fashion trends, community culture etc.)
2. Could you share an example of a recent secondhand purchase and explain what factors influenced that decision?
3. How important are environmental or sustainability concerns in your decision to buy secondhand compared to other motivations such as price or style?
4. To what extent do trends or fashion inspiration (e.g., social media, influencers) motivate your secondhand purchases?
5. Do you see secondhand shopping as a way to express your personal style or identity? How?
6. How important is the 'thrill of the hunt' or the excitement of finding something unique in motivating your purchases?
7. Have your motivations for buying secondhand changed over time? If so, how and why?
8. When you think about buying secondhand, what kinds of value or benefits come to mind /how do you evaluate whether it's 'worth it'? (
9. Can you describe a time when buying secondhand gave you a positive feeling or a sense of satisfaction? What made it valuable to you?
10. Does buying secondhand make you feel part of a particular community or culture? Why or why not?
11. Do you feel there's a social or status value in telling others you shop secondhand?

Q3: Consumption behaviours

1. Do you buy secondhand mainly to replace buying new, or as an additional way to shop? Why?
2. Have you ever bought more items than you planned when browsing a secondhand platform? If so, what led to that?
3. Do you think that motivations such as enjoyment, pleasure or fashion trends lead you to value secondhand items more — and therefore buy them more often?
4. Do you believe these platforms primarily encourage reusing and recirculating clothing, or do they make it easier to buy more and impulsively?
5. Can you think of any examples where the platform's features (e.g. easy payment, discounts, trending items etc.) encouraged you to buy something you didn't plan to?
6. Have you noticed that using these platforms changes how often you buy clothes? In what way? Would you say you're consuming more, less, or about the same — comparing your purchasing pattern before starting using these platforms?
7. Do you think secondhand platforms are becoming too similar to fast fashion in terms of encouraging trends, novelty, and quick turnover of clothes?
8. On average, how long do you keep fashion items before selling or disposing of them?

Q4: Self licensing and justification

1. Would you have bought the same item at full price if it were new? If not, what made it more acceptable to you in a second-hand setting?
2. How often have you bought a second-hand item because you couldn't resist its uniqueness, price or rarity, even though you had no immediate use for it?
3. How do you usually justify a purchase that you didn't necessarily need?
4. Do you think being able to resell items on these platforms makes people feel justified in buying more, as they know they can always sell them later?
5. Have you ever felt it's 'okay' to buy more because the items are secondhand? Can you give an example?
6. Do you think that features of secondhand platforms (e.g., recommendations, discounts, notifications) influence how much or how often you buy?
7. Do you think that buying secondhand might be contributing to overconsumption, even though it feels sustainable?

Q5: Others

1. Do you think purchasing second-hand fashion items through these digital second-hand fashion platforms is a sustainable choice? Why? What changes would you like to see in these platforms to better support sustainable fashion?

2. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience of using second-hand fashion platforms?

C.2 Interview Transcript

C.2.1 Participants 1 Interview Transcript

Raw Data	1st Order Coding
<p>HS: Okay, Hi! I'm sharing my screen now. Can you see it?</p> <p>P1: Yes, yes, yes, I can.</p> <p>HS: Great. So, this interview is mainly about understanding consumers' attitudes and behaviors towards the secondhand fashion market in the UK. We want to explore their motivations, perceived value, and also how self-licensing and justification play a role in their shopping decisions.</p> <p>HS: Let's start with the first question: when you buy fashion items in general, how often do you shop? And do you often buy secondhand products?</p> <p>P1: When you say fashion items, you mean in general, not necessarily secondhand, right?</p> <p>HS: Yes, just in general first.</p> <p>P1: Okay. Well, I'd say I usually shop for fashion items maybe once or twice a week.</p> <p>HS: And out of those shopping trips, does secondhand take up a big portion?</p> <p>P1: Yeah, I'd say secondhand makes up quite a large proportion. Because if you want something trendy or unique, I usually consider buying secondhand first, because I feel like they're more special and one of a kind.</p> <p>HS: So when you buy these fashion items, do you usually consider them because they're rare and hard to get, or more because of the price?</p>	<p>One/twice a week</p> <p>High shopping frequency</p> <p>Secondhand preference</p> <p>Uniqueness, trendy</p> <p>One of a kind</p>

<p>P1: I will say both reasons, really. Sometimes it's because the item is no longer in production, so the ones circulating in the secondhand market are already "sold out" or "discontinued." That makes it really attractive to me because I personally love limited-edition items. To me, secondhand pieces often carry more meaning and history. On the other hand, sometimes the price is lower than the original retail price, which means I can get something unique and save money at the same time.</p>	<p>Prefer scarcity items meaning and history Emotional value Historical value Functional & hedonic value</p>
<p>HS: Got it. So, when you buy secondhand, do you usually shop online or offline? And if online, do you have any preference for secondhand platforms?</p>	
<p>P1: Both, really. I like offline shopping better because you can touch and see the items directly. With online purchases, sellers sometimes don't describe the condition clearly, so it's a bit risky. When there are physical secondhand stores, I prefer those. But offline shops don't always have enough stock, so I also use online platforms. I mostly use eBay and Depop.</p>	<p>Prefer offline</p>
<p>HS: Depop?</p>	
<p>P1: Yes, Depop. I actually prefer Depop over eBay, because eBay has a lot of listings that aren't truly secondhand — sometimes even fake items being sold as if they were. Depop has fakes too, but eBay is much worse in that sense.</p>	<p>Digital platform user Prefer Depop more</p>
<p>HS: Right, I got you, so when you're buying second-hand goods, you do tend to consider factors like the item's current condition and its usage rate, isn't it?</p>	
<p>P1: Definitely. I always check the item's usage and overall condition. I prefer things that are in near new or unused condition. Secondhand items usually come in different grades, and I prioritize "sample" or "good preserved" pieces first. After that, I will consider items rated 8/10 or 9/10 in condition, but I rarely buy heavily used items.</p>	<p>Condition consciousness Quality consideration</p>

<p>HS: So when you shop on these platforms, the main attraction for you is the uniqueness and limited-edition nature of the items, right?</p>	<p>Uniqueness</p>
<p>P1: Exactly. For me, the most attractive aspect of secondhand fashion is the uniqueness. Many pieces carry a sense of history that fast fashion items can't replicate. I love vintage items because they reflect craftsmanship and styles that no longer exist today. Buying them also feels meaningful and I get to continue the life of something instead of letting it go to waste.</p>	<p>Love vintage</p>
<p>HS: Besides uniqueness, does environmental or sustainability concern influence your decision to buy secondhand?</p>	<p>Sustainability- 2nd motivation</p>
<p>P1: Yes, they do. While uniqueness and price are my main drivers, I also feel good knowing I'm contributing to sustainability in some way. Giving items a second life and reducing waste makes me feel like I'm doing something positive for the environment and society.</p>	<p>second life and reducing waste</p> <p>Do cares about sustainability</p>
<p>HS: I see. Ah, so what you were saying earlier is you bought it because it was unique. So for the heritage and historical significance, does that mean when you're browsing second-hand platforms, you get that thrill of hunting?</p>	
<p>P1: Absolutely. I am totally enjoying it. It's all about unexpected discovery and luck, it's not something you can plan for. Many items are no longer in production, so when you find it accidentally, it feels exceptionally special. It's also because you've likely never seen the same design or craftsmanship before. For me, the process is incredibly enjoyable, scrolling through the website and accidentally finding something I adore makes me feel that sense of satisfaction.</p>	<p>Enjoy browsing</p> <p>Feel special, enjoyable</p> <p>Sense of satisfaction</p>
<p>HS: Do you ever find yourself scrolling through secondhand platforms, adding lots of things to your cart and you don't realise it?</p>	
<p>P1: Oh, totally. That's basically me all the time. Honestly, I sometimes try to avoid opening secondhand shopping apps for that reason. The platforms use big data to recommend items based on what I've searched or liked before. So, let's say I only planned to</p>	<p>Thrill of hunt</p> <p>Enjoyment driven</p>

look for a pair of boots, but then they'll start showing me gorgeous shirts, scarves, and leather jackets that I love. I'll just keep scrolling and mark it as I like, then before I realise, my cart is already overflowing. Sometimes I'll spend the whole night stuck on these apps. That's why, unless I really want to buy something specific, I try to not open those platforms at all.

HS: I get it. I think most people are like that when it comes to shopping.

P1: Exactly! They know exactly what I like and keep showing the recommendations to me. I'll open them thinking I don't need anything, and five minutes later I'm debating buying stuff I never even planned to get.

HS: Yeah, Instagram does that too with targeted ads. They track your likes and style preferences and just keep showing you more of what you like.

P1: Oh my god, yes! It happens to me all the time, especially with jewelry. I love browsing jewelry, so whenever I'm scrolling Instagram Stories, I'll suddenly get ads for rings and necklaces that perfectly match my taste. I end up clicking through the shop's profile and falling into it, even if I've never heard of the brand before. Big data is honestly kind of scary, it knows me too well. Sometimes I spend way too much time browsing, but I can't help it because it's exactly my style.

HS: So, do you think secondhand fashion can replace buying new items for you?

P1: Hmm...It depends. For clothing and accessories I think yes, secondhand can totally replace new for me. If I can find a great secondhand piece, I rarely feel the need to buy it new. Price and uniqueness are the main reasons.

HS: What about other fashion items like clothes and shoes?

Algorithm drives impulsive buying

Social media drives more purchase behaviour

P1: I buy both, but I will say I shop for clothes and shoes the most when it comes to secondhand.

HS: So does buying secondhand fashion items reduce your desire to buy new items, or do you still buy the new things?

P1: Buying secondhand actually gives me a sense of satisfaction that new purchases can't match. For example, if I'm at a mall and there's a fast fashion store next to a vintage shop, I'll always go into the vintage shop first. Fast fashion pieces are mass produced and even if you can't find something in-store, you can buy it online or from people reselling it later. But for vintage pieces, once they're gone, that makes them so much more valuable to me. So yes, secondhand definitely reduces my desire to buy new items, though I still occasionally buy new things.

HS: And secondhand fashion also gives you a kind of emotional satisfaction, right?

P1: Yes, exactly. There's an emotional value to it. I hate wearing the same thing as everyone else. With fast fashion, everyone chases the same trends, so everyone ends up looking similar. But when I find a vintage piece that reflects my personal aesthetic, I can style it in unique ways. That makes me feel accomplished which is both the thrill of hunting the item and the creativity of making it my own.

HS: So this emotional satisfaction makes you more likely to shop for secondhand fashion more often, right?

P1: Definitely. You know in the UK, there are lots of vintage stores, and I became kind of obsessed. I always spend my free time around these stores, exploring little vintage shops and secondhand warehouses. Whenever a new store opens, I will be one of the first to check it out. It became a habit, I constantly discover new places to shop, which made me buy more frequently.

HS: Are you in Glasgow or Sheffield?

Hedonic value

Scarcity pieces is valuable

Creativity

Personal style expression

Secondhand identity

P1: Yeah, I am in Sheffield. This city is not huge like London, so you can basically walk everywhere. That made it easy to explore all the vintage spots.

HS: So you actually like Sheffield's "vintage map"?

P1: Haha, pretty much! And when I was in Cambridge, it was the same thing, I explored everywhere! I look up vintage shops and visit whenever I have time. On weekends, I just walk around and sometimes go to the secondhand markets. That's why my shopping frequency got so high.

HS: Sounds like you were really into it.

P1: Oh, absolutely. You know sometimes the new stores have opening promotions, like sales...for example, like "buy three, get two free." That would make me buy way more than I planned. Once, I went to a vintage shop in Leeds that was selling Ralph Lauren shirts for £10 each. There were so many different colors and patterns, so of course, I bought more than I needed, I think I bought over 10 shirts!

HS: So when you see those discount promotions, do you feel like it pushes you to buy more than you actually need?

P1: Definitely. It gives me this sense of urgency, like, "If I don't buy now, I'll miss out." For example, if a vintage store has a sale like "£10 per shirt" and there are tons of colors and patterns, I'll immediately start thinking about how rare it is to find these deals. Even if I only planned to buy one or two items, I'll end up buying five or six, just because it feels like a good bargain and I don't want to regret missing it out later.

HS: You really, really are a second-hand map !

P1: I really obsess with it! I used to host a Christmas market selling secondhand items because I bought too much but some of it I

Secondhand shopping is a habit

Obsess with vintage style

FOMO : fear of missing out

Discount drives overconsumption

<p>never wore, you know? For example, I bought all these really over-the-top dresses in America, and Britain.</p> <p>HS: Wow.</p> <p>P1: Those are courtly styles, and I wouldn't normally wear them when I go out, they're too hot. So at the market, I take them out to sell. They were actually bought on impulse. I didn't need them, so I think, well, I sold quite a few back then. Now I still have so many left at home, and I'm thinking maybe I should just open another shop and sell them off.</p> <p>HS: Oh yes, that's one way to go about it.</p> <p>P1: There's still a difference between online and offline sales. Offline sales are much faster. That's because customers can touch and see the items, making the experience more intuitive. Online shopping is just showing an image. That's why I might prefer buying in person. Online purchases often involve a lot of uncertainty. You worry it won't be as new as you imagined when it arrives, or that it might have other flaws. And returning it is tricky because secondhand items don't really come with that option. Not like the stores selling brand new items will have return policies. That's the downside of P2P transactions, they often don't allow returns, so it feels like a gamble sometimes. You have to be extremely selective, really carefully to see every photo for any major flaws, and only then decide whether to place an order. It's incredibly time-consuming.</p> <p>HS: Right.</p> <p>P1: Efficiency-wise, it's much lower.</p> <p>HS: Definitely.</p> <p>HS: When it comes to these platforms, the functionality you get when making purchases on them is actually quite important. For example, they might offer discounts, or as you just mentioned, they use your big data to recommend things you like. Or maybe they</p>	<p>Overbuying then reselling</p> <p>Risk perception online</p> <p>Offline can actual feel it</p> <p>Carefully on online shopping</p>
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make payment more convenient. Sometimes when you're offline, like at markets or physical stores, they might only accept cash. So will this kind of convenience actually boost your purchasing power to some extent? Like, you didn't plan to buy something, but because of these features, you end up buying more and more.

P1: I think the biggest difference between websites and physical stores is that websites have big data, giving you way more choices. Platforms can categorize items which you type in a category, and it easily finds similar types or specific items that you want. You just search and then you find it, right? But in physical stores, walking into one feels like opening a blind box. You might not find what you came for, but you might find something and buy something you are not intended to and actually that probability is much higher.

HS: Plus, you don't need to be a "map" and go around everywhere.

P1: Exactly. I don't even need to go outside. Sometimes the weather's bad, so you're more likely to shop online. If I really want something rare or it isn't produced anymore, I'd choose online first. Because you just can't find that item offline. Like if you want some limited edition shoes, Limited edition clothes and limited edition styles, you can just search for a specific brand and it pops up. But offline, you don't have that capability. Each store carries different items, and it's all random. It's all about luck.

HS: Right. You just search and find it.

P1: Yeah, offline it's purely about liking something in the moment. But online, you shop with purpose. The experience is quite different. So it depends on your needs.

HS: Exactly. But these platforms only really took off in recent years, they've surged in popularity lately. Before using them frequently, you might have just browsed physical stores. Comparing the offline and online store, which do you think is increasing your purchase frequency? Or is it about the same?

Algorithm calculate preference taste

Shop with purpose online

P1: I still think it's offline.

P1: Because I've gone around through so many markets. It's really just aimless browsing, but I'm genuinely interested in these things, so I go in. Once you're inside, you start hunting because the prices are low, right? You feel like you're getting a great value, and the items are actually good too. Like when I bought that gold necklace, it had to be super pricey in a store because it's gold. But at those markets, you will find a whole stall packed with all kinds of gold necklaces and stuff. The styles are so vintage, and you don't see them in stores anymore. You weren't planning to buy anything, but they look so pretty, you just really can't say no to them. You can touch them, feel the quality, see the craftsmanship, and before you know it, you've bought a bunch. But when you shop online, there's still some risk involved in the transaction, and you can't get it immediately which is crucial. After you select it, you might have to wait a few days, so the whole process feels nerve-wracking.

HS: Yeah.

P1: So, for me, I would rather buy in person. I wouldn't choose online shopping first unless it's genuinely inconvenient or I can't find what I need locally. Only then will I check online.

HS: Got it.

P1: But honestly, I really do go shopping with my friends every single week. We'll go out together, and often we'll say, "Hey, you buy one, I'll buy one," so we can wear matching outfits. I just love doing that kind of thing. Then we can all wear them together next time we go out. It's pretty fun, you know? That feeling of shopping together when you have company.

HS: Hahaha. Ha.

P1: It's a different vibe. Online, you're kind of on your own, but offline, everyone recommends things to each other like, "Oh, this would totally suit you!" And I say to my friend "it really suits your style, you should buy it!" Then everyone hunts for it, helping each

Value for money

other to find the suitable items, that's another kind of fun. It's all quite different, so I definitely shop in person way more often than online.

HS: So in the UK, which city do you think is best for shopping? London or Leeds?

P1: Hmm, I think Leeds is really great. I rarely shop in London, though they do have markets there that I like.

HS: So would you pay for emotional value? Like, whether it's offline or online, you just keep browsing and end up buying more and more.

P1: Hmm...

HS: Does that buying behavior feel a bit like fast fashion?

P1: Overconsumption, right? Sometimes I feel like it's excessive, you don't even need it, it's kind of wasteful. You just buy it back, right? And then it just stays there after you bring it home.

P1: But sometimes I buy lots of things that are not for wearing, but purely for collection. I always do this, like if I spot a pair of shoes that are gorgeous but not my size, I'll actually buy them, then just display them at home afterwards.

HS: What?

P1: Like a size 35 shoe. My feet are a size 38 or 39, there's no way I could fit into a size 35 shoe. But it's gorgeous, absolutely stunning. Then I'll probably buy it, but the price needs to be really low. Yeah, I feel like buying them just makes me happy, it's emotional value, like buying dolls. You know, you buy them and they're useless, right? I don't like buying dolls, but I like buying vintage stuff. It's just a different way of spending.

HS: I see.

Buy for collection

P1: Exactly. I'm the same on impulse buys that inevitably lead to some waste. It's just a matter of perspective. If it's there pleasing yourself, that's hardly wasteful, is it?

HS: <Laughter> Self-licensing kicks in.

P1: I think it all comes down to perspective!

P1: It's genuinely tricky to make a clear definition for this. Fast fashion changes with trends, so you're constantly paying for those shifts. Sometimes you're just buying something different, but if I'm buying emotional value, even though that's still paying, I think it's genuinely about feeding my emotional needs. I just keep paying for that emotional value.

P1: Everyone has their own preference, some are into cars, others may into property etc. It's all the same, but who can actually live in all those spaces or drive all those cars? It is not whether it's fashion or not, you just have that one interest, that point to where you want to spend. If you're completely without desire, fine. But if you have that everyday urge to consume, you might just love something in a particular field or a specific item, and you'll keep spending on it. It's hard to avoid.

P1: You know people only have two hands and two feet, so no one can possibly use all the stuff they buy, right? It's impossible. I think it's hard to avoid, but if nobody consumed, if nobody had any desire to buy, then you couldn't sell anything either, right? It's a cycle, I suppose.

HS: Ha ha. A vicious circle.

P1: I think we need people like that. Otherwise, if everyone avoids consumption out of fear that fast fashion habits lead to overconsumption, then society will not be going to work, won't it? Items are produced precisely for consumption. If nobody buys them, then everyone will not have income, and society can't function. Ironically, during economic downturns, people are more inclined to buy items that aren't particularly expensive. It's precisely

those fast fashion, lower priced items that people gravitate towards when the whole society is tough. Strangely enough, when the economy is poor, people actually feel more inclined to spend. I remember I have conducted research previously indicating that during economic crises, such as pandemics or similar events, certain areas of consumer spending actually experience a surge in demand.

HS: So for yourself, would you say that during the pandemic, you found yourself buying secondhand items online more often?

P1: That was certainly the case during the pandemic. Back then, I would scroll through Instagram and come across these online shops. Since physical stores were closed, everything moved online. They will use Instagram Stories to post their new arrivals daily. I open the Stories every day to browse, and if I see something I like, I will just send them a direct message. And they will hold it for me.

HS: Well, having bought so many, you must have quite a few spare pieces. Do you ever resell them?

P1: I do resell quite a lot, but it's quite a long process. I'll definitely wear them initially, otherwise it is wasteful buying them, right? But actually, later on, a large number end up completely unworn, especially when buying online, you can't try them on.

P1: Usually I can't get a refund. Honestly, their system isn't properly set up, so it's really tricky. I mean, buying stuff online still carries a huge risk. You might argue for ages but still not get your money back. I've tried it too many times.

HS: Ha ha.

P1: Always you buy something expensive, wait for it but find the problem when it arrives. Then the seller will never say it's their responsibility, and the platform rules in their favour, it's really

Purchase behaviour is needed

annoying. Maybe the photos looked fine at first, but when you receive them are totally different items.

HS: Yeah, it happens all the time.

P1: And then sometimes it is fake, it happens all the time.

HS: Right.

P1: You found out it's a fake after receiving it, but you still can't return it.

HS: I remember that on platforms like eBay, returns or exchanges require the seller's consent.

P1: Exactly. I've bought lots of stuff on eBay, and mostly were fake. I bought several pairs of limited edition secondhand trainers that you couldn't get outside. But I think both pairs I bought were fakes, and they weren't even my size. The thing is, they're not producing anymore in the market, so it is really hard to find them. So when you buy something you're really looking forward to, and you get it and it's not what you expected, you get really annoyed.

HS: I see.

P1: Exactly, so offline shopping is definitely better for me. Online shopping has its conveniences, but for me the downsides are more than the benefits.

HS: So on these platforms, since they permit resale as being a peer-to-peer platform, do you feel that allowing resale encourages people to buy without control?

P1: Of course, that thought crosses my mind, just like "I can always resell it later". But honestly, I tried reselling a few times but it was never a success, no matter if it was bought online or offline. One time in a physical store, the shop assistant said, 'Oh, this is a renowned brand from the 19th century, hardly known now but still classic,' and so on. But I later realised I just don't wear this style, so I was like 'Well then, could you help me sell it?' They agreed but

Online platform has high risk of counterfeit

Resell drives overconsumption

<p>not a single person asked. To be honest, those who truly appreciate vintage pieces remain a minority.</p> <p>HS: Ha ha.</p> <p>HS: So, do you think the features like discounts make you justify buying more on those digital secondhand fashion platforms?</p> <p>P1: Yes, for sure. In my head, I'll calculate the "savings" and convince myself it's worth it. Like, if a shirt originally cost £40 and now it's only £10, I'll feel like I'm saving £30 each time. So even if I buy ten shirts, I'll tell myself, "Hey, I just saved £300." That's how I justify it, even though I know I've actually spent more than I planned.</p> <p>HS: Ha ha. That's really interesting. Okay, finally, for platforms like Depop, Vinted and eBay, what do you think they could improve to better support sustainability?</p> <p>P1: I think the first priority is to stamp out counterfeits, which means platform oversight is very important. Because from my own personal experience, I had bought fakes which I didn't expect, and I also know that I have friends who use Depop to sell those stockings that cost just a few pounds, passing them on as real and making a ridiculous £100k a month for doing this. Probably bought them for £8, but flogged them on Depop for £30 a pair, you can't believe how it hit on the platform.</p> <p>HS: Seriously?</p> <p>P1: Yeah, it's crazy! Also I think the after-sales management is very important. Like when you buy something and you find out it's not what you expected, but you can't return it because of the platform policy, that's really annoying.</p> <p>P1: So if you buy something, is it what you actually want? How exactly do you intend to use it? Or is it even suitable for you once you bring it home? Does it hold high practical value? If it does, then it is recyclable, and you can really achieve that recyclable value.</p>	<p>Platform feature drives overconsumption</p> <p>Strengthen platform oversight</p>
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<p>But if you buy it and then find you can't use it, or is fake but you can't return it, then it just becomes a waste.</p> <p>HS: This is actually a kind of overconsumption.</p> <p>HS: Right then! That's all about for today.</p> <p>P1: Great!</p> <p>HS: Thank you for your sharing and all your experience.</p> <p>P1: No worries! Have a good day!</p> <p>HS: Thank you! Have a good day!</p>	
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C.2.2 Participants 2 Interview Transcript

Raw Data	1st Order Coding
<p>HS: Okay. Recording in progress. Wait for a second.</p> <p>P2: Okay.</p> <p>HS: Hi. Hi.</p> <p>P2: Hello.</p> <p>HS: Hi. Hi. So. Okay, so let's just start our interview today. So the interview today is mostly about, um, second hand fashion market. And how would you feel about, uh, feeling with the secondhand fashion, digital secondhand fashion platform. And we are just addressing the motivation, perceived value, self licensing and justification directly yet. So can we start it?</p> <p>P2: Yeah. Of course.</p> <p>HS: Okay, so the first question I want to ask you is, well, how um how often do you usually buy fashion items?</p> <p>P2: U m, at least once a week.</p> <p>HS: Once a week. And at this time how do you often purchase secondhand fashion items when you are buying the fashion items?</p>	<p>Once a week</p>

<p>P2: Um, normally maybe about, uh, once every three months, I don't always buy secondhand fashion items.</p> <p>HS: Okay. Understand that. Have you ever used the digital secondhand fashion platform?</p> <p>P2: Uh, yes I do.</p> <p>HS: Like what platform do you use?</p> <p>P2: Um, actually, I just use eBay.</p> <p>HS: eBay. Okay.</p> <p>P2: Yes.</p> <p>HS: Do you feel good using eBay?</p> <p>P2: Um, it is, uh,</p> <p>HS: Can you usually get what you want on eBay?</p> <p>P2: Uh, yeah, I think so. It's very convenient.</p> <p>HS: Okay. So what usually makes you purchase secondhand fashion items on those digital secondhand fashion platforms? Like because of its lower prices, and it is saving money or being environmentally friendly or etc..</p> <p>P2: Mhm. Uh, to be honest, uh, my initial motivation for buying secondhand fashion items on those um, digital P2P platforms such as eBay was to save money. And this is the most important reason, um, because the price, they're so affordable. Uh, but later on, I realised, um, it wasn't just about saving money. Sometimes it was because the platforms were so convenient and I was always seeing the trendy items. Um, yeah. And I was often inspired by the products shared by social media influencers.</p> <p>HS: Uh, so the social media or influencers may drive you to buy some secondhand fashion.</p> <p>P2: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.</p> <p>HS: Okay. Understand. Do you have any, like, experience you can share with, like, um, the most recent secondhand purchase and, like what make you to made that decision on buying that item?</p> <p>P2: Um, so my most recent secondhand purchase was, uh, last month. So when I bought a piece of clothing on eBay and there are I think there are several key factors that influenced my</p>	<p>High shopping frequency</p> <p>Secondhand-1/3month</p> <p>Low secondhand frequency</p> <p>eBay user</p> <p>Price concern</p> <p>Saved money motivation</p> <p>Platform is convenience</p> <p>Trendy drives consumption</p> <p>Affected by influencer</p>
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<p>decision. So the first one is, um, the price was within my budget and was crucial.</p> <p>HS: Oh, okay.</p> <p>P2: And the second one is, um, I carefully examined the quality of the items, uh, to determine if it was worth to purchase. If if the price is a good price for me. Uh, and. And there's one more reason is, um, I also considered the sell the seller's reason for selling the items. So if the reason sounds reasonable, such as the size is not fitting or the item having been unused for a very long time, I feel more confident to do to purchase the items. And this combination of factors made me make the purchase decision.</p> <p>HS: Oh, I understand that. So you will also considering the seller's reason. So if the seller's reason is not reasonable, even though that item is what you want and you want to purchase it, even though the price the price is affordable to you, you still won't get it.</p> <p>P2: Yeah, yeah.</p> <p>HS: So. Um, just like you said, you would be influenced by the social media influencer. So what extent can motivate your secondhand purchase?</p> <p>P2: So I think the trends and the fashion inspiration have a significant influence on me, especially on the social media and the blogger recommendations. And also it is because they are both on trend and cheaper than the new style, um, in making it easy to buy. However, this can also lead me to buy more than I intend, even though the items that are secondhand and the price they are not that high. I often buy a lot.</p> <p>HS: Mhm. Okay. Do you think that makes you buy a lot?</p> <p>P2: Yes. Because, um, they will show me the thing I'm interested in. They are similar items. They are very similar. So maybe I just oh this one is good, I will buy this one. And then I see another one quite similar but different. I will say oh this one is also good. So I will buy both.</p> <p>HS: Mhm. Okay. So do you buy the secondhand fashion mainly to replace the buying the new one. Or it is an additional way to shop?</p>	<p>Functional value-price, quality, seller reason</p> <p>Influenced by fashion inspiration, social media, blogger</p> <p>Hedonic functional value</p>
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<p>P2: Mhm. Um, so I buy the second hand, uh, not simply to replace the new clothes, but rather as an additional way to shop. Um, there are two main reasons for it. So the first one is that secondhand is cheaper and allows me to find the items I like for half the price or even or even lower. Um, another reason is, uh, some out of season items that are no longer available in the store or on their website, but they are still available on the secondhand platform, and which is very appealing to me. Um, but honestly, sometimes because they are cheaper and more likely to place an order than, um, if I were buying new clothes, which can make it an additional purchase rather than a simple substitution.</p> <p>HS: Now understand that. Have you ever bought more items than your plan when browsing on the digital secondhand fashion platforms?</p> <p>P2: Uh, yes, I have experienced this, and I attribute it to big data. Uh, that's the reason. So I think this is the main reason. So I was simply, uh, searching for an item. But secondhand platforms, they constantly suggest the items I was interested in. I think it's because it's based on my browsing history or the search habits. And many times they recommend items. They were cheaper, so I would think this is no big deal. Only spend a little. So normally I end up ordering things that I didn't intend to buy. And it is the combination of big data recommendations and low prices. Um, that easily leads me to buy more than I have planned.</p> <p>HS: Um, okay, so mainly the prices will be the biggest reason that you buy in secondhand fashion.</p> <p>P2: Yes, exactly.</p> <p>HS: Uh, do you believe these platforms primarily encourage like reusing and recycling recirculating clothing, or do they just make it easier to buy more?</p> <p>P2: First of all, I believe these secondhand platforms do encourage the reuse and recycling of clothing to a certain extent, but more often than not, they actually encourage impulsive spending because the platforms are so convenient, with the new and affordable items constantly available and coupled with the constant recommendations. I tend to think it's not expensive</p>	<p>Algorithm drives impulsive buying</p> <p>Additional consumption</p> <p>Lower prices drives overconsumption</p> <p>Algorithmic recommendation drives impulsive buying</p> <p>Platform blurred the sustainable intent</p> <p>Low price justification</p>
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<p>anyway, so I can buy a few more. So as a result, I will end up buying far more than I actually needed. And in other words. So while the initial intentions are environmentally friendly and sustainable, however, in practice these platforms also inadvertently promote the overconsumption.</p> <p>HS: Um, okay. And as we know, um, in those platforms, they will also have some features like easy to pay, they have discounts etc. Do you think that could encourage you to buy something that you didn't plan to buy? Just like when you're browsing something and you actually didn't plan to buy it, or you just don't even plan to buy anything today, but you are just browsing on the website and then you see "oh, there's a there's some discounts!" Does that encourage you to buy something?</p> <p>P2: Definitely it. So when I say discount I would just think, oh my God, the Black Friday is coming. I can't refuse it! I'm going to buy two. I can't not buy these items because even though I don't need the items right now, but maybe in the future I would need it. Um, don't miss the good price.</p> <p>HS: Okay. Yeah, that's the point. Okay, on average, how long did you keep the fashion items that you like before selling or disposing them.</p> <p>P2: Mhm. On average I will clean my closet about every three months. So I think I'd probably do the same for this fashion item. Or maybe when I realized that I, I didn't need it and I didn't use it for a very long time, I would just sell it.</p> <p>HS: Um, so how can you explain yourself if you buy something that you really don't need?</p> <p>P2: Mhm. Okay. So, um, so when I buy something secondhand that I really don't need, I also use several. There are so many reasons. So for example, I may think the prices are so cheap that I could miss out and if I didn't buy it, or I may tell myself that even I don't need to use it now. Um, maybe in the future I will find this one very useful. Or I may think that since the second hand, buying more is a big deal, and this will be the reason.</p> <p>HS: Um, so do you think being able to resell items on these platforms makes you feel justified in buying more, as you know</p>	<p>Self-licensing</p> <p>Green washing consumption</p> <p>Platform features drive impulsive consumption</p> <p>Closest cleaning every 3 months</p> <p>Self-licensing</p>
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<p>intended to be, uh, user friendly for me, they actually stimulate my desire to shop and lead me to, um, order more frequently and sometimes even on impulse.</p> <p>HS: Okay, yeah, I got that. So do you think that purchasing secondhand fashion items through those digital secondhand fashion platforms is a sustainable choice?</p> <p>P2: So, uh, I believe that, um, buying clothes through this secondhand platform is sustainable to some extent because it allows clothes to be reused rather than thrown away. However, the platform is that the convenience and low prices for some of these platforms can also lead people to buy more than they needed. So the results may still be less sustainable. Okay. For example, I originally bought secondhand to be environmentally friendly, but when the platform showed me recommendations and discounts, I was tempted to place orders and end up buying too much. If the platform truly wanted to support the sustainable fashion. I hope they can make some changes, such as they could remind the users of their consumption habits so that they can be aware of whether they are over buying. They could also add educational content to encourage people to buy what they need, rather than just because it's cheap or looks good. And this will be more in line with the original intention of sustainability.</p> <p>HS: Okay, thank you so much. It is really useful information that you are giving to me.</p> <p>P2: Haha. No worries.</p> <p>HS: Thank you! Bye bye.</p>	
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C.2.3 Participants 3 Interview Transcript

Raw Data	1st Order Coding
<p>HS: Hi! How are you?</p> <p>P3: Pretty good!</p>	

<p>HS: Okay, so we are now starting. Hello, welcome to my interview today. The main focus of this interview is to discuss the context of UK's young consumers and how sustainable consumption versus unsustainable consumption plays out in the second-hand market. We will also look at whether the current consumption patterns under the second-hand environment might gradually shift towards overconsumption and move closer to the direction of fast fashion. Let's begin with the first question: How often do you purchase fashion items?</p> <p>P3: If I buy second-hand clothing, it might be every six week.</p> <p>HS: Okay, every half a year.</p> <p>P3: Yes, or if during this period I am selling my secondhand clothing, then the frequency of browsing these apps and websites for secondhand clothing will increase. As a result, my purchasing frequency may also increase.</p> <p>HS: Okay, so what generally makes you want to buy secondhand items?</p> <p>P3: Previously, I might rely more on homepage recommendations. Like the homepage of the secondhand website I used, which may recommend some clothing brands that I frequently check. Then there are some accessories that may not have many purchasing channels available at present, so in such cases I would look for them on secondhand websites.</p> <p>HS: Understood, so seems like the main direction of your secondhand purchases is mainly focused on vintage items</p> <p>HS: So when you're purchasing these items, usually is online. Do you have any commonly used digital secondhand platforms?</p> <p>P3: I mostly use online platforms. I browse eBay quite a lot because it's comprehensive and global. Recently, I've also become aware of some more niche secondhand platforms, such as Depop.</p>	<p>Moderate secondhand shopping frequency</p> <p>Reselling behaviour influenced shopping frequency</p> <p>Influenced by algorithmic</p> <p>eBay&Depop user</p> <p>Niche secondhand platform</p>
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<p>I like it quite a lot recently, because on this website, it's almost just some more carefully selected vintage brands or niche brands.</p> <p>HS: Understood, so in general, what kind of motivations could drive you to purchase on these secondhand platforms? For example, it might be because the price is lower, or perhaps you have environmental awareness, you might want to do something more sustainable and so on.</p> <p>P3: I think for me, the style of clothing might be the biggest reason, and then secondly, it's the price.</p> <p>HS: Is it any environmental or sustainability corner in your decision when you purchase secondhand items?</p> <p>P3: For sustainability, I might not think about it initially. However, later on, due to my own issues with clothing hoarding, I realized that rather than throwing these clothes away, it would be better to consider them. I would rather say, if it can be sold to someone who might need it, then I could extend the life of my clothing and also have some money back.</p> <p>P3: And recycling I think is a good choice.</p> <p>HS: This is actually related to your major as well. Because with a major like yours, fashion styling, you would buy a lot of clothes. It might be that at the beginning, you might still go for new items, but later on, it could become more common to use secondhand items. After using them up, you can also donate or give them away to people in the same field or those who have a greater need.</p> <p>P3: If it comes to my profession, sometimes there might be a sudden period when I have a high demand for clothing. In such cases, the second-hand platform would be my first choice. I look on these platforms to see if there are any clothes that fit my style and budget.</p> <p>HS: So as you are buying more and more secondhand items, the sustainability or environmental concern becomes a consideration.</p>	<p>Style & price motivation</p> <p>Conscious Environmental Protection</p> <p>Functional value</p> <p>Professional needed secondhand</p>
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<p>Will proportion of sustainability or environmental concern increase? What is the approximate percentage?</p> <p>P3: Emm... now I might consider after purchasing it, for example, in one year or two years later, I could sell it through the secondhand market or platform. That's a consideration that I think would increase the proportion of sustainability.</p> <p>HS: Understood, so when you're browsing these items, whether it's vintage or on these secondhand platforms, and you're purchasing some used items, apart from possibly liking them for your own style, are there also some recommendations? For example, online elements, social media, or influences. And how much impact do they have on your decision to buy secondhand?</p> <p>P3: I think the impact is becoming increasingly significant now, because there are actually a lot of social media platforms where we can see posts or even influencers who tend to. It's like they will look for the good stuff in secondhand and then recommending those secondhand sellers or platforms. From the browsing records, I often see similar recommendations. I think this has helped me learn more about secondhand.</p> <p>HS: Understood, so for something like vintage, there might be some recent celebrity who wears it quite frequently and gets exposed. Or some influencers will share their OOTD (outfit of the day) on social media and then people might ask about quite a lot and follow that style.</p> <p>HS: Okay! So when you buy secondhand, will your motivation change over time?</p> <p>P3: I think there will be a change, and I feel that this change is quite significant and rapid. Initially, perhaps due to my initial aversion to secondhand items, I might have felt somewhat concerned about them because they are secondhand. However, later on, the price and style of these kinds of things are becoming</p>	<p>Social media & influencer influenced</p> <p>Secondhand perceptions shifted</p> <p>Peer influence</p>
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the mainstream trend, then I find myself becoming less bothered by their past history.

HS: Understood, so now it's more about feeling a higher acceptance of it, understood.

P3: Yes.

HS: But for now, you might more likely to choose a brand new item or the secondhand item but is still in good condition.

P3: Does 'new' refer to the brand new on a second-hand platform, or does it mean that the item is completely new?

HS: On the secondhand platform, but is like nearly brand new.

P3: Actually, personally speaking, I would definitely prefer the "brand new" one which is more attractive. However, based on my experience with secondhand purchases, sometimes after seeing something brand new, its price might not seem as advantageous, and in some cases, it could even be close to or equal to the original price.

P3: Or for the very perfect one, at this time I would still worry about whether there are issues with its authenticity and quality.

HS: Understood, so when you're buying secondhand, for example, do you consider whether it brings you a sense of pleasure? Like, would you enjoy this emotional value?

P3: I think there is a general trend, because if I finally choose to purchase it, it must be because I feel that it met some of my needs.

HS: Understood, so what if you are just browsing on the digital secondhand fashion platform today, or you may go with a specific goal in mind, but the big data knows your preference and it will keep showing the relevant items to you. For example, if they push a pair of shoes that you were interested in buying, and then they suggest a beautiful handbag, you might start browsing more intensively. Does this situation lead you to buy more products?

Condition & price
consciousness

Authenticity and
quality
consciousness

Secondhand meet
the needs

<p>P3: I think it will be, because I feel that whether it's a secondhand platform or brand new ones, as long as it's online shopping, I think everyone is basically influenced by some recommendations or related content. If you follow certain searches, then I think as long as you click on them, you will be attracted and it is very likely that will increase your purchase intention</p> <p>HS: Yeah, so do you have a treasure hunting mentality when making purchases. You might think to yourself, 'Today I'll buy and shop, constantly searching for the items I like,' which can bring about a psychological pleasure.</p> <p>P3: I feel that the thrill of hunting is something I get easily from browsing secondhand items, because it's like you find something wonderful or valuable among old things.</p> <p>HS: When you're buying these secondhand items, no matter if they're vintage or simply secondhand, do limited editions or historically significant pieces increase your desire to purchase them?</p> <p>P3: I think generally speaking, yes, but the premise is that I originally thought it looked good in quality and had a nice design sense. And if there's something written on it saying it's an item that are now scarce, or what I would call an old fashioned style from a certain season, tends to increase my desire to purchase them.</p> <p>HS: Understood, so overall, in general, these secondhand platforms, including vintage, are having a great appeal, and it can inadvertently lead to over consumption. This phenomenon might be getting closer to fast fashion. However, because of its 'secondhand fashion' label, for example, it has been dubbed as a more environmentally friendly and sustainable way of shopping. So it seems more reasonable to everyone, but in essence, this behavior is actually moving closer to fast fashion. Do you feel that? What do you think about it?</p>	<p>Algorithmic Personalisation drives overconsumption</p> <p>Thill of hunt Emotional value</p> <p>Scarcity motivated Collecting rare pieces</p>
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P3: I think over consumption definitely exists and follows such a trend. For example, if I were to buy something used, it might replace something new that I would otherwise purchase. However, after purchasing this secondhand item, for myself, I have added another piece of clothing. Will this piece of clothing become a spare item in the future? Actually, it's very possible. I've always wanted to say that secondhand is a very environmentally friendly existence. So if I keep buying like this, I'm actually adding to the pile of clothes I already have, and it's also creating a cycle of buying more and more.

HS: In fact, the consumption of secondhand items is becoming increasingly close to fast fashion. Essentially, the category of what they are purchasing is different, but the actual behaviour remains the same. It can be said that it is getting closer and closer.

P3: Everyone's purchasing frequency, and then the quantity of purchases may be increasingly converging with that of fast fashion.

HS: So, does buying secondhand items replace your desire to purchase brand-new things, or is it just an additional way of shop?

P3: Currently, I think it is an additional way for me to shop because my needs for new items and secondhand items are different. So I think both of them are attractive to me at the moment.

HS: For secondhand items, what are the main aspects of your needs?

P3: For example, a brand new item might be attractive because of its innovative design or the brand itself. On the other hand, an item that is secondhand might attract me due to its unique features or history. Its price or I need a large amount of clothing purchases during this period, then my first choice might be secondhand.

HS: Understood, understood. So they each have their own responsibilities. As you mentioned earlier, if you're purchasing second-hand items, it's likely that you will resell them after a certain

Similar to fast fashion

Additional way to shop

Uniqueness and historical motivation

need to choose some clothing that I think not only can be used for my studies but also for personal use.

HS: Actually, it's quite reasonable for you to buy it. Apart from some study needs, you should also consider whether you can use it in your real life. But if you don't need it in your real life, then maybe you will just not buy it.

P3: Yes.

HS: Then do you think that because of first, it's a secondhand item, and then you might resell it afterwards, so you will be more unbridled when you are making the purchase.

P3: Yes, I think there will be no scruples. Overall, the price of second-hand items is not that high. The restrictions on me are not so great, and then I might feel that if I buy it, I can still sell it, so I will.

HS: So do you think the process of selling is easy? Generally speaking.

P3: I think it depends on pricing and the item's condition. I think these two factors are quite important. If both factors are acceptable, I believe reselling it would be feasible. However, in most cases, you need to communicate with the seller who is interested. It might take two or three communications before they place an order.

HS: So do you feel when others are buying second-hand, or when you yourself are purchasing secondhand items, would your expectations for the price be somewhat lower?

P3: I think that for most buyers, when they buy secondhand items, there is a significant factor that they feel it's cheap. They might be looking to find something at a bargain price, such as clothing or other items. Yeah, I think many people go to secondhand platforms because they want to buy these low price items.

HS: Understood, so I think my spare clothes and shoes can't be sold because the price is not that low as those buyers expect.

P3: Based on my own experiences, yes, that's the reason.

Because I sell clothing a lot, and actually the clothing is basically everyday styles and I keep it quite well, but a significant factor in the final purchase decision was its reasonable price.

HS: The price is quite reasonable. Understood.

P3: Yes.

HS: Okay, so do you think shopping on those digital secondhand fashion platforms is a sustainable behaviour?

P3: I think at this point, I think it is because most secondhand platforms allow you to be both a seller and a buyer. That might give the impression to people that I can spend money on you, but I can also make money with you.

HS: However, these secondhand platform, sometimes come with features like coupon and discounts. Or they might be easier to pay because you know, in some places like the UK, there are vintage shops or secondhand stores that only accept cash. So do you think these kind of features will make you buy more?

P3: I think it will definitely happen because originally, from my personal perspective, I feel that online shopping is much more convenient than offline physical shopping. At the same time, I also think that making payments online is actually quite convenient. It's not easy to realise how much you spend rather than cash payments, because it's just a number. So, yes, I think there will be this situation.

HS: So, do you think that this kind of digital secondhand fashion platform has any way to better support sustainability, like educating consumers about the correct concept of consumption behavior?

P3: I think it is a bit difficult, this is somewhat challenging because I think secondhand platforms are anyway a business approach, so

Online is easier the offline shopping

<p>the platform will promote more transactions among users and generate more shopping behavior. If it's truly sustainable, I think it might only be possible through some kind of charitable activities. For example, let's talk about the recycling of spare clothing and donating it to places like impoverished areas or people in need. Instead of exchanging it for money, this approach might only allow for certain activities.</p> <p>HS: Understood, is quite difficult. Have you had any memorable experiences on those digital secondhand platforms, and do you have any reflections when using them?</p> <p>P3: I think there is, that surprised me a bit. Although they are what we call secondhand, when I receive them, I feel that most of the goods have actually been cleaned. For example, I can smell that they have been washed. Or at least when they are shipped, their packaging is sufficient to ensure the safety of the items during transportation.</p> <p>HS: So, do you think this is the platform's regulatory oversight?</p> <p>P3: Yes, I think so. And actually if some goods are not satisfactory, and if the platform can intervene in a timely manner to handle them, I think it will definitely encourage or educate sellers to provide users with genuine and good products.</p> <p>HS: Understood. Okay , so that's it for today!</p> <p>HS: Thank you for sharing!</p> <p>P3: No worries! Hope that's helpful to you.</p>	<p>Secondhand item is cleaned</p>
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C.2.4 Participants 4 Interview Transcript

Raw Data	1st Order Coding
<p>HS: Hello, hi! Hi, can you hear me?</p> <p>P4: Hello!</p> <p>HS: Okay, so thank you so much for helping me with this. So, yeah.</p> <p>P4: No, it's good.</p> <p>HS: Okay. So... Thank you so much for joining this interview. I'm doing this interview as part of my dissertation. We're looking at how young people in the UK shop secondhand fashions. Lots of people see secondhand fashion as a sustainable way to shop, but I'm also really interested in how the low price or convenience may sometimes lead to buying more than we need, almost like a new kind of fast fashion. So, I'd love to hear about your own experience. There are no right or wrong answers here, so don't worry. Everything you share will be anonymous and only used for my research.</p> <p>P4: Yeah, okay.</p> <p>HS: Okay, so the first question is, how often do you buy fashion items?</p> <p>P4: Um, I mean, I prefer... like, I don't buy that often, but I try to buy wardrobe things I need, so I don't really buy secondhand. Uh, but I prefer secondhand over fast fashion, or any other platforms. I do use Depop a lot. And sometimes they do secondhand market sales, so you can go there, and they have archive stuff.</p> <p>HS: Yeah. Okay, yeah.</p> <p>P4: Most of the time, I'm just looking and browsing to see what I need. If I really need it, I'll buy it, but it's not consistent for me.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, I understand that. But, you know, London has a lot of archive markets, which are attractive for people to go to.</p> <p>P4: Yeah... Of course!</p>	<p>Selective buyer</p> <p>Prefer secondhand</p> <p>Depop user</p> <p>Into archive stuff</p>

<p>HS: Yeah, you mentioned you will you Depop, so have you ever used other secondhand fashion platforms besides Depop?</p> <p>P4: Um, not really. I mostly use Depop because I'm very familiar with it. I also sell stuff there.</p> <p>HS: Oh, you sell stuff.</p> <p>P4: Yeah, like clothes I don't wear anymore, both mine and my boyfriend's. I just put them there. Also, my Instagram algorithm follows what I look at, so it recommends secondhand clothing shops sometimes.</p> <p>HS: Yeah.</p> <p>P4: Some of them are like clickbait, I click on them, then end up browsing more.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, I know, Instagram has a lot of advertising and it's quite attractive.</p> <p>P4: Yeah... yeah, it's so hard not to click on it.</p> <p>HS: You would just look on it, and is quite attractive.</p> <p>P4: Exactly, that's crazy.</p> <p>HS: So, what usually motivates you to purchase secondhand fashion items on these digital secondhand fashion platforms? Is it the low price, saving money, environmental concerns, or uniqueness?</p> <p>P4: I feel like it's a bit of everything. Sometimes I have a visualisation of what I want or need. I also stay loyal to some brands I really like. When I look for something, it often shows me similar styles or brands, so I go through phases of different styles. That really attracts me.</p> <p>P4: I also prefer secondhand because I like the look of old clothing slightly distressed, with character. It also helps the environment, and I don't support exploitative labor.</p> <p>P4: Plus, there are many people like me selling to get rid of stuff, so I see it as helping each other. It's a mix of many things.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, I understand.</p> <p>P4: And price plays a role too, though it's not the most important.</p>	<p>Reselling on platform</p> <p>Social media influenced</p> <p>Impulsive buying by platform algorithms</p> <p>Visualisation, brand loyalty, personalized recommendation motivated</p> <p>Vintage value</p>
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<p>Some brands I like are slowly upping prices, but if an item is really nice or rare, I don't mind paying more.</p> <p>HS: How important are environmental or sustainability concerns in your decision to buy secondhand fashion compared to other motivations?</p> <p>P4: I think it's quite important because you're not throwing clothes away. It's about avoiding waste. If something doesn't sell for a long time, I'll give it to charity or find another use for it.</p> <p>P4: I also have friends who rework vintage pieces into something new, like turning old jeans into something different. I totally support that because it helps reduce clothing waste.</p> <p>HS: Right. So, like we mentioned, Instagram has a lot of advertising. Do you think social media or influencers motivate you to purchase more secondhand fashion?</p> <p>P4: Influencers don't influence me much. I like some influencer's style, but I wouldn't wear the same clothes. Social media does influence me a little though, like browsing Depop, saving pages I like, and following about 30 sellers. But it's not the main factor.</p> <p>P4: I also have friends selling clothes on social media, so I try to support them, even if I'm not that into their style.</p> <p>HS: Do you enjoy the excitement of finding something unique when browsing secondhand platforms?</p> <p>P4: Yes, definitely. Sometimes I spend an hour just browsing, which is bad but addictive. I love discovering rare pieces or big brands at cheaper prices. It's exciting because you never know what's coming next, and the platform suggestions always go to your tastes.</p> <p>HS: Do you usually buy essentials or do you ever have over consumption?</p> <p>P4: I focus on essentials. For example, if I want a specific coat with a unique detail, I'll look for that one item rather than buying several</p>	<p>Environmental concern</p> <p>Small influenced by social media</p> <p>Enjoyment from platform algorithms</p> <p>Essential focused</p>
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coats. I add many things to my basket but narrow them down before purchasing.

HS: Okay, so as you will use Depop, you know Depop can resell stuff. So does reselling make you feel justified in buying more?

P4: Not really for me, but it depends on the person. Some friends buy a lot during sales because they know they can resell later. Personally, I don't buy just for the sake of buying. Reselling on Depop is a bit difficult for me, taking good photos matters a lot.

HS: Understood. Do you buy secondhand mainly to replace buying new clothes or is it an additional way to shop?

P4: I buy secondhand because some brands I like don't make certain styles anymore. Or some brand has become very commercial now, but I like their older pieces. My style is more French and vintage-inspired, so secondhand is perfect for that.

HS: Okay. Have you ever bought more items than you originally planned?

P4: Not really, but sometimes I do. Like I plan to go to a secondhand market and I have a list of things I need to buy, then I end up buying something different, but this is like sometimes because it is a bit hard to look through in the secondhand market. I prefer online so I can see how they are on the model etc. Also I hate trying on clothes.

HS: Haha...

HS: Do you think that enjoyment, pleasures, fashion trends, or uniqueness make you value secondhand items more and then you buy them more often ?

P4: Uh... I like taking inspiration from the '90s and Y2K fashion, I prefer how they dress before, nowadays everything is just so boring, and I go through phases you know, so never stick to one style.

HS: Do you think secondhand platforms encourage reusing and recycling, or do they make it easier to buy more impulsively?

Not easy to resell on Depop

Online preference

90's & Y2K style preference

<p>P4: I don't know... yeah, it's a bit hard. But yes, it is cheaper and people do buy easily, but I've noticed people are becoming more careful recently. I work part-time in luxury retail, and traffic has slowed compared to before COVID. And I think reselling definitely helps the environment, so...</p> <p>HS: Do you think being able to resell items on these platforms makes people feel justified in buying more, as they know they can always sell them later?</p> <p>P4: I think it really depends on the people. I know lots of my friends will buy a lot when it is on sale, but just some of them. But for example, if it is the sales for me, I'm not going to buy for the sake of buying.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, I understand. But do you think buying secondhand might be contributing to overconsumption, even though it feels sustainable?</p> <p>P4: Yes, it can lead to that in the future. But I still believe secondhand is better than fast fashion because it extends the life of clothing, it actually helps the environment and avoids labor. In fast fashion, people don't get paid well when they make these clothes in like Zara, Topshop... Maybe something will change in the future, it might be better in the future and I hope so, but I do see the overconsumption at the moment.</p> <p>HS: Do you think buying secondhand on these platforms is a sustainable choice?</p> <p>P4: I'm very in between. It depends on your reasons for buying. If you buy for the right reason, it's fine. But if you are buying for the wrong reasons, like buying over the amount or buying something unnecessarily, then it's not sustainable by the end of the day.</p> <p>HS: What do you think secondhand platforms could do better to support sustainable fashion?</p> <p>P4: Yeah maybe! They could do renting! You know Selfridges they do that! They do for new clothing though, but it helps people from over buying. Like people can try on those clothes, or maybe go for</p>	<p>Not buying for sake of buying</p> <p>Secondhand has sustainability awareness and ethical consumption</p>
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<p>an events but buy for the time they use it. So I think with secondhand, they could do something like that. And it can reduce the waste, so I think it will be interesting.</p> <p>HS: Okay, that's great. Thank you so much for your time today!</p> <p>P4: Thank you.</p> <p>HS: You did really well.</p> <p>P4: Thanks!</p>	<p>Renting on secondhand platform</p>
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C.2.5 Participants 5 Interview Transcript

Raw Data	1st Order Coding
<p>HS: Hi.</p> <p>P5: Hello.</p> <p>HS: How are you doing?</p> <p>P5: Yeah. I'm good.</p> <p>HS: Okay. Shall we start it?</p> <p>P5: Yes. Okay.</p> <p>HS: Okay. So thank you for doing this interview. I'm doing this interview as part of my dissertation. So we just look at how young people in the UK shop secondhand fashions. So lots of people see secondhand fashion as a sustainable way. But I'm also interested in how the low price or the convenience etc. might sometimes lead to buying more than we need. So it's almost like a new kind of fast fashion. So I would like to hear about your own experience and thoughts on secondhand shopping. There is no right or wrong answer here, so I just want your honest perspective</p>	

<p>and I can make sure everything that you share will be anonymous and only be used for my research this time.</p> <p>P5: Okay.</p> <p>HS: Yeah. Okay. So the first question is how often do you buy fashion items, including secondhand fashion items?</p> <p>P5: Um, I would say most of the items I buy are actually secondhand when it's applicable. So I wouldn't buy delicacies such as underwear or like sportswear secondhand because that's just kind of like gross, but everything besides socks, underwear. Um, in terms of frequency, I'd say I normally buy clothes, maybe like 1 or 2 items of clothing once a month or once every two months. I try and prioritise, like higher quality, more expensive pieces. Um, maybe once a month or once every two months, just because I don't want to buy too many clothes and no space.</p> <p>HS: Yeah. That makes sense. And have you used any digital secondhand fashion platform for the purchase?</p> <p>P5: Um, yes. Most of my secondhand purchases actually do come from online sources, so I use platforms like Vinted and Depop, or I'll even look at Instagram or something where you'll have a specific dedicated secondhand, curated, um, like shops on these social media platforms that showcase different clothes. Because for me personally, I like to buy some older designer stuff. Mhm. Um, or like 90s, 80s, early 2000. So just have the specific Instagram or social media pages that have like curate and showbiz items.</p> <p>HS: Yeah. So what usually motivates you to purchase secondhand fashion items on those digital secondhand fashion platform like um because the price is low or you are environmental or sustainability concern?</p>	<p>Strong preference on secondhand</p> <p>Hygiene concern</p> <p>Once or twice a month</p> <p>Or once every two month Moderate shopping frequency</p> <p>Vinted and Depop user</p> <p>Shop on Instagram boutiques</p> <p>Prefer vintage design</p>
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<p>P5: Um, I would say for me, it's definitely a lot like environmental consciousness. Um, because obviously as someone who's gone through, well, I know it's going to be anonymous, but someone who has a lot of education in terms of sustainability, specifically within fashion, I understand sort of like the life cycle, um, and sort of how much environmental damage the production of new clothes and clothes. So if I can buy something that's, you know, old or vintage and secondhand, then I can extend the lifecycle like no one else is going to wear it, right? But also I feel like for me personally, I think some designers. Well, like the sort of designers on clothes I like. Maybe I like the style more when it was an older collection for some designer. Not like I might not necessarily like their new stuff. Yes. And also because I think for me personally, I think individual style is a more important thing. I do really like vintage or secondhand clothing, especially secondhand designer. It's a lot harder to find and source, and that also adds to it, because if no one else is wearing what I'm wearing, I think I'm, like, more cool than someone else.</p> <p>HS: Yeah. So mainly it's sustainability and also the unique design style.</p> <p>P5: That yeah, I'd say definitely unique design style and like sustainability intentions with like lifecycle. Mhm.</p> <p>HS: I understand that. So how important are environmental or sustainability concerns in your decision to buy secondhand compared to the other motivation?</p> <p>P5: Um, I would say, obviously I'm still a student. Right. So budget is like it has to be a big part of my decision making, if something is really, really expensive, obviously I'm not going to buy it. But I think when it comes to secondhand and vintage and shopping in general, it's more often than not going to be cheaper than buying something new. But there are exceptions to this, of course, where certain things are going to be marked up because I</p>	<p>Sustainability awareness</p> <p>Educated on environmental damage</p> <p>Uniqueness motivated</p> <p>Cares about personal style</p> <p>Budget conscious</p>
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do feel like secondhand shopping is very trendy and very popular. You know, businesses are aware of this, so they're going to increase their prices to match this. Um, so compared to things like price, I would still say price is the main concern for me when it comes to just making, like if I could take all the boxes, but at the end of it, like the last one is how expensive something is if it's too expensive, and I obviously wouldn't buy it. But, um, in terms of shopping secondhand, sustainably. Um, sorry. Could you repeat your question again?

HS: Is how important the Sustainability concern is in your decision to buy secondhand fashion compared to the other reason, just like you said, you mean the most important thing is budget.

P5: Could you give me some examples of other things?

HS: Comparing like budgets or the fashion trends or the community culture?

P5: Um, I would say style is also super important for me. Like I wouldn't buy something just because it was second hand. I always say I try to buy things for the second hand, but it also has to fit me like I fit my taste, my style. I like to match my wardrobe. Um, but in general I will only try to buy things which I know are sustainable in a sense, in terms that they use like material, good production. I tend to avoid things like polyester or, like, mixed fibers. Yeah.

HS: So do you feel like when you are buying second brands, do you feel like it's like the thrill of the hunt or like, you know, the excitement of finding something that unique?

P5: Sorry. What was the thing you said before?

HS: I am just wondering when you are shopping second hand, do you feel the thrill of the hunt or the excitement of finding

Style conscious

Material and
production
conscious

<p>something unique, like how important these two things make in motivating your purchase.</p> <p>P5: Um, yeah, for sure. I feel like that is a fun part of it. Like trying to find something really cool and unique and in terms of shopping secondhand, because for me personally, I do a lot of my shopping secondhand online. So I have the ability to just sit on my phone or sit on my computer at home and like, scroll through a bunch of websites or whatever. Um, I do think it is more fun personally, to shop secondhand in person because you can like, really just look through different clothes. But I think the convenience of shopping so I like online in terms of like you just go to see so many more different options, just make it so much more easier. Uh, yeah, I'd say it's a fun part of it, but at times it can get really tedious because for me, I have like a lot of criteria. I'm like very specific in what I buy, like the stores I get, so. It takes me even longer to try to find something. You know, it's like, got to be secondhand. You've got to be made of these materials, maybe only like this style. Also has to fit my sizing, you know. So it is like the hunt is fun and all, but after a certain point, I'm just a bit tired. I just want to give up.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, I know that because you are looking so many things. Yeah. And you need to decide what you really need to buy because you can't buy anything.</p> <p>P5: Yeah, yeah.</p> <p>HS: Because you said you're actually buying quite a lot secondhand. So is it replacing you to buy something new items?</p> <p>P5: Yeah. I would really only buy things that are secondhand. Like I wouldn't go out of my way to buy new clothes unless they absolutely need to. Let's say for example. Unless I absolutely had to. Like if I didn't have, maybe like swimming shorts or like a suit for a wedding. Just because I need it soon or like it's important.</p>	<p>Thrill of hunt and excitement motivated</p> <p>Online preference and convenience</p> <p>Offline more experience</p> <p>Secondhand is prioritised</p>
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<p>Then I would only think I would spend the time to search for second hand. But I think in most 90%, 95% of the time when I buy clothing and garments, it's going to be secondhand.</p> <p>HS: Um, I understand that. So do you think that like, have you ever bought more items than you planned to when you are browsing on the, on those secondhand fashion platforms?</p> <p>P5: Um, yeah. Definitely have like I've definitely bought something and be like, oh, this is so cool. I'm going to wear it. And then I end up wearing it maybe less than ten times. And I think that's just inevitable when it comes to shopping in general, because you're not always going to like what you buy. But I think it is difficult because I also think that because I'm shopping online, most of the time, I don't really get to try it on before I buy it. Whereas if you go to like a secondhand stores, a vintage store or something, and you can like go to a mirror and see how it fits, you see how like, how you feeling it compared to like if you buy something online and then you get delivered to your place and then I don't like it that much and you're like, oh, then what can you do now? Right? And also a lot of times with secondhand shopping, it's you can't really like how they don't really have return policy or anything. So it's not like you can return it to seller or vendor compared to if you buy something new and you still have the tags on. If you don't like it, you can just return it. But normally when you buy secondhand doesn't really work like that or I don't really like return items. Um, so I do try and avoid over consuming and buying too much stuff I don't like. If I want to buy something, I feel like, am I really like going to wear this more of a lot of times for like, it's not going to go out of style. So I try to be very considerate.</p> <p>HS: Yeah. So so in that case, do you usually like resell something?</p> <p>P5: Um, yeah, I think yeah, definitely. Because I feel like for me, I don't want to like, you know, sound like I'm in too much, but I think</p>	<p>New clothes purchase is exception</p> <p>Regret overbuying</p> <p>Cautious decision making before purchase</p>
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<p>HS: So do you think that buying the second hand fashion might be contributing the overconsumption? Even though it is buying a secondhand fashion is is a it feels sustainable.</p> <p>P5: Yeah. I think in terms of overconsumption, even when you do buy something secondhand, I think for me personally, I think of it as like cost per wear. So let's say if a jacket costs £100 and I wear it ten times, that's like £10 per wear. But if I only wear it like two times, it's £50 to wear. And that's not good, right. That's like adding to the problem. So I think it just depends on how much you wear your second items. And it's not just like you're, you're just shopping secondhand just for the sake of shopping. It's whether you're actually going to wear your garments like style them, actually use them outside and stuff. Um. Yeah. It definitely is a fine line between shopping secondhand and overconsumption, for sure. Um, I do think there's like, the sort of protectiveness because you're shopping secondhand, there's that internal argument that says like, oh, I'm not over consuming. It's secondhand, like the stuff is going to go to waste anyway. But I think you have to be people who have to be more mindful and careful before they buy anything. Really.</p> <p>HS: Oh, yeah. Um, do you think that purchasing secondhand fashion items through this digital secondhand fashion platform is a sustainable choice?</p> <p>P5: I think. Really compared to traditional shopping. I guess it really depends on the context. Um, because I think on average, compared to buying something like new in person and store, you really have to think about the whole life cycle. Yes. Like the whole journey of buying a garment. Let's say if you go into town to like a shop and you take, like, you know, transportation to get there, it's kind of like add to your emissions. Like also if you are depending on like what type of clothing you buy, like the materials, if you're like importing as well from different country, that's going to add to your emissions. Yeah. But also there's no general like one for me.</p>	<p>Overconsumption depends on wearing frequency</p> <p>Self protection</p> <p>Self-licensing</p>
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<p>HS: Okay. So is there anything else that you would like to share about your experience for using those platform?</p> <p>P5: Um, no, I think that's about it. Really.</p> <p>HS: Yeah. Okay. Thank you. Thank you for sharing today, thank you for your experience.</p> <p>P5: Oh, no worries, it's fine.</p>	
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C.2.6 Participants 6 Interview Transcript

Raw Data	1st Order Coding
<p>HS: Hi!</p> <p>P6: Hello!</p> <p>HS: How are you?</p> <p>P6: I'm good, good, thank you. How are you doing?</p> <p>HS: Good! Okay, shall we start?</p> <p>P6: Sure!</p> <p>HS: Okay, so, hi, thank you so much for joining this interview. I'm doing this interview as part of my dissertation, which is look at how young people in the UK shop secondhand fashions. So a lot of people, see as a sustainable shopping way, but I'm also interested in how, the low price, or the convenience might sometimes lead to buying more than we need. Almost like a new kind of a fast fashion. So... For this interview, I would like to hear your own experience and thought on the secondhand fashion shopping. And no worry, there's no right or wrong answer here. I just want your honest perspective. And I can make sure that everything that you share with will be stay anonymous and only will be used for my</p>	

<p>research.</p> <p>P6: Okay. Sure, that all sounds good.</p> <p>HS: Okay, so the first question is, how often do you buy fashion items, and how often do you buy secondhand fashion items?</p> <p>P6: So, I would say I probably a few times a month, maybe two, three times, it depends on the season, really. I feel like sometimes there's months where I'm buying things every week, and then some months where I'm really trying to not buy much, or I'm too busy, or I'm traveling, or whatever, but definitely a few times a month.</p> <p>HS: Okay, I see.</p> <p>P6: And I would say I really try to mainly just buy secondhand, or if I'm buying new, then it's kind of a piece that I've really thought about for a long time, like an investment piece, maybe from a brand that I love, kind of the higher end, like, I try to avoid shopping at Zara, H&M. Yeah, if it's new, it's something I really can't find secondhand, and really love and have thought about for a long time.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, I got you.</p> <p>P6: Or at least that's what I try to do.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, that sounds good. Yeah, so, for the secondhand that you shop, did you usually buy offline, or did you use any digital secondhand fashion platform?</p> <p>P6: I would say Vinted is probably where I buy most of my clothes, so that's I also sell a lot on there, so I feel like I'm always on there, kind of scrolling and looking and getting notifications. If there's a piece that I really want, I'll also look on Vestiaire Collective, I've bought a few things from there in the last few years, and also Depop. I used to use it a lot more, but now don't really use it, if there's a piece that I really like and it's on Depop, I'll maybe buy it through there, but Vinted is kind of the main one I go for. And then I also shop in person, I go to a lot of, kind of, car boot sales, vintage shops, charity shops, but I will say mainly online for secondhand clothes, yeah.</p> <p>HS: It's more convenient.</p> <p>P6: Yeah, for sure.</p>	<p>Two or three times a month</p> <p>Moderate shopping frequency</p> <p>Season influence shopping frequency</p> <p>Prefer secondhand</p> <p>Vinted and Vestiaire Collective user now</p> <p>Use to use Depop</p> <p>Hybrid shopping channels</p>
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<p>HS: Yeah. What usually motivates you to buy secondhand fashion items on those digital secondhand fashion platforms? Like, for example, is the prices low, or you are environmental friendly and sustainable concern, or is uniqueness?</p> <p>P6: I think it's a bit of everything. I think, firstly, it's probably sustainability. Like, I love clothes and fashion and buying clothes, but I don't want to buy lots of fast fashion and new things, for sustainability reasons, but also for quality reasons. Like, I think if I'm buying Primark or Zara or H&M, like, they're not gonna last long, and if I do want something from one of those shops...</p> <p>HS: I rather buy it secondhand.</p> <p>P6: I think, yeah, the quality and the price is better in secondhand places as well. Like, if I want a luxury item, for example, I can't really afford it new, but I could afford it...</p> <p>HS: Secondhand?</p> <p>P6: Also convenience. I feel like I would not shop as much on Vinted if I wasn't always just kind of scrolling on my phone. The last notification I got was a Vinted one. While we were sitting here, I was like...So, yeah, it's a bit of everything, but I would also say very much convenient.</p> <p>HS: Yes. So, in your secondhand fashion shopping, how important that, environmental and sustainability concern in your decision. Compared to other motivation, such as price...</p> <p>P6: I will say it's very important. It's definitely something that I think about with every purchase. Even if it's secondhand, I'll really try and kind of prioritise natural materials and brands that I know are kind of doing well, sustainably or ethically. Even if it's secondhand, I wouldn't buy from Shein, for example, and I really try and avoid buying from Zara and those kind of things. Yeah, so sustainability is probably always a part of it, for sure. Price, and then quality, and also the style is obviously very important. You know, even if something's the most sustainable and the cheapest thing ever, if I don't like the style, or if it doesn't fit with what I've already got in my wardrobe, I won't buy it.</p> <p>HS: Yeah.</p>	<p>Sustainability is prioritized motivation</p> <p>Avoid fast fashion</p> <p>Quality and price is better in secondhand</p> <p>Always browsing</p> <p>Natural material</p> <p>Sustainability and ethical awareness</p> <p>Personal style conscious</p>
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<p>P6: For sure.</p> <p>HS: So in secondhand shopping, do you see this shopping way as a way to express your personal styles or identity?</p> <p>P6: Yeah, definitely. I think, especially kind of working or studying within fashion...You see the same styles over and over and over again, and, I feel like we're all very aware of the trends.</p> <p>HS: Yes.</p> <p>P6: Even though some trends are really cute, you don't want to be kind of wearing the same as everyone else, so I feel like shopping secondhand, especially on Vinted, or kind of, you know, charity shops or whatever...you're just naturally not going to be wearing the same as everyone else, and you can kind of adapt a trend that you really like into your own personal style more, and kind of be a bit more unique that way. And also kind of, like, the hunt of it.</p> <p>HS: It's quite fun!</p> <p>P6: Yeah.</p> <p>P6: If everything's just kind of on the rails, just like 10 of the same item in every size, and it's just easy for you to pick, it's kind of too easy, it's no fun. You want to search for a little bit. And I think if I'm, like, watching TV or something, and I'm scrolling through Vinted...I'll scroll for so long, like my brain is going foggy, and then if you find something you really like that's, like a good price, and you put a bid on it, and they accept it, it's like, I hope they accept my bid and not someone else's, it's like a bit of a race. So I feel like that's probably also a motivator, and it maybe shouldn't be. I should maybe be a bit more tactful.</p> <p>HS: Haha, is so fun.</p> <p>P6: Almost, like, gamified.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, especially if you just browsing that, you don't know what's going to show you.</p> <p>P6: And their algorithm is so good, I find as well compared to other apps. Like, they know my style, they know what I'm looking for.</p> <p>HS: It's the big data.</p> <p>P6: Yeah. Yeah. They're too good at it.</p>	<p>Personal identity expression</p> <p>Thrill of hunt</p> <p>Hedonic value</p> <p>Gamification effect</p> <p>Algorithm drives impulsive buying</p>
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<p>HS: So, like, can you describe a time when you are buying secondhand fashion, and give you a positive feeling or a sense of certifications? Like, what made it valuable to you?</p> <p>P6: I think one that really stands out is a top that I bought on Vestiaire. At the beginning of the year. It's a brand that I have known and loved for years, and when I was living and working in Copenhagen, that's when I first, kind of, became aware of the brand, and it's a brand that isn't very big in the UK. I used to love their shows, and I kind of know the designer a little bit, and I think they're just the coolest thing ever, and I've always wanted a piece from them. And, like, all the Copenhagen cool girls have pieces from them, and I always wanted one, but they're always quite expensive.</p> <p>HS: Yes.</p> <p>P6: And I've been looking for a years, kind of just browsing on and off, you know, it's one of the things that I search for. And I think it was just before Fashion Week in February, I found this top from the brand on Vestiaire. And it was super cheap. Not super, like, I think I've still paid £100, but compared to what it would be, the price, or even in Denmark, because I think the brand's just not really known here.</p> <p>P6: And I was, like, I was thinking about it for ages, I didn't want to impulse buy something like that, and then when I finally bought it, it was, like, so satisfying that it's a piece that I kind of had my eye on for so long, and I knew that Fashion Week was coming up, and I knew I could wear it then, and now, like, every time I wear it still, I'm like so happy with it, and if I bought it new, I don't think I can feel like that.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, I understand that feeling. So, do you feel there's some social or status value that tells you to shop secondhand fashion items?</p> <p>P6: I think so. I don't know if it's the same kind of the general population, but for me especially, kind of being in the fashion industry, and a lot of friends are the same... I feel like if I showed up somewhere in, like, a full Shein outfit, I will get shunned, I will get like kicked out. So, I do feel like sometimes if I'm going to a fashion</p>	<p>Sense of accomplishment</p> <p>Community belongingness</p>
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event in sustainability, or even, like, when I started going to Uni I was like always checking my outfit, being like, is any of this fast fashion? Like someone asked me about my outfit, would I feel comfortable

P6: I can use it all secondhand, so I guess there's kind of that pressure, which is a good thing, I think. I think everyone should feel guilty for buying fast fashion clothes.

HS: Yes.

P6: In a way. So yeah, I think there is some sort of pressure, especially maybe in terms of fashion, that you want to look unique and not...Mmm...Because I feel like sometimes I walk down the street...like central London, and you have all the kind of...the girls that maybe are into fashion, but, like, follow the trends, and I'm like I could tell you where all of your outfits are from, and that's I don't want people to do that for me, you know? Yes! Like, I don't want to recognize, like, oh, your coat's from Zara, like, that's embarrassing.

HS: Yeah.

HS: I mean, we want some uniqueness and we don't want to follow the trends.

P6: Exactly. And if you do, then you want to do it in, like, your own way, and not feel...

P6: Just bought a whole look from a website.

HS: Yeah, no, just being the copycat.

P6: Yeah, exactly.

HS: Okay, so you said before, like, you mostly only buy secondhand fashion, so it's kind of like replacing you to buy something new?

P6: Yeah, I would say so. I think...Or if there's something I want, I'll always look secondhand first. And then if...I really can't, like, a pair of jeans that I need to try on. Maybe I'll buy that new, or, like, a white top. But yeah, I'll always go secondhand first. I'm actually... I've got, like, a clothing app, I don't know if I've shown you this before, where I track every single item that I have. Which is insane. And then you can see your stats. Sorry, this is probably a tangent.

HS: No, it's okay.

People should feel guilty for buying fast fashion

<p>P6: To, like, remind myself what I've got already. And then you can see, like, what's in your wardrobe, and see what percentage of your wardrobe is, like secondhand versus new.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, of course.</p> <p>P6: Whenever I buy something new, I'm like what if that tips the scale on my app and says I buy more new than secondhand. I'm always conscious about that a little bit, I think.</p> <p>HS: So, have you ever bought more items than you planned to buy before, especially when you were browsing those digital secondhand fashion platforms?</p> <p>P6: Yeah... definitely. I think it's so easy, especially on Vinted, when things are so cheap, and there's the 'bundle' feature, where if you buy more than one thing, they give you a discount, and then the shipping's cheaper. So I'll be, like, 'oh well, it makes sense to just buy, like, three things,' and then suddenly I've got five things in my basket, and I didn't plan on buying any of them.</p> <p>HS: Yeah.</p> <p>P6: So yeah, definitely, it's so easy, and also just the way the algorithm works, like, once you've bought something, they show you loads of similar things, and you're like... 'oh, maybe I need that too,' and it's like a rabbit hole.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, I know that feeling.</p> <p>P6: Yeah, exactly.</p> <p>HS: Do you think, like, those digital secondhand platforms, are they encouraging people to reuse clothes and be more sustainable, or are they making it easier to buy more and buy impulsively?</p> <p>P6: I think both. Like for people that are conscious about sustainability and are shopping with that in mind, it's amazing. Like you can find great pieces, you're giving clothes a new life, you're avoiding fast fashion which is great. But for other people, I think it's just feeding overconsumption. Because it's like, "oh, it's secondhand, it's cheap, so it doesn't really matter if I buy more," and then they just buy loads and loads, which kind of defeats the purpose a bit.</p>	<p>Conscious about overconsumption</p> <p>Platform features cause impulsive buying</p>
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<p>HS: Yeah, exactly.</p> <p>P6: So yeah, I think it really depends on the person and their motivations.</p> <p>HS: Do you feel like the possibility of reselling makes you feel more justified when you buy something, like, “oh, I can always sell it later”?</p> <p>P6: Yeah, a little bit. Like if I really like something but I’m not 100% sure, I’ll sometimes think, “well, if I don’t wear it, I can just resell it on Vinted,” so I’ll buy it. And I have resold a lot of things, so it does kind of work, but it also makes me buy more than I probably would otherwise.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, I feel the same.</p> <p>P6: Yeah, it’s like a little safety net.</p> <p>HS: So, do you think buying secondhand fashion on these platforms is actually sustainable?</p> <p>P6: Hmm... I think it can be, but not always. If you’re buying like one thing to replace something or because you really need it, and you’re extending its life, then yeah, I think it’s sustainable. But if you’re buying five things every week because they’re cheap, even if they’re secondhand, I think that’s not really sustainable.</p> <p>HS: Yeah.</p> <p>P6: So it depends on the behaviour, not just the platform.</p> <p>HS: Do you think these platforms could do something better to support sustainable fashion?</p> <p>P6: Yeah, I think so. Like, I know Selfridges has started renting clothes, and I think that’s really cool. Maybe Vinted or Depop could have a rental feature too, where if you just need something for, you could rent it instead of buying it.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, that’s interesting.</p> <p>P6: Or maybe they could have a way of tracking how much you’re buying, like showing you how many items you’ve purchased in the last six months, to make people more aware.</p> <p>HS: Oh yeah, like a “conscious shopping tracker.”</p> <p>P6: Exactly.</p>	<p>Self-licensing and justification from reselling</p> <p>Platform renting like Selfridges</p>
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<p>P6: I think most people don't even realise how much they're buying because it's all cheap and it doesn't feel like you're spending much.</p> <p>HS: Okay, thank you so much for your time today.</p> <p>P6: No problem, I'm happy to help.</p> <p>HS: Your answers are super helpful for my dissertation.</p> <p>P6: Yay, I'm glad. Good luck finishing it!</p> <p>HS: Thank you!</p>	
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C.2.7 Participants 7 Interview Transcript

Raw Data	1st Order Coding
<p>HS: Okay, Hi!</p> <p>P7: Hi!</p> <p>HS: If you are ready, can we start?</p> <p>P7: Yes, let's start!</p> <p>HS: Okay, I'm doing this interview as a part of my dissertations, so we just look at how young people in the UK shop secondhand fashions. A lot of people see secondhand fashion as sustainable, but I'm also interested in the low prices...</p> <p>P7: Okay.</p> <p>HS: And convenience etc. this feature might sometimes lead to buying more than we need, and it's almost like a new kind of shopping of fast fashion, so I would like to hear about your own experience and through this and on secondhand fashion shopping. There is no right or wrong answer here. I want to. I just want your honest perspective, and I can make sure that everything you said will stay anonymous and only be used for my research.</p>	

<p>HS: Alright. So, let's start with the first question? How often do you usually buy fashion items, and how often would you typically purchase them?</p> <p>P7: Anything about fashion?</p> <p>HS: Anything.</p> <p>P7: Generally, two to three times a month!</p> <p>HS: Okay, so in this two to three times a month, how much is about secondhand fashion?</p> <p>P7: Because I buy second-hand less frequently, so it might only be two or three times every 6 months I would buy a secondhand item.</p> <p>HS: Okay, so do you usually buy those secondhand online or in person?</p> <p>P7: I mostly shop offline because I find that for me, the quality and design of secondhand items are more important, so I usually like to see them in person, try them on, and then decide if they're okay before making a purchase. If it were online, I might only buy from well-known brands or vintage items that have some assurance about their authenticity.</p> <p>HS: Have you ever used any secondhand platforms, and do you think they are quite good?</p> <p>P7: There's one called the Vestiaire Collection I will use. Because if I'm going to buy secondhand, it would be a slightly more expensive brand. And I use that app because it has quality assurance.</p> <p>HS: So what kind of motivations do you generally have to buy on these secondhand platforms? For example, they might be more affordable, or they could be environmentally friendly, which is a form of sustainability. Or perhaps these items are quite unique?</p> <p>P7: I think sustainability is what I value most, because you're buying secondhand items already, so... Buying secondhand inherently aligns with a more sustainable for the wider</p>	<p>Low secondhand frequency</p> <p>Prefer offline</p> <p>Quality conscious</p> <p>Vestiaire Collection user – authentication trust</p> <p>Sustainability and environmental motivation</p>
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<p>environment, being inherently more eco-friendly. Beyond that, I particularly value seeing innovative elements within the product's eco-conscious foundation, like remixing two secondhand pieces into a well-executed design. That would make it feel truly unique to me. The item itself is inherently one-of-a-kind, and when combined with creative design elements, I find myself genuinely drawn to it.</p> <p>HS: Understood, first of all, it's definitely about its sustainability. And it is also a relatively special and unique item.</p> <p>P7: Particularly in the special design, or those that have been used by someone before, such as a designer who is very famous, or even by a celebrity, can endow them with some unique value. I find this aspect quite interesting.</p> <p>HS: Understood, overall, things like environmental protection and sustainability those factors affect quite a large proportion.</p> <p>P7: Because for me, buying second-hand is always about sustainability.</p> <p>HS: Understood, so when you're buying these second-hand fashions, do you have any influence from things like social media or influencers on your decision to purchase secondhand fashion items?</p> <p>P7: I think there will be a small impact, like with the Kim Kardashians family. Because they actually like to buy secondhand items and then either buy some brand new clothes. They've started a project called Kim Conversions Wardrobe, and they takes their old stuff out and sells it off. It allows their fans to wear the clothes they love, on the other hand, it's also very environmentally friendly as it keeps the clothes circulating for longer.</p> <p>HS: Understood, so do you think when you're browsing these second-hand platforms online, and shopping around, would you feel like you're on a thrill of hunt? Just like you don't really have anything you're particularly interested in buying, but you just</p>	<p>Creative innovation motivation</p> <p>Focus on scarcity and fame</p> <p>Sustainability is core value</p> <p>Influenced by influencer</p>
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secondhand purchase will replace you go buy something new, or it just an additional way to shop?

P7: For me, I think it's a coexistence because it can be simply understood as my preference for buying secondhand items. However, purchasing new things might make more sense to me in terms of being decisive. If I have identified that I want something new, then I will definitely go out and buy it. But when it comes to buying secondhand items, it doesn't necessarily mean I have to do so today. However, if I come across one, I will purchase it. So there is more uncertainty, it might buy or not buy, but purchasing new things maybe like is part of my plan for this month, I will definitely go and buy it. There is no contradiction in this views on the two matters.

HS: Then, for example, if you're browsing a secondhand platform today and you just want to buy something, not even want to buy anything today, but because the big data knows you well, and keep showing something that you like. So will you buying more and more when you scrolling on those secondhand platform?

P7: There are possible to happened but however maybe I will control myself the number of times I buy new things or the budget for buying new things will be evenly distributed to buying secondhand items.

HS: You will decide based on the situation, so do you think about things like buying secondhand will brings to you the enjoyment or emotional value? Then makes you to buy them more frequently.

P7: You said to buy secondhand items?

HS: For example, during this period, secondhand items might indeed bring you a great sense of satisfaction. Moreover, with the popularity of fashion trends at this time, would this make you pay more attention to the category of secondhand itmes? As a result, you may increase your frequency of purchasing them.

Coexistence of buying secondhand and brand new

Self control

HS: Do you think that a digital secondhand fashion platform like this is actually slowly getting closer to fast fashion in terms of its purchasing format?

P7: I think its nature might be somewhat like fast fashion, for example, they sell things at very low prices, combined with some marketing strategies, which make it particularly easy for customers to impulse buy, in certain aspects, I feel that it's a bit like fast fashion. I think it's about 60-70 % similar, but not exactly the same because fast fashion is more inclined towards low cost, then volume, and then proceed with a transaction, but secondhand sometimes still occurs. It doesn't reach such a large volume, and it may only be produced once during its production, but many hands will trade through it.

HS: It can only be said that there is a characteristic of sustainability here in the secondhand.

P7: Its current situation might be that he has been influenced by the marketing strategy of some platforms, which have given them a fast fashion vibe.

HS: Understood. So how do you sometimes convince yourself to make a purchase that may not necessarily be reasonable.

P7: How to persuade myself?

HS: Yes, for example, you bought something today that you really don't need very much, and how do you make it into something that convinces yourself to make it reasonable.

P7: If I really like something and it's not urgently needed right now, I might convince myself to see it as a product for the long term. I might think that I don't need it now, but I'm sure I will need it next week or next month. Then try to convince yourself to buy this thing, but in fact, it's not a very good idea.

HS: It's a bit like self-justification.

60-70% like fast fashion

Self-licensing and justification

<p>P7: In fact, it is a consumption.</p> <p>HS: Do you think, for example, that when you on a secondhand platform, reselling these items could make you less considering in your purchasing behavior, like not considering as much? Because you'll eventually sell it anyway, so even if you don't need it now or because the price is cheap, or because it's really beautiful, you will still buy it.</p> <p>P7: I might have this thought, anyway I feel that since I can sell it again myself, it doesn't matter much now that the price is so cheap. I just bought it, and if it really doesn't work out, I'll sell it. In fact, in the end, it's probably just going to be thrown away at home. It might not even be sold because it has passed its time, and there's no point in bothering with it anymore and that period is over. That kind of energy is gone which is actually a rather wasteful behavior.</p> <p>HS: Understood, is also a process of self-justification. These products actually make up a larger proportion because sometimes it's possible that impulse overcomes the rational brain. Have you ever felt like when purchasing secondhand items is ok because you are buying secondhand items, which is also a form of sustainable consumption. Because secondhand items has the sustainable features, so it's not big deal if you buy more.</p> <p>P7: There might be a bit of this thought, but because I personally wouldn't buy secondhand and then sell it again, there may not be the habit. So when I buy, I will consider it a bit more. Once I buy it, I will use it continuously. Because I don't have the habit of selling it once it reaches me, then sustainability actually ends at that point for me. In fact, in the end, if I don't need it anymore, I will throw it away like garbage, which can cause certain pollution and so on. Therefore, before buying, I will think about it a bit clearer.</p> <p>HS: Even though it's a secondhand item, you still buy a lot. So, do you think that even in secondhand fashion items, there can still be an issue of overconsumption?</p>	<p>Resell as idea – overconsumption – wasteful behaviour</p>
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<p>P7: I think there will be some, because I feel that the second-hand sustainable one needs to have it, and it needs to be liquid.</p> <p>Although you sell it as if it were new, turning it into second-hand, you are essentially recycling once. Then the second person sells it to a third person. Then it might be environmentally friendly once, but if any of the people in between doesn't sell their used items or doesn't have the habit of selling things, then that item may become useless. In this case, they would throw it away, which is actually an end-of-life behavior for both the environment and themselves.</p> <p>HS: Understood.</p> <p>P7: Yes, so I think is about how to compare. If something can be passed down and continue over time, it can truly be a sustainable system in the sense of being able to last forever. But if something ends up with one person and then gets thrown away outside, like in a park, and somehow pollutes the environment, then I don't think it can truly be considered a perfect sustainable system.</p> <p>HS: Understood, so you think that purchasing some secondhand fashion items through a digital secondhand fashion platform is a sustainable choice?</p> <p>P7: On the platform, I think it is because for example, if you go to a secondhand store. From the moment you purchase something secondhand, like driving yourself to the store, doesn't that drive pollution into the environment? Then when you're out shopping and drink a bottle of water, and throw the plastic bottle outside, that actually counts as pollution too, but now in the digital secondhand platform you can directly reduce emissions at home, you can reduce any kind of emissions that you can, and so on. In fact, I think this is also considered a very environmentally friendly approach.</p> <p>HS: From this perspective, yes.</p> <p>P7: The definition of buying secondhand through the method is no different from what you would buy in a store, right? Many people</p>	<p>Online reduced emissions – environmental friendly approach</p> <p>Achieve “green energy”</p>
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nowadays use what is called 'green energy,' which includes even the electricity from your computer, as you can harness solar power and achieve a zero-pollution, zero-emission shopping process. This has also been implemented by many express delivery services. Some of the green energy delivery services, such as electric vehicles or similar means, aim to achieve zero emissions.

HS: Yes, this angle is what I hadn't considered before. So, what do you think are the changes these platforms can make to better support sustainable fashion moving forward?

P7: I think if these platforms can do so on the premise of ensuring they are not losing money, for example, take my case. I bought a bag on this platform and after using it for some time, I no longer liked it. Then the platform could quickly repurchase my bag from me at a slightly lower price than what I originally paid. This would allow me to get the money back immediately. In such cases, I am very willing to have my second-hand items circulated again on this platform. For instance, if the platform adds some features. In terms of more humane policies, I think the first thing it ensures is a continuous action for the sustainability of second-hand goods. If I sell something again several times, I won't just throw it away to waste or pollute. If there were more platforms with such policies, I believe they would have a better impact on sustainability or the second-hand market.

HS: Understand, so if you have any other experiences to share with us about using those digital secondhand fashion platform?

P7: Um... purchase experience, yes! Because I use that very platform which I just mentioned, and since I mainly buy luxury goods on it, I find it to be quite good. The point is, he can say whatever he wants. He can argue with the shopkeeper about the price. For example, if you think something is a bit beyond your budget, you can. Offer a reasonable price, and if the shopkeeper agrees, you can sell it at a lower price to get it. I think this way will save some money. You can directly negotiate the price with the store owner, and there will be many tests involved, such as

<p>authenticity checks of the goods. This ensures that you feel more confident when making purchases. The logistics services are also quite comprehensive, including various return and exchange policies.</p> <p>HS: Understood, okay. So after you use the secondhand fashion platform, do you feel that there should be more actions or mechanisms in place to truly support sustainability?</p> <p>P7: What I just said is that if the platform could issue more behaviors that are beneficial to users, such as being witty and smart, it would make people feel confident when buying. Even if I regret it later, I can quickly return the item to the platform for them to sell again. This kind of mechanism will first build trust in this product among more people, allowing them to buy on this platform. Second-hand because I know that even if I don't like it, I can resell it or return it, and then let this thing go to someone who really likes it. Similar systems might make more people like them.</p> <p>HS: Understood. Okay, so all about today! Thank you for sharing!</p> <p>P7: No worries at all!</p>	
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C.2.8 Participants 8 Interview Transcript

Raw Data	1st Order Coding
<p>HS: Okay, hi!</p> <p>HS: Okay, hi, how are you?</p> <p>P8: I'm good, yup.</p> <p>HS: Good, pretty good. Okay, so thank you for helping me today. So, if you're ready, we are about to start it.</p> <p>P8: Yeah.</p> <p>HS: Okay, so, hi, thank you so much for joining this interview. I'm doing this interview as part of my dissertation, which is to look at</p>	

<p>how young people in the UK shop secondhand fashions. So, lots of people see secondhand fashion as sustainable shopping ways, but I'm also interested in how the low price and convenience might sometimes lead to buying more than we need. It's almost like a new kind of fast fashion, so I would like to hear about your own experience and thoughts on secondhand fashion shopping. So, no worry, there's no right or wrong answer here, I just want your honest perspectives, and I can make sure everything you share will stay anonymous and only be used for my research.</p> <p>P8: Okay, let's get started.</p> <p>HS: Okay, so the first question is, how often do you buy fashion items, and how often do you purchase secondhand fashion items?</p> <p>P8: I think probably once a month, or maybe two months... It really depends on monthly income. And, I don't really purchase secondhand a lot, but I do have some experience with secondhand clothing or fashion purchasing, yeah.</p> <p>HS: Mmm, okay, so, when you are purchasing secondhand fashion items, do you usually do it in person, or have you used any digital secondhand fashion platform?</p> <p>P8: I think I've done both.</p> <p>P8: Yeah, I usually go to secondhand marketing events. But I also tried to buy it online, because it saves a lot of time for me.</p> <p>HS: Like, what platform did you use?</p> <p>P8: I think I used Vinted several times, but I also checked Depop once, yeah.</p> <p>HS: Okay, sounds good. So, what usually motivates you to purchase secondhand fashion items on those digital secondhand fashion platforms? Like, because the price is low, is saving money, or is environmental-friendly and sustainability concern, something like that? Or the item's uniqueness?</p> <p>P8: I think it's a bit of a mixture. I care about the low price because it's already, you know, secondhand. That's what I'm seeking the low price, but at the same time, also the good condition of the items. To be honest, I never thought about sustainability from a consumer perspective. For me, it's just lower price and good condition. Even sometimes, I checked out the brand a bit, yeah.</p>	<p>Once or twice a month</p> <p>Low – moderate shopping frequency</p> <p>Purchase depends on income</p> <p>Hybrid shopping</p> <p>Vinted and Depop(once) user</p> <p>Price and condition conscious</p>
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<p>But I do think shopping for secondhand items online is probably... a bit more sustainability, you know. Because I think it will have... like garbage waste if you host an event and stuff like that.</p> <p>HS: I got you. So, how important are environmental and sustainability concerns in your decision to buy secondhand fashion compared to other motivations, like low price or uniqueness?</p> <p>P8: To be honest, it's not very important to me personally. I know a lot of people talk about sustainability now, but for me, my main motivation is still the price and the value. If I can find something good, cheaper, and in good quality, that's more important than whether it's sustainable or not.</p> <p>HS: Mmm, I understand.</p> <p>HS: Do you see secondhand fashion shopping as a way to express your personal style or identity?</p> <p>P8: Yeah, I think so, because... I am a bit old fashioned guy. Sometimes you can find some special items that you can't find in normal retail shops. So, if I find something unique, I feel like it's part of expressing myself and my style, especially if not many people have it.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, that makes sense. So do you feel any thrill of hunt or the excitement of finding something unique and motivating your purchase?</p> <p>P8: Oh absolutely, that's like 90% of what motivated me. I will feel very happy if I can find something that fits me, and at the moment if the price and the conditions of the goods are all perfect will make me feel so enjoyable. So, that's the most motivation.</p> <p>HS: Can you describe a time when you bought a secondhand fashion item and it gave you a positive feeling or sense of satisfaction?</p>	<p>Sustainability irrelevant to purchase decision</p> <p>Uniqueness motivation Personal style expression</p> <p>Hedonic value Enjoyable motivation</p>
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<p>P8: Oh, yes. I bought a jacket once at a secondhand market, and the price was really good and is, like much cheaper than the original price. And I really loved the design. I remember feeling happy because I got a good deal and also got something that felt a little unique.</p>	<p>Emotional value</p>
<p>HS: Yeah, I know that feeling. So, do you buy secondhand fashion to replace buying new stuff or is it just an additional way to shop?</p>	
<p>P8: I think for me it won't be able to replace the brand new stuff, because the brand new stuff is always designing, and they're like trying to design more stuff and it will always be brand new stuff, right? But it really depends, I think secondhand shopping has their own Fanbase. Just like rich people they get luxury stuff, and guys like me will go for secondhand stuff.</p>	<p>Buy secondhand and brand new are coexistence</p>
<p>HS: Oh, I see. So have you ever bought more items than you plan to? Like when you browse a secondhand platform, it keeps showing your style, and something you will like. Will you buy more than you plan to because of that?</p>	
<p>P8: Hmm...I mean every time I will set a value that I won't go over that money. Like £100 or £200 each time for the limit, if there's leftover, I can buy more next month.</p>	<p>Self regulation Budget control</p>
<p>HS: Do you feel like there's any kind of social or status value in buying secondhand fashion?</p>	
<p>P8: Hmm... maybe a little bit, but not too much for me personally. I know some people see secondhand shopping as trendy now, especially among young people, but for me it's more practical, I'm not doing it to show off. It's more about saving money and finding good quality items.</p>	<p>Money saving Good quality items</p>
<p>HS: Do you think these digital secondhand platforms encourage people to reuse clothes and be sustainable, or do they make it easier to buy more impulsively?</p>	

P8: Honestly, both. On one hand, they give clothes a second life, which is good for sustainability. But at the same time, because prices are low and platforms are very convenient, they also encourage people to buy more than they actually need. I think it really depends on how you use them.

HS: Do you feel like the possibility of reselling makes you more comfortable buying things? Like thinking, "I can always sell it later"?

P8: Yeah, a little bit. I think, if I buy something and later I don't like it, I know I can just resell it on the platform. So it feels less risky, which sometimes makes me buy more easily.

HS: So we all know, there's a feature for secondhand fashion items which is sustainability, so have you ever felt is ok to buy more because it is secondhand items?

P8: I don't think I will. Yeah, and you know I feel like some people are buying for themselves because they have no choice, like they're on the edge but they need to get through the winter. So for those people, they're thinking more about themselves, so it is not about sustainability or not at all.

HS: Oh, so it is not about the trends or environment...

P8: Yeah, like you know the original thought of secondhand market is to help those low-income families, but recent 2-5 years nowadays, purchasing secondhand just becoming a trends, after that some secondhand has much higher price more than its value... and those low-income families are not going to afford again. I don't think people are thinking about that anymore which is sad I think.

HS: Yeah... so do you think purchasing on those digital secondhand platforms might be contributing to overconsumption?

Resell drives overconsumption

Secondhand initially for low-income families - not care about sustainability a lots

Secondhand recently become a trend

<p>P8: Maybe... I mean it really depends on the status. For me, I think I only purchase like 1 or 2 a month which is I think is okay. But I know there's some people will buy it in a crazy way so... that will definitely causing overconsumption.</p> <p>HS: Do you think purchasing secondhand fashion on these platforms is a sustainable choice?</p> <p>P8: Hmm... Maybe because we are saving power and energy. And you know if it is offline, then it will cause more garbage things like that but online you just need to click so ...But to be honest, I like shopping in person more, because it is more fun you know. But online is okay too, I am not biased.</p> <p>HS: Yeah, that's true.</p> <p>HS: What do you think these secondhand platforms could do better to support sustainable fashion?</p> <p>P8: I think they could maybe host some online events, to give more discounts and educate consumers like they could promote more conscious buying, like showing people how many items they've purchased recently, or encouraging them to think twice before buying. Maybe also give tips about how to make clothes last longer, or encourage reselling instead of throwing things away. Also there can be more transparency. Because you know people are having that stereotype that secondhand are dirty, old and smelly etc. so if they can be very transparency on how they are being sustainable for doing online shopping, I think it will encourage more people to buy secondhand, not only low-income families.</p> <p>HS: Okay, so that's all about today! Thank you so much for sharing your experience. It's really helpful for my dissertation.</p> <p>P8: No problem, happy to help.</p> <p>HS: Great, I really appreciate your time today.</p> <p>P8: You're welcome, good luck with your research!</p> <p>HS: Thank you!</p>	<p>Overconsumption depends on the status</p> <p>Online saved emissions</p> <p>Offline shopping more interesting</p> <p>Educate consumer about sustainability</p> <p>Improve transparency</p>
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Appendix D Generative AI Mapping Document

Gen AI tool	What prompt did you use (please copy and paste)	What output was generated from this prompt?	How did you use this output in your work?	Date of use
Chatgpt 4.0	<p>I am conducting interviews for my dissertation My research primarily emphasises unsustainable consumption behaviour within the secondhand market, exploring how the convenience and affordability of secondhand platforms lead many to unconsciously purchase excessively, resulting in overconsumption or even serving as an alternative to fast fashion. Although the nature of the purchased goods differs, the purchasing behaviour is indistinguishable from that of fast fashion. Could you kindly draft a brief English opening for my interview based on all the information provided above? Thank you.</p>	Interview Opening speech	I used it for my interview opening and make the participants understand more about the interview context and their rights.	17/08/2025
Chatgpt 4.0	<p>Could you please help me to translate the interview transcript into Chinese and make sure there is no changing meanings and keep all context? Thank you.</p>	Interview transcript translation	I have reviewed all translations and checked them sentence by	27/08/2025

			sentence in comparison with the Chinese, ensuring the accuracy of the translations.	
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