GARMENT SHARING EVENTS – THE PERSPECTIVE OF ORGANISERS AND PARTICIPANTS

Thesis for One-Year Master, 15 ECTS
Textile Management

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2019.18.01
Acknowledgements

We would like to express our appreciation to everyone who has encouraged us during our research time with motivation and inspiration.

Further, we thank our supervisor Jenny Balkow for her guidance and our fellow students who provided us with their opinions and support.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to all research participants, who shared their experience, knowledge and thoughts freely with us and gave this thesis a valuable dimension of reality thereby.

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The Swedish School of Textiles in June 2019
Abstract

Title: Garment Sharing Events - The Perspective of Organisers and Participants

Publication year: 2019

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Background: Different social, environmental and economical aspects indicate the current need for sustainability and build the imperative for a change in the fashion industry from the prevailing “take-make-dispose” consumption habit to more circular practices, which minimise the input of resources. According to research, the most direct way to capture value and design out waste and pollution in the textile system lays therewith in increasing the number of times a garment is worn. Therefore, the key challenge is to subvert the habit that garments are perceived as disposable and to increase their utilisation.

Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to investigate how sharing events influence the use phase of garments through the perspective of organisers and participants of such events.

Method: The study implemented a qualitative research nature and followed thereby an exploratory research design and strategy. Through semi-structured interviews, event organisers of different organisations with a well-founded experience in sharing events - staged in a Circular Fashion environment - provided their insights on the influence sharing events obtain regarding the use phase of garments. The research strategy supplemented the theories and empirical data with the insights of participants of a sharing event through self-completion questionnaires.

Conclusion: Besides their practical ability to pass on garments to various users, sharing events are indicated to prolong the garment usage by promoting a possible change in the consumer’s mindset. Doing so, different aspects connected to Event Management, -Strategy as well as additional offers and activities, besides swapping, are facilitating. As the research outcome hints, the sharing event model, as one of the simplest forms of collaborative garment consumption, is indicated to influence the usage by enabling a change from garment consumer to user.

Keywords: Clothing Utilisation, Garment Use Phase, Sharing Events, Swapping, Circular Economy, Circular Fashion
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1 Introduction

‘We live in a world where rapid anthropogenic changes occur’ that drastically affect life on the planet and the environment, as Sauvé, Bernard and Sloan (2016) discuss in their article. Global economies based on high exploitation of natural resources are facing a systematic shift in their status quo, since the business models of “take-make-dispose” have several negative environmental and societal effects (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017), leading to increased demand for sustainability.

1.1 Background

The industry of textiles, which is of focus in this thesis, is a vital component of the global economy, providing employment for many individuals around the world (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). Apart from this, textiles and clothes in particular are ubiquitous in human life, since they fulfil basic needs such as protection from weather conditions or comfort; but they are also essential parts of the individual’s allocation within the fabric of society and expression of self-identity (Baldwin & Roberts, 2006). Burns, Mullet and Bryant (2016) address how new technologies and globalisation have transformed the fashion industry over the last fifteen years, with international companies managing to expand their capabilities on a global scale. At the same time, consumer demand for fashionable high-quality garments at reasonable prices is what formed the fast fashion supply chain, which is a dominant business model of the contemporary textile industry (Burns, Mullet & Bryant, 2016).

The fundamental concept behind the fast fashion strategy has turned out to be overconsumption, fast-changing trends and poor garment quality (Rathinamoorthy, 2019). These factors lead consumers to create weak relationships with their clothes and thus inhibit the garments’ optimum utilisation; as a result, globally each year, millions of garments end up in a landfill (Rathinamoorthy, 2019) and as the recent report by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation similarly demonstrates: ‘More than USD 500 billion of value is lost every year due to clothing underutilisation’ (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017, p.3); this is consistent with the fact that fifteen years ago people wore clothes for twice as long as nowadays (Koszewska, 2018). The indicated issue of low rates in garment use forms the foundational focus of this thesis.

The importance of this topic is furthermore highlighted by clothing consumers, who increasingly acknowledge this as a problem, for example, 60% of German and Chinese citizens admit to excessive buying of new garments (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). Moreover, the report by Ellen MacArthur Foundation provides further quantitative insights that render underutilisation and overproduction of garments a real problem for sustainability, as production of clothing is two times higher than it was in 2000, while, during the same period, the times a garment was used, before it was no longer utilised, declined by 40%, as seen in Figure 1. This phenomenon is greatly encouraged by the fast fashion business model.
Figure 1: Apparel Production vs. Apparel Utilisation, authors’ figure adapted from Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2017)

More specifically, a great sustainability obstacle that the fashion industry ought to overcome is the dependence of current linear systems on non-renewable resources – ‘98 million tonnes in total per year – including oil to produce synthetic fibres, fertilisers to grow cotton, and chemicals to produce, dye, and finish fibres and textiles’ (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017, p.20). With low rates of utilisation and low levels of recycling, this wasteful system is massively contributing to the depletion of the planet’s natural resources (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017).

The negative impact of fashion on the environment could be seen on other aspects as well. For instance, in 2015 greenhouse gas emissions from textiles production reached 1.2 billion tonnes of CO2; to grasp the equivalent of such impact, it is assessed to be ‘more than the emissions of all international flights and maritime shipping combined’ (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017, p. 20). Additionally, synthetic fibres escalate the microplastic pollution of the marine ecosystem, a phenomenon that is regarded as an invisible disaster caused by human activities and is detected to be present in all living organisms - including humans (Jankowski, 2019).

In correlation with the issues above, studies underline the worsening of the situation by the predicted growth of the global population. Demographic data from the United Nations Population Fund present that the world population had reached 7.5 billion in 2016 and is increasing by 1.2% every year (Koszewska, 2018). At the same time, yearly consumption on emerging markets is expected to rise from USD 12 trillion in 2010 to USD 30 trillion in 2025 (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2012). The correlation of population growth and textile consumption has to be taken into consideration by the textile industry in order to comply with demand for more sustainability, while fulfilling the sartorial needs of such census.
1.2 Problem Discussion and Research Gap

Consequently, the factors mentioned in the Background clearly indicate the necessity of the fashion industry to change current linear production and consumption models to more sustainable practices. Concretely, in their article Todeschini et al. (2017, p.3) discourse on five macro trends for sustainability-related business models in fashion. These are the following:

i) Circular Economy
ii) Corporate Social Responsibility
iii) Sharing Economy and Collaborative Consumption
iv) Technological Innovation
v) Consumer Awareness

This thesis will point its centre of attention towards Circular Economy, as well as Collaborative Consumption and sharing applied in the fashion industry and the use phase of garments. Gallaud and Laperche (2016) underline that the consumer is the ultimate enabler of circular business models; meanwhile, Kirchherr et al. (2017, p.228) suggest that the consumer perspective may provoke the ‘flipside of the Circular Economy business model coin’. However, the negligence of the consumer in Circular Economy definitions demonstrates the research gap regarding the consumers’ role and their eagerness towards such a shift (Kirchherr et al., 2017). Researchers also detect that the phenomenon of consumers’ low engagement with such models is observed by the practitioners within the industry; concisely, business leaders complain on how consumers demand sustainability from companies, but in the end it is not reflected in their purchasing behaviour (Accenture, 2014). Therefore, this thesis will emphasise in addressing the research gap regarding sharing practices in the textile industry.

As discussed in the Background chapter, it is indispensable to examine ways to alleviate overconsumption and overproduction, while activating the role of the consumer. For that matter, the consumer will be viewed as part of the value chain and enabler of use-prolonging business and consumption models on the example of sharing events, through the analysis of the perspective of both, participants and organisers of those. The use phase is thereby defined in this thesis as the time span between the garment purchase by the consumer until the garment disposal; it consists of laundering aspects, use frequency, reuse and end of use (Laitala, 2014).

Thereon, the consequence of consumers’ sartorial choices, openness to new business models, the manner of dealing with used garments on the example of sharing events as well as how organisers attempt to establish such events as a dominant consumption habit, are greatly taken into consideration in answering gaps found in literature and the business environment regarding the deployment of Circular Fashion.
1.3 Purpose and Research Question

This dissertation aims to investigate how to influence the use phase of garments, which is considered an extensive part of their lifetime. This is done by researching garment sharing events in a Circular Fashion context as well as out of the perspective of participants and organisers. The latter are valuable for the diagnosis of the research question, as the analysed events develop in a Circular Fashion-promoting environment, providing practical insight for further future experimentation.

Based on this purpose, the research question has been developed in order to steer the topic of this dissertation towards a narrow scope. The research aim is therefore defined in answering the following research question:

How do Sharing Events influence Garment Usage out of the Perspective of Organisers and Participants?

1.4 Systematic Procedure

Within this thesis, six chapters build up on each other, as illustrated in Figure 2, and guide stepwise to answer the purpose of the research, how sharing events influence garment usage out of the organiser’s and the participant’s perspective.

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Figure 2: The Thesis’ Structure, authors’ figure
The first chapter guides thereby into the thematic by introducing its background and connected challenges, describing the problematics appearing through increased textile production and garment underutilisation. Out of that, the research gap was detected, which is taken as foundation for the thenceforth laid down research purpose and -question, which focuses on sharing events as influencers of the use phase in a Circular Fashion context.

Thereafter, the theoretical framework builds a foundational knowledge and understanding relevant for the topic, based on researched literature. Within the course of the chapter, the regarded aspects and concepts develop from more general to specific topics within the context of this research. Doing so, the meaning of the use phase in a Circular Fashion context is laid down, while taking into account reasons for garment usage. Building up on those foundations, sharing events as Collaborative Consumption models in which Event Management Theory and -Strategy influence are considered.

Chapter 3 gives insights into the methodological considerations of this research, while explaining, assessing and reflecting on the research design. Further the chapter points out the sampling as well as empirical data collection and -analysis method.

Within the fourth chapter, the collected empirical data of organisers as well as participants is analysed into empirical results according to the themes that were detected in literature.

Following, Chapter 5 discusses the empirical results in conjunction with the findings in literature through the established themes, in order to answer the central research question, how do sharing events influence garment usage out of the organiser’s and the participant’s perspective.

Finally, the sixth chapter concludes the discussion and summarises the outcomes of the research, considering limitations, indications for further research as well as taking a future outlook into garment sharing events and their influence on garment usage.
2 Theoretical Framework

The following chapter is going to guide into this research, by establishing an understanding of the underlying theories and concepts, as well as by building a foundation for the empirical data analysis in order to answer the central aim of this thesis. Therefore, this chapter reviews relevant literature and builds a framework regarding the Circular Fashion concept and its use phase, while the central goal is to detect reasons that hinder consumers from using the garments they own. Further, sharing events and Event Management Theory as well as Strategic Planning are taken into account as foundation to answer the research question, how do sharing events influence garment usage, based on investigating the view of participants and organisers.

2.1 Garment Usage in Circular Fashion

In the following, the Circular Economy concept is described while taking into account the connected idea of Circular Fashion. Based on that, the importance of the consumer use phase is investigated and reasons are detected why consumers do not use the garments they own.

2.1.1 Circular Economy Applied in the Textile Industry

Since the industrial revolution, the dominating linear economy model follows a “take-make-dispose” strategy: it uses raw material in a sequence of extraction, production, distribution and consumption in which it ultimately ends up in waste disposal (Rathinamoorthy, 2019). In favour of achieving economic objectives, the model thereby does not take into account ecological and social concerns as well as the value that is lost with resources ending up in landfills (Sauvé, Bernard & Sloan, 2016).

Challenging this linear economic model, the concept of Circular Economy gained increased attention in the last decades by overcoming the current production, consumption and disposal practices and decreasing the negative impacts on economy and society, in order to achieve a balance between economy, environment and society (Ghisellini et al., 2016). As described by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2012), the idea of a Circular Economy roots in different schools of thought, which are related to product life and offering services instead of products.

The Circular Economy promotes a closing-the-loop production pattern through the different product life cycle stages it consists of (Ghisellini et al., 2016). It is therefore strongly resource oriented and takes into account the inputs and outputs generated during the lifetime of a product (Sauvé, Bernard & Sloan, 2016). This results in the maintaining of their value for as long as possible (European Commission, 2017).
Figure 3: Model of the Circular Fashion Concept, authors’ figure adapted from Mistra Future Fashion (2019)

Aligned with the principles of the Circular Economy, is the ‘vision of a new textiles economy’ (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017, p.27). In this context, the Circular Fashion concept was established in 2014, based on the main principles of Circular Economy and sustainable development (Green Strategy, 2019), which can be seen in Figure 3.

Circular Fashion stands for a regenerative economy that provides economical, social and environmental benefits (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). As further described by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2017, p.3), ‘in such a system clothes, textiles and fibres are kept at their highest value during use and re-enter the economy after use, never ending up as waste’.

As Ghisellini et al. (2016) describe, this transition can just take place when all actors are involved, which means that producer as well as consumer need to be active in fighting the “take-make-dispose” culture. Thereby, the consumer is the most central enabler of circular business models (Gallaud & Laperche, 2016). With their behaviour towards a more sustainable mode, they can act as ‘agents of societal change’ (Balderjahn et al., 2013, p.181). Therefore, with the help of new models and concepts, consumers not just need to care and maintain, but especially share their garments (Rathinamoorthy, 2019).
2.1.2 The Garment Use Phase

‘The implementation of Circular Economy worldwide still seems in the early stages, mainly focused on recycle rather than reuse’ (Ghisellini et al., 2016, p.11). However, as described before, worldwide the clothing utilisation has dramatically declined in the past years (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017; Rathinamoorthy, 2019).

‘A garment’s useful life makes a great difference in its total environmental impact’ (Swedish Institute, 2018, p.2). Compared to recycling, clothing reuse is better for the environment: One tonne of reused cotton T-Shirts saves twelve tonnes of CO2, while recycling one tonne just saves less than one tonne CO2 (WRAP, 2012). Mistra Future Fashion (2019) states that, if a garment stays in use three times longer than today, its carbon footprint is reduced by 65% and its water use by 66%. Additionally, high costs and the impact for laundry and disposal can be lowered (WRAP, 2012). That shows the environmental impact of the use phase.

Moreover, it needs to be taken into account, that a short garment lifetime ‘increases the need for products to be replaced faster, hence increasing the environmental load from production and disposal phases’ (Laitala & Boks, 2012, p.122). As described before, this fact is important in Circular Fashion, as ‘the ultimate goal is to retain the inherent value of products by utilising a product for as long as possible and within the shorter loops of material circulation, i.e. reuse, repair and remanufacturing’ (Milios, 2018, p.868).

Sustainable consumption in the context of Circular Fashion requires consumer not just to buy less, produce less waste and ensure that garments reach recycling systems, but especially also to use garments for a longer time (Armstrong et al., 2016; Mistra Future Fashion, 2019). The most direct way to capture value and design out waste and pollution in the textile system lays in increasing the number of times a garment is worn (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). Therefore, the key challenge is to increase the clothing utilisation and ‘reverse the trend of clothing being seen as disposable’ (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017, p.77).

As can be seen in Figure 4, in this context, F/ACT movement, a Collaborative Consumption promoting experiment, organised by the interviewed Boner and Zethraeus, lays down the way

![Figure 4: The Consumption Pyramid, authors’ figure adapted from Zethraeus (2019)](image-url)
in which garments should ideally be consumed in the Consumption Pyramid. According to Zethraeus (2019), this way of consumption ensures that the garment stays as long as possible in use, with the foundation being the “use of what we have and experience”, followed by “sharing”, the focus of this dissertation. Just if all possibilities are exhausted, a new garment should be purchased.

2.1.3 Reasons for Garment Underutilisation

In order to answer how sharing events influence the garment use out of the perspective of organisers and participants, it is necessary to consider why garments are actually not used.

In that context, many studies about consumers’ clothing disposal behaviour were conducted (see for instance Armstrong & Lang, 2013; Laitala, 2014), which focus on the consumers act of disposing a garment and ending the ownership of it, regardless of the garments condition and possible further usability (Laitala, 2014). The studies provide insights and the main reasons why garments are disposed instead of being used. These findings are highly valuable regarding the following analysis and central aim of this thesis.

Can there be differences seen in the usage of different kinds of garments (Laitala & Klepp, 2015), in general the reasons why a garment is not used can be related to either the physical properties of it or psychological user related aspects (Laitala, 2014): While the former describe the functionality and physical quality of the product, user related aspects consider the symbolic traits of the garment in relation to fashion, the personal style as well as needs and desires and hedonistic considerations, like the pleasure in the shopping activity.

Armstrong and Lang (2013), as well as Laitala (2014) reviewed in this context different studies that researched garment disposal behaviour and reasons. According to Armstrong and Lang (2013) some main reasons given thereby were fit and damage. As Laitala (2014, p.453) describes, ‘it seems that quality-related disposal such as wear and tear is most common’. As the author found out in a study in which customers were interviewed about garment disposal reasons, 49% of the participants named garment changes like abrasion, colour fading, unstable dimensions or broken parts as such (Laitala & Boks, 2012). As further main reasons named were size and fit issues (Laitala & Boks, 2012). This shows, that also an unsuitable design considering the fit, the wrong size and use properties, led to no or low usage of the garment before it was disposed (Laitala, 2014).

The Waste & Resources Action Program (WRAP) conducted a study about garment disposal reasons in the UK (compare Figure 5). As can be seen, fit and lost shape as well as damage are reasons. However, style gets introduced as another reason, which is supported by a study review Laitala and Klepp (2015) conducted. This leads to the psychological and user related aspects, which play an important role regarding the disposal and underutilisation of garments (Laitala, 2014).
Considering the human needs and the relationship between consumption and well-being as well as the social and behavioural aspects of consumption, consumers see products as satisfiers and reflect their needs in the use phase (Briceno & Stagl, 2006). That shows that there are different reasons why consumers do not fully use what they have, but want to wear different garments to express themselves in a new way again and again (Morgan & Birtwistle, 2009). That relates mainly to the motivators and attitudes that decide the disposal of apparel (Goudeau, 2014).

Are those certainly an important factor that lets the customer decide about usage of a garment, they do also lay in a really complex construct out of behavioural and social aspects. In favour of simplicity and the overall research goal of this thesis, those aspects are recognised and considered without focusing on deeper understanding of them.

Summarising the detected aspects, as Figure 6 lays down, the main reasons why garments are not used can be related to the garments quality, fit and style.

Thereby, it needs to be considered, that partly the appearance of use-stopping reasons lays in the responsibility of consumers themselves and gives them the possibility to act against the identified influences in increased purchase behaviour and the tendency to keep clothing for a shorter time’ (Morgan & Birtwistle, 2009, p.190), as per researched literature. In the case of

![Figure 5: Reasons for the Disposal of Garments, authors’ figure adapted from WRAP (2017)](image)

![Figure 6: Reasons hindering Garment Usage, authors’ figure](image)
quality issues, this can be the correct maintenance of the garment through following care instructions or the ability to repair and alter clothes (WRAP, 2012). Considering fashion change and boredom issues, the consumers’ openness for trends and fashion is deciding.

2.2 Influencing Garment Use: Relevant Theories

The past section developed the need to “use what we have” to achieve a Circular Fashion concept. In order to do so and meet the sustainability changes nowadays faced (Armstrong & Lang, 2013), ‘new models to access and maintain clothes are essential’ (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017, p.73).

Such models require alternative forms of ownership at their core, that at the same time address the need for fast-changing requirements and styles. Likewise, models that offer high quality, great fit and additional services are prerequisites in order to respond to segments that value reliability; for instance, ‘sales with warranties, clothing-on-demand, clothing resale, or sharing services’ (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017, p.73) which enhance the use phase of a garment.

As already highlighted, clothing utilisation forms a great part of discussion within this thesis. According to Rathinamoorthy (2019) clothing swaps or buying second hand are the most suitable alternatives to prolong the life cycle of a product without downscaling its quality, since most people might own garments they have never worn or no longer reflect their style, but are still in great wearable condition. For a better understanding of sharing events, the following sections investigate where they emerge from.

2.2.1 Collaborative Consumption

Sauvé, Bernard & Sloan (2016, p.55) discourse on how contemporary consumer thinking is greatly steered towards “everyone having their own equipment” in order to be independent, a phenomenon that dilates product underutilisation. However, this issue could be addressed by initiatives that refocus on shared-use; such initiatives ‘offer the potential to improve the efficiency throughout the use phase of a product, as well as reduce the needs for maintenance and storage’ (Sauvé, Bernard & Sloan, 2016, p.55).

These initiatives are part of a more generic term called Collaborative Consumption; as per Pedersen and Netter (2015) this term is ultimately about people sharing and collaborating to meet certain needs, whether it concerns transportation, accommodation, land or garments. Some well known examples from different industries include AirBnB (space sharing) and Car2Go (car sharing); nonetheless, Collaborative Consumption entails practically all types of products and services where people consume excess resources (Pedersen & Netter, 2015).

Likewise, in 2011 Time Magazine defined Collaborative Consumption as the encompassing of renting, lending and sharing of goods and named it as one of the ‘ten ideas that will change the world’ using the headline “Today’s smart choice: Don’t own. Share” (Walsh, 2011).
Researchers also noted that apart from obvious advantages, Collaborative Consumption encourages community building (Botsman & Rogers, 2010). The idea of Collaborative Consumption is already discussed by scholars in the late ‘70s as ‘events in which one or more persons consume economic goods or services in the process of engaging in joint activities with one or more others’ (Felson & Spaeth, 1978, p.614).

Thereupon, globalisation has prompted a transition to conceptual age where knowledge and experience are emphasised (Orefice, 2018), which correlates with the experience Collaborative Consumption has to offer to the consumer. Subsequently, it is debated that there has been an increase in service-based business models, such as the media service provider Netflix, which overcome the profitability barriers that product-based brands set in a linear capitalist business environment (Armstrong & Lang, 2013).

With regard to the fashion industry, Collaborative Consumption is slowly gaining ground although still it cannot be perceived as one of the dominant consumption habits. Nevertheless, Pedersen and Netter (2015) reckon that current mushrooming of such initiatives, based on community and sharing, are about to create a systematic change and substantial business potential for the fashion industry. Examples include online services like ThredUp, which is one of the largest online thrift stores globally, Swapstyle, which enables people to swap fashion worldwide, and local “swishing parties” where people share clothes from their own wardrobes (Pedersen & Netter, 2015).

In their research, Albinsson and Perera (2012) classify Collaborative Consumption into three categories:

1. The first category encompasses product service systems where consumers pay a fee for sharing a provided resource.
2. The second classification concerns redistribution markets, namely large general marketplaces, like eBay.
3. The third category encompasses collaborative lifestyles, where consumers with similar interests are ‘banding together to share and exchange less tangible assets such as time, space, skills, and money’ (Albinsson & Perera, 2012, p.305).

Nonetheless, due to the various approaches of these activities in all of the three categories, their goal can range from profit, non-profit or both (Tukker, 2015).

In this research and the study of the selected sharing events, aspects of the third category of Collaborative Consumption are mainly distinguished, like the intention of a community to connect through sharing in a ‘free-economy’ environment, in an effort to extend the understanding of sustainable fashion and consumption.

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1 Mushrooming = ‘to spring up suddenly or multiply rapidly’ (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2019)
In essence, Collaborative Consumption models are recognised as one of the best available options, regarding the consumer side, in order to shift from the present wasteful linear model to Circular Economy (Tukker, 2015). As mentioned before, these models are based on shared ownership among multiple consumers, an attribute of Circular Economy that is perceived as one of the most stubborn obstacles regarding the deployment of such models (Tukker, 2015), especially in the industry of fashion where ownership is closely bound to conventional consumption (Baldwin & Roberts, 2006). Thus, this thesis could bring aspects of sharing events to surface that could help consumers overcome such obstacles through the analysis of data collected from sharing event organisers and participants.

2.2.2 Sharing Events

Literature indicates so far that sharing is a key element of Collaborative Consumption and this thesis depends its research on this perspective. Belk defined sharing as ‘the act and process of distributing what is ours to others for their use and/or the act or process of receiving or taking something from others for our use’ (Belk, 2010, p.717). Moreover, for Albinsson and Perera (2012, p.306) sharing develops in ‘multiple contexts, for multiple reasons, and with multiple outcomes’.

Sharing is practised for as long as human interaction; yet it is the internet and global access to sharing platforms that have brought sharing to the forefront in current times, with user-generated content platforms flourishing, as for instance the video-sharing website Youtube (Belk, 2010). Such platforms create communities, which in an attempt to expand their reach or fulfil their purpose, create sharing events.

Albinsson and Perera (2012) define sharing events (or swaps) as organised occasions created by consumers or organisations; such events are alternative marketplaces that embody facets of Collaborative Consumption. The forms in which swaps manifest are based on the organisers’ motivations and target participants’ interests; in an earlier study Albinsson and Perera (2012) researched informal non-monetary clothing swaps as a form of voluntary disposition between friends or co-workers. This phenomenon of creating a sharing network is increasingly becoming well-received both on an informal and formal level (Albinsson & Perera, 2012).

As already discussed by Albinsson and Perera (2012) some events require only garment exchange, while others require monetary exchange, such as pre-purchase of tickets to the event; each event sets its own rules regarding the amount of clothes that participants have to bring, the size or the style. What is more, different motivators drive sharing events; like need for low-cost goods, limiting wastefulness, decluttering one’s lifestyle (Albinsson & Perera, 2012). Apart from building and strengthening communities, staging sharing events fosters great sustainability advantages, as the events are a protest against over-consumerism and at the same time promote the common good for the community and for the environment (Albinsson & Perera, 2012).
As aforementioned, the regarded sharing events are created to raise awareness regarding different consumption models and how consumers can discover their unique fashion style through creativity - without buying new clothes (Albinsson & Perera, 2012). In this context, swapping events are going to be part of the further empirical study of this dissertation from the organisers’ and participants’ view.

Albinsson and Perera (2012) discuss in their article that the rise of new sharing business models (such as the Chinese garment sharing platform MsParis), generates possibilities for further interdependence and sense of community between all the stakeholders in the marketplace, namely consumers, marketers and policy makers. Also, the aforementioned authors stress that although sharing businesses are still a small part of the economy, consumers welcome opportunities for sharing. In addition, it is worth mentioning the perspective of Gansky (2010) in the book, ‘The Mesh - Why sharing is the Future of Business’ where he implies that sharing is undoubtedly becoming a dominant business model, rather than a marginal alternative; thus, global retailers could benefit from observing how innovative existing feasible sharing-based business models could be translated into traditional mature industries.

With regard to sharing events it is essential to understand the drivers for success and the complexity of the art of staging an event.

2.2.3 Event Management Theory

As reported by Daniel et al. (2012, p.5409), ‘events can be described as non-standard services in which the knowledge, behaviour and commitment to such service providers are crucial’ and subsequently, ‘Event Management is the design and coordination of an event’. Moreover, according to Orefice (2018, p.20) contemporary academics and practitioners recognise the evolution of Event Theory; this is highlighted by the shift from a focus on events’ operational nature to the growing dialogue on events being perceived ‘as socially constructed staged experiences lived differently by different audiences that require designing instead of managing’.

Additionally, Toledano and Riches (2014) argue in their article that Event Management could often be a valid and yielding part of the blend for other campaigns promoting social causes; their article presents an example of how events can strengthen the community and affect behaviour. Richards (2014, p.2) stresses the social dimension of events as well; namely through repeated engagement to the event’s context and ‘the feeling of togetherness a big part of the neo-tribal event experience is formed’, which potentially has a transformational role to societal norms.

Event Management is rooted in social marketing and public relations; literature from the disciplinary of public relations describes events as tools for ‘direct communication and

\[^2\] neo = ‘in a new and different form’ (Merriam-Webster dictionary, 2019b)
tribal = ‘relating to characteristics of a tribe’ (Merriam-Webster dictionary, 2019c)
engagement’ (Toledano & Riches, 2014, p.809); moreover, events are a divergence from traditional public relations and marketing, where the organisation meets first-hand with consumers or participants and provides them with a meaningful experience through that event (Toledano & Riches, 2014) and ‘builds on the experience to create value in the long term’ (Orefice, 2018, p.21).

This is also demonstrated by Toledano and Riches (2014) in their research on how Event Management added value to accomplish a particular organisation’s goals. They examined the “Get it on!” event, which aimed at promoting healthy sexual behaviour and how to engage people into safe sex. The event’s success was based in delivering persuasive messages about safe sex to its specific audience, so as to shift their current behaviour on this topic and increase attendees’ commitment to safe sex in the long run (Toledano & Riches, 2014).

In conjunction, social marketing is considered to promote common good issues such as health, environmental protection, animal welfare, human rights and freedom; therefore, Event Management as a discipline of the former could be considered an asset tool for community building and the dissemination of sustainability as well as Circular Fashion to the public (Toledano & Riches, 2014; Richards, 2014).

It is worth mentioning, especially when discussing the delayed transition towards Circular Fashion, which forms one of the problematics of this thesis, that ‘a triggering event can produce behaviour’ (Grunig, 1993, p.123); or better in this case, alter it from linear overconsumption to Circular Fashion through sharing events. In that context, events could achieve the outcome of behaviour change, through the increase of the participants’ engagement (Toledano & Riches, 2014), which could result into the creation of new habits. Furthermore, the direct interpersonal communication that events offer between the organiser and participants, explains the impact of events on behaviour; namely, exposure to peer group influence and sharing experiences trigger a shift on behavioural patterns (Toledano & Riches, 2014). The potential of events is recognised by social marketing experts, such as Kotler and Lee (2008, p.300), who discourse on how they ‘generate visibility to your effort, offering advantages of interaction with your target audience, allowing them to ask questions and express attitudes towards your desired behaviours you probably need to hear’.

Additionally, this thesis will try to examine how sharing events can establish into the for-profit sector and procure economic value. As already stated, sharing events could create value in the long run through the experience they offer to the attendee (Orefice, 2018, p.21), which in turn strengthens the accomplishment of the mission, vision, goals and objectives of the organisation. In conjunction with Kotler and Lee’s (2008) view, this is also defended by Toledano and Riches (2014) in their research regarding how Event Management indeed added value to achieve an organisation’s goals and how through attendees’ engagement the creation of new habits could be accomplished.

Therefor, a great part of a successful event is the satisfaction it delivers to the participants; according to Daniel et al. (2012) this is fulfilled through a complex interaction of customers,
event venue and design, the management system flow, volunteers and staff; such multi-faceted factors lead to the complexity of event quality evaluation. Thereafter, the following section will delve into how event creators can strategically plan their events to deliver what the attendees want (Sharples et al., 2014).

2.2.4 Event Design and Strategic Planning

Event Design and Strategic Planning are considered influential for the general positive accomplishment of an event, meaning the stages before, during and after its existence. Therefore, aspects that determine the success of the event’s goals are borrowed by the conclusions of Daniel et al. (2012) on how events can be used and how should these take place, depending on the stakeholders that they are addressing to, and in order to fully benefit from the advantages of using the event.

Specifically for the events that target customers or, in this dissertation, consumers, some important strategic steps are the following (Daniel et al., 2012, p.5411):

- Events should be as interactive and engaging as possible, depending very much on the characteristics and type of event.
- Promotional gifts at the end of the event create a sense of pride to the consumer for taking part in the event.
- Awarding the participants for achievements during the event to maintain their interest.
- The schedule of the event ought to be tailor made according to the target audience, thus it should be flexible to their needs.
- The event must be promoted as intense as possible, while at the same time all possible media channels are used in order to disseminate the event’s message to a broader scale of the targeted audience.
- The progress and the benefits of the event on the participants must be greatly communicated as well.

In addition, when organising an event the following points must be thoroughly considered (Daniel et al., 2012, p.5411):

- Accessible location.
- Attention to detail, for instance providing clear instructions to participants.
- Innovating and exciting ideas, in order to keep the level of interest high.
- Strict time schedule and compliance to it, in order to make sure the event reaches its full potential and goals in the end.
- The organisers must own the relevant knowledge regarding the event, in order to provide necessary information and help at the understanding of the event’s message.
- A proper environment that encourages network building and experience sharing.
- Ultimately, the more simple and concise the event message, the easier for the participants to digest and pass it onto their own peers.
The stated aspects and points above are part of this thesis empirical study and analysis, regarding the effect of sharing events on prolonging the use phase of a garment. Thus the knowledge and experience of sharing event organisers and participants will be analysed through interviews, which will be further analysed in the Method of Research in Chapter 3.

Additionally, as highlighted by Sharples et al. (2014) planning is the basis for all successful events. Therefore the event organiser ought to have a clear apprehension of why the event exists - its vision, mission and purpose - and it should be clearly stated to the public or its participants (Sharples et al., 2014). Secondly, the event manager must take into consideration the goals and objectives of the event - namely what the event is trying to achieve and for whom - and additionally select the strategies that will assist into delivering the desired results (Sharples et al., 2014).

Moreover, all the aforementioned require an organisational structure and the development of operational plans according to the strategy the event manager has designed; undoubtedly the budget of the event plays a substantial role regarding the available resources and affects the development of the event in multiple levels - e.g. venue size/location, personnel, additional workshops, food/drinks, music (Sharples et al., 2014). As a foundational rule of strategic management - and also event strategy - flexibility and agility are essential in order to properly adjust to changing circumstances while maintaining the events ‘why’ (Sharples et al., 2014; Bowdin et al., 2006).

As a result, various researchers and practitioners admit to the complexity of staging an event, as seen in Figure 7; that is because events are manufactured by different creative disciplines as seen on the left side of Figure 7 and interconnect throughout the whole process with the aim to create a unique experience (Daniel et al., 2012; Beard, 2014).

![Figure 7: The Complexity of the Event Management Process (Rutherford, 2008), authors' figure adapted from Daniel et al. (2012, p.5410)](image-url)
However, this intermingling of creative disciplines is the reason why events obtain an enormous power of attraction combined with deep emotions and as per Daab ‘they create customer loyalty and enhance the sense of group, or "we", between members of a team (Daniel et al., 2012, p.5410). Richards (2014, p.1) also defines the importance of events as sites of social interaction in the contemporary network society.

Literature indicates that events are ways to translate changes in technology, environmental conditions and needs of consumers (Daniel et al., 2012); through direct communication and exposure, the participant can grasp the intended message better, while the event managers can procure real-time feedback regarding their goal. As aforementioned, this thesis will deal with sharing events, where Circular Fashion and alternative consumption is a main message.

In essence, the investigated organisations and events, which will be introduced in Chapter 3, are ‘legitimate events’, which as per Toledano and Riches (2014) are about building relationships between the organisation and its stakeholders. At the same time they are motivating the participants to accept an idea and maintain or change behaviour, which could potentially serve well the establishment of alternative social norms. When planned and executed well, such as in the case of the healthy sex behaviour in the research done by Toledano and Riches (2014) or the hereafter investigated garment sharing initiatives, events could be considered as an integral part of public relations as well as social marketing promotion campaigns that deal with common good themes such as health or sustainability.
3 Methodology

The following chapter will present the research method chosen to lay down the theoretical and empirical approaches as well as the data collection process selected. Thereby, not just the reasoning behind those considerations are taken into account, but also limitations that set in place based on this.

3.1 Research Strategy and Design

Various considerations are relevant in the process of research in which the research strategy is guiding based on the pursued aims and objectives (Bryman & Bell, 2015). This research followed a qualitative approach in which words are emphasised in the collection and analysis of data (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Thereby, the focus was put rather on exploring the depth of a new concept or theory than the breadth, which mirrors the aim of this research: As it concerns sharing events as a topic, which became recently popular within the last years and regarding those not much research was done yet, the purpose of the research was to develop an in-depth understanding of the participants’ view, but especially gain the organisers perspective on sharing events, therefore the qualitative approach was perceived more suitable compare to a quantitative one.

Doing so, the research is of exploratory nature, as it is ‘primarily concerned with discovery’ (Jupp, 2006). The focus was thereby put at looking for patterns, ideas and assumptions regarding sharing events and their ability to prolong the use phase in Circular Fashion - while taking the organisers perspective and analysing indicators regarding the participants perspective - rather than testing or confirming done hypotheses.

Thereby, the thesis followed a deductive reasoning regarding the way the relationship between theory and research is viewed, which describes that the research first of all focused on the foundational knowledge and theoretical considerations in the specific domain and developed a research questions that is evaluated with empirical scrutiny (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The last step of the process followed the inductive approach, as the findings were revised against the laid down theory (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

According to Bryman and Bell (2015, p.40), the research design gave a framework for the data collection and analysis and gave priority to ‘expressing causal connections between variables’ as well as ‘generalising to larger groups of individuals than those actually forming part of the investigation’. In this context, the research on the one side investigated the Swap it! Festival as a case to achieve an indicator for the participants’ view as well as on the other side the organisers’ view and the thematic relevant experience they gained through organising various sharing events.
The Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival was thereby examined intensively and detailed - for gaining indicators for the participants view - as representative case as it provided the typical characteristics of a sharing event, according to what was researched and laid down in the literature framework: Firstly, it was an organised occasion created by an organisation (Albinsson & Perera, 2012) and further it involved ‘the act and process of distributing what is ours to others for their use and/or the act or process of receiving or taking something from others for our use’ (Belk, 2007).

The complete research strategy is described in Figure 8. As shown, the research started with a literature review using the keywords: Circular Economy, Circular Fashion, Collaborative Consumption, Sharing Events, Event Management and -Strategy, Strategic Planning. Thereby, the research question was formulated and followed the collection of empirical data. The latter were gathered by semi-structured interviews with five sharing event organisers and by self-completion questionnaires answered by participants of the Swap it! Festival, being the specific sharing event. Afterwards, the collected data from both sides were analysed to detect patterns and themes, which are whereupon merged into the discussion of this dissertation. Therefore, the discussion developed according to the findings from the literature review and the analysis. Subsequently, the conclusion was laid down in order to provide an overall comprehension of what has been studied in this thesis, the practical and theoretical implications as well as the future outlook the research anticipated.
3.2 Sampling

The sampling of this research was conducted following two different approaches, to achieve a holistic approach towards the topic and steer towards the overall research aim, which is to investigate sharing events and their influence on garment usage out of participants’ and organisers’ perspective. Thereby, it is important to stress, that both mentioned views reflect only their individual perception regarding the investigated topic.

3.2.1 Organisers

To examine the organisers’ perspective, the non-probability form of purposive sampling was chosen as suitable, as thereby sample members are selected, which have characteristics relevant to the topic of the study (Bryman & Bell, 2015) and are expected to provide various in-depth information, which were sought in this qualitative research.

After intensive online research as well as peer recommendations, 23 sharing event organisers with well-founded experience in organising sharing events were contacted. Their relevance to this research is decided according to the number of organised events and participants, their activism towards Circular Economy and Fashion, as well as the organisation’s reputation on the aforementioned. To overcome cultural influences on the topic, organisers out of different countries were invited to the interview. More specifically, the respondents were the following:

**Gudrun Boner, project leader of F/ACT Movement (Borås, Sweden)**
F/ACT movement was initiated in 2018 and aims to establish consumption habits that focus on prolonging the use of garments, while buying new products is the consumer’s ultimate alternative solution. Boner is a designer and event creator and together with Re:textile tries to discover the possibilities of alternative consumption (F/ACT, 2019). She organised one sharing event within the social experiment of F/ACT, but has also organised some other private events of around twenty participants.

**Kelly Drennan, Founding Executive Director Fashion Takes Action (Toronto, Canada)**
Fashion Takes Action is the only Canadian non-profit fashion industry organisation with the mission to incorporate sustainability in the entire fashion system while working with consumers as well as the industry (Fashion Takes Action, 2019). In this context, they have organised twenty sharing events with averagely 20-100 participants.

**Alex Fridunger, Educator at Eskilstuna Folkhögskola - ReTuna Galleria (Stockholm Area, Sweden)**
The Eskilstuna school was founded in 1962 and belongs to the Culture and Education Administration of the region. It offers several courses that explore sustainability and Fridunger is the educator for the Recycle Design course (Recycle Design, 2019). This course holds a swapping event twice a year for the last eleven years in collaboration with the recycling mall called ‘ReTuna Galleria’ on the area east of Stockholm (ReTuna Återbruksgalleria Eskilstuna, 2019). Fridunger has organised six sharing events individually,
while the course Recycle Design has organised twenty swapping events with an average of 400-500 participants.

**Clara Scharl, Green City e.V. (Munich, Germany)**
The non-profit association Green City e.V. was founded 1990 and aims to green and increase the liveability in the German city Munich, besides other staff with almost 2000 volunteers (Green City e.V., 2019). Besides many other activities, the association organises three to five garment sharing events each year with over 100 participants.

**Adrian Zethraeus, project leader of Re: textile and F/ACT Movement (Borås, Sweden)**
The Re: textile project is financed by the Västra Götaland region and the Borås region in Sweden and is run in collaboration with various brands, resellers, organisations and other stakeholders (Re: textile, 2019). Several sub-projects have been carried out where circular products have been developed and tested in the market; some of the brands that have collaborated with Re: textile are the Swedish fashion retailers Lindex, Cheap Monday and Monki (Re: textile, 2019). Re: textile aims to change design methods and business models in order to support the Circular Economy. Zethraeus organised a sharing event for F/ACT with ten participants.

### 3.2.2 Participants
To get insights into sharing events out of participants view, it was decided to focus on one event, which fulfills the aforementioned relevant sharing event factors, as per Chapter 3.1. Therefore, due to time limitations faced by the researchers, organisers of different events, which took place a short while before the intended data collection, were contacted to find a way to approach participants.

The organisers of the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival provided the researchers with contact details of twelve participants, who were available for interviews. Therefore, during this research convenience sampling was conducted, which describes that a sample, which was accessible to the researchers, was selected. It is a form of non-probability sampling that describes that each member of the population, which was in this case the sharing event, had an unknown probability of being selected (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The researchers contacted those twelve participants and ten respondents provided completed questionnaires. As those number of respondents compared to the total number of participants of the event is very low, it can provide the research only with some indicators about the participants’ view regarding sharing events and builds an important limitation which is discussed in the respective chapter further.

As mentioned before, the garment sharing event, which investigated the participants’ view, is the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival, which took place at the 28th of April 2019 in Cologne, Germany.
The event took place as part of the Fashion Revolution Week in remembrance of the collapse of the Rana Plaza Textile Factory in Bangladesh in 2013, which killed and injured more than 1000 people and encourages consumers to demand greater transparency in the supply chain of fashion brands (Fashion Revolution Foundation, 2019a). Fashion Revolution sees itself as global movement which wants to transform the textile industry towards safe, environmental friendly and fair production as well as changed sourcing and consumption by uniting all connected parties (Fashion Revolution Foundation, 2019b). The event’s main organiser was the Kleiderei Köln, a stationary fashion renting service, which wants to act against fast fashion with their motto “Sharing is Caring!” (Kleiderei Köln, 2019).

As stated by Kleiderei Köln (2019), prior to the event participants were able to hand in garments and accessories, before they entered the swapping area in which they were able to choose the pieces they wanted. However, some rules were set up to guide the participants: 1) Behaving respectfully towards all participants; 2) Only handing in garments in good quality; 3) Treating the swapping garments in a caring manner; 4) Only taking garments that fit and are needed, as the event should encourage to think about the own consumption behaviour.

As further described by Kleiderei Köln (2019), besides the actual garment swap, different activities and workshops were offered in cooperation with local organisations and fair-fashion brands: A garment repair station, garment upcycling workshop, the possibility to upgrade garments with screen printing and a photo booth featuring Fashion Revolution’s hashtag #Whomademyclothes. Further, documentations focusing on textile production and fast fashion were screened (for instance the movie “The True Cost”, which criticises textile production practices (Kleiderei Köln, 2019)). Besides that, the organisations Femnet e.V., a human rights association, as well as the non-governmental environmental organisations Greenpeace Köln and Zero Waste Köln, gave information on how to engage and change the individual consumption behaviour. Food and drinks were provided in a lounge with selected furniture provided by an interior company. Leftover garments were given to a charity after the event.

### 3.3 Data Collection Method

In order to answer the overall question of this research, how sharing events influence garment usage out of participants’ and organisers’ perspective, a foundational understanding of underlying aspects, concepts and theories was needed.

This was gained with the help of secondary data by conducting an extensive literature review of scientific researches, books and publications of companies, charities and non-governmental organisations. The laid down theoretical framework decided then about the data collection process (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

As the aim of this research was to view sharing events out of the participant’s and organiser’s perspective, two different types of data collection were conducted regarding the two sample groups, with the purpose of confirming findings revealed in literature as well as detecting new
aspects regarding the respondents role as garment sharing event participants or organisers. Therefore, during the data collection open questions focusing on knowledge, personal attitudes, beliefs, as well as personal data were used (Williams, 2003). The open and qualitatively evaluated questions provided the research with valuable information and aspects that were not stated in literature, as they allowed free as well as unusual responses by not suggesting answers (Bryman & Bell, 2015). This was important regarding the context of this research, as it was wished to detect new aspects in addition to rich answers which made it possible to evaluate sharing events while influencing the respondents as less as possible in their answers.

To be able to combine the collected empirical data of both respondent groups, four common themes were used, however to also gather relevant insights based on the experience of the respective group themes specified to that were constructed.

### 3.3.1 Organisers

For the data collection of the organisers, semi-structured interviews were conducted. This term refers to the possibility of the researcher to ‘use questions that are in a general form of an interview, however the interviewer is still able to change the sequence of the questions’ (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.213). This data collection method allows the researcher to keep an open mind about what it is needed to be investigated, allowing the emergence of theories and concepts out of the empirical data (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

The interview guideline was developed into twelve questions (W = warm-up part; M = main part; C = concluding part). Firstly it began with a warm up question (W1), then the focus was taken onto the planning steps event organisers have to consider Before the event (M1). Further, the next section guided the questions with regard to the During the Event aspects (M2, M3, M4, M5) and subsequently the organisers were asked about their opinion and experience regarding After the Event aspects (M6, M2, M8). The interviews concluded with two questions (C1, C2); question C3 was used in order to get feedback from interviewees in a free manner. Lastly, the interview closed with some additional personal data, which was easy to answer, in order to avoid fatigue of the participants. The final questionnaire, which was also handled as interview guideline, can be found in the Appendix.

The interviews were conducted at different dates between the 9th and 13th of May 2019 via Skype or in person and had a duration of between 20-45 minutes. The interview transcriptions can be provided upon request. Due to time limitations and practical reasons, two of the interviews were conducted in form of self-completion questionnaires.

Once the data was collected and saved through audio or video recordings, the researchers followed up with a transcription of the records and condensation of meanings. Through this condensation, five main thematic categories were developed in order to allow the emergence of theories and concepts that supplement or confirm the theoretical framework of this thesis.
The thematic main categories can thereby be found in the following Table 1, while including categories as well as the connected questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Theme</th>
<th>Category with respective Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Event Planning (Before the Event)</td>
<td>Strategic Planning Key Steps (M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment Assortment</td>
<td>Quality - Fit - Style (M3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspects during the Event</td>
<td>Organisation and Guidance (M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activities and Atmosphere (M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Building/ Networking (M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome of the Event</td>
<td>Value regarding Organisations’ Vision and Mission (M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do Sharing Events prolong the Use Phase? (C1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future of Sharing Events</td>
<td>Monetary Value (M7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connection of Sharing Events and Circular Fashion (W1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Influence from Buying to Using, Role of Participants as Ambassadors (M8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Future (C2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3.2 Participants

For the empirical data collection of the participants of the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival, qualitative self-completion questionnaires were used.

The standardised approach of a self-completion questionnaire makes it possible to describe perceptions, attitudes and behaviour of the group of respondents and to test explanations based on the individuals (Swanborn, 2010). Therefore, the questionnaires ensured the gathering of relevant data, which built the foundation for the analysis and enabled answering the main research question, by eliminating interviewer effects and interviewer variability regarding variety in the question-wording and -order (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Further, the self-completion questionnaire built a suitable data collection method regarding the participants experience on the Swap it! Festival, as it allowed the respondents to reflect on the given answers (Williams, 2003). To overcome a disadvantage, the usual low response rate for self-completion questionnaires (Bryman & Bell, 2015), the questionnaire introduced into the topic again and gave clear instructions on how to complete it in order to guide the respondents and overcome the absence of a guiding interviewer. Further, as the event took place in Germany and the respondents were expected to be German speaking, the possibility to complete the questionnaire in either English or German was given to increase the responding rate. Questionnaires completed in German were translated by the researchers into English.
The questionnaire was divided in a warm-up (W), main (M) and concluding part (C), to provide structure and guidance for the respondent, while the questions developed from concrete to more abstract ones (Williams, 2003). While the other two guided into the questionnaire and finalised it, the main part was essential with questions grouped into sections according to the relevant findings of the theoretical framework (Williams, 2003). The thematic main categories can thereby be found in Table 2, while including categories as well as the connected questions to them. Questions M10a/b, asking about “likes and dislikes” during the event, as well C1, which gave the chance to provide additional remarks, were used to enrich the data in possibly all of the themes. The completed questionnaire can be found in the Appendix. It was expected that the respondents can complete the questionnaire in around 20 minutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Theme</th>
<th>Category with respective Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garment Usage Behaviour</td>
<td>Underutilisation Reasons (M1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Utilisation Reasons (M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintenance and Care (M2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment Assortment</td>
<td>Quality - Fit - Style (M3a/b/c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspects during the event</td>
<td>Organisation and Guidance (M4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peer Influence (M5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Building (M6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome of the Event</td>
<td>Main Take-aways (M9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future of Sharing Events</td>
<td>Openness to Sharing (W1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joining or organising other Event (M8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consumption Change (M7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 Method of Data Analysis

In this thesis an objective and systematic qualitative content analysis was chosen as an approach to make sense of the gathered qualitative data with the help of structuring content regarding the predetermined categories of the questionnaire (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

The qualitative content analysis is a highly systematic method (Schreier, 2014) and was suitable for this research, as it reduced the gathered data to focus on aspects of meanings connected to the overall research question. More specifically, this form of analysis worked ‘as a means to interpret data by identifying codes and common themes (manifest content) and then constructing underlying meanings (latent content)’ (Frey, 2018).

Therefore in this thesis, coding was applied to analyse the outcomes of the collected empirical data qualitatively by assigning them to categories, which are based on this thesis’ research question and are then interpreted (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Thereby, the coding frame was built out of main categories with respective subcategories in which the collected qualitative
material from the questionnaires was laid down; then, it was analysed with the help of detecting common themes and tendencies as well as exemptions (Schreier, 2014).

The results were laid down, organised by the coding frame as descriptive writing (Frey, 2018). The coding frame of this research can be found in Table 3. In order to answer the overall aim of this thesis, how sharing events influence garment use by taking into account the perspective of participants as well as organisers, the collected empirical data of both investigated groups had to be connectable for the following discussion. Therefore, both questionnaires had four common main themes: Garment Assortment, Aspects during the Event, Outcome of the Event and Future of Sharing Events. Further to each investigated respondent group a theme was assigned relevant to their role, which are Garment Usage Behaviour (for participants) and Event Planning (for organisers). Within those main themes, categories can be found with codes belonging to it.

The gathered data of the questionnaires and the interviews in transcribed form were assigned to those codes, categories and themes for the analysis, which was conducted separately for each investigated group. The outcomes of the analysis were then combined in the discussion.

Thereby, it is important to state, that the results of the discussion reflect the individual view of the participants and organisers as respondents and give an indicator for the perspective of both groups, but cannot be generalisable, as through another sampling group, another outcome might have been achieved.

Table 3: The applied Coding Frame, authors’ table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Questionnaire Participants Categories + Codes</th>
<th>Questionnaire Organisers Categories + Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garment Usage Behaviour</td>
<td>Underutilisation Reasons (M1): Style, Fit, Purchase Reasons Utilisation Reasons (M2): Fit, Combination Possibilities, Psychological Reasons Maintenance and Care (M2): Care Actions</td>
<td>Strategic Planning key steps (M1): Communication, Promotion, Volunteers, Consistency, In-store Experience, Location, Good Feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Planning (Before the Event)</td>
<td>Quality - Fit - Style (M3a/b/c): Assortment Width, Assortment Quality</td>
<td>Quality - Fit - Style (M3): In-store Experience, Event Message, Event Quality, Target Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspects during the Event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome of the Event</strong></td>
<td><strong>Future of Sharing Events</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Take-aways (M9): Atmosphere, Psychological Influences, Activities, Messages, Events Purpose, Catering</td>
<td>Openness to Sharing (W1): Psychological Outcomes, Practical Outcomes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value regarding organisations vision and mission (M6): Collaboration, Activism, Experience, Brand Value, Volunteers, Good Feeling, Community</td>
<td>Joining or Organising other Event (M8): Past/Future, Private/Public Consumption Change (M7): Past, Influence of Sustainable Actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Sharing Events prolong the Use Phase? (C1): Feel Good, Philanthropy, Community, Culture</td>
<td>Monetary Value (M7): Brand Value, Communication, Good Feeling Connection Sharing Events and Circular Fashion (W1): Communication, Good Feeling, Activism Influence from Buying to Using (M8) &amp; Role of Participants as Ambassadors (M8): Community, Experience, Target Groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities and Atmosphere (M4): Good Feeling, Location, Consistency, Collaboration, Communication Community Building and Networking (M5): Culture, Community, Collaboration, Activism, Experience</td>
<td>Future (C2): Activism, Brand Value, Community, Target Groups, Culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5 **Assessment of Research: Trustworthiness and Ethics**

In order to assess the research, the following chapter will take into consideration different criteria of trustworthiness.

**Trustworthiness**

The research community is still divided in opinion regarding the use of validity and reliability as assessment methods in qualitative research, as Bryman and Bell (2015) discourse on regarding Research Design. Therefore, the possibility to use reliability and validity in this research was examined, however, these measurements are inapplicable and inappropriate to this qualitative research. That is because this thesis does not use quantified measurements or variables, which form a great part of the reliability and validity assessment, but uses qualitative semi-structured interviews and self-completion questionnaires with qualitative open questions; thus validity and reliability are less grave for this study (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Also, the small participant sample that this research uses is considered as problematic
for the elevation of external validity, meaning the generalisation of results (Dudovskiy, 2019). Therefore, it was imperative to seek other criteria of assessment for this thesis.

This was furthermore obvious to the researchers due to the epistemological position their research is standing on, which is described as interpretivism (Bryman & Bell, 2015). In contrast to positivism - which entails the application of natural sciences to the study of the social world - this position seeks to ‘understand the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants’ as explained by Bryman and Bell (2015).

As a result, the researchers turned to alternative definitions and assessment methods in order to support the hereby developed thesis. The alternative method that suited the research was the one proposed by Lincoln and Guba in Bryman and Bell (2015) called trustworthiness, which is a standard of judgement of how legitimate a qualitative study is. The levels that unfold in trustworthiness are covering aspects of validity and reliability, but mirror better the idiosyncrasy of qualitative research (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Morrow, 2005) and are the following:

**Credibility**
This term deals with how believable the results of the study are (Bryman & Bell, 2015). During the collection, analysis and presentation of findings it was aimed to remain objective and unbiased from own experience and beliefs. Due to time limitations the research could not proceed with respondent validation, a typical tool to increase credibility (Bryman & Bell, 2015), however the research was conducted in an objective manner and focused to remain like that throughout the entire process. Also, in order to fortify the laid down findings, this thesis investigated both the views of participants and organisers of sharing events.

**Transferability**
This term refers to the criterion of whether the findings are applicable to other contexts (Bryman & Bell, 2015). This study indeed used the unique and small sample of the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival to obtain empirical data for the participants’ perspective and conducted semi-structured interviews with individuals that are experienced sharing event organisers, which could be proven difficult to transfer in another context. However, the researchers provided a detailed methodology and description of analysis in order to assist future researchers who would apply the purpose of this study in a different frame of reference.

**Dependability**
This criterion concerns the possibility of the results being applicable at another time and for that matter researchers ensured to follow an ‘auditing’ technique, as Bryman and Bell (2015, p. 403) suggest. Therefore, apart from the explicit methodology chapter found in this thesis, the authors have kept records of all the empirical data, personal notes of how the research was developed, a detailed timeline of how every task was executed as well as decisions regarding the analysis of the collected data, whilst ensuring that all of the auditing records remained easily accessible.
Confirmability
The last criterion of trustworthiness regards the judgement of whether the researchers have permitted their own views to penetrate in a high degree (Bryman & Bell, 2015) and the fact that the integrity of findings lays in the data (Morrow, 2005). This was ensured in this research by the correct use of language and the strict confinement to the obtained results and laid down theoretical framework as the generators of the findings, and not the personal opinions, beliefs and experiences of the researchers.

Ethics
The researchers have incorporated into this study the principles associated with their Educational Institution with regard to conducting ethical research. The research was conducted in a transparent manner and all empirical data is stored and remains available upon request. The researchers have recreated or created their own figures and tables, in order to comply with copyright regulations. All referencing is done according to the Anglia Ruskin University Harvard System of Referencing and all resources are provided in the Bibliography.

Moreover, it was ensured that no harm was done to this thesis participants. Specifically, the participants were informed regarding the nature and purpose of the study prior to their participation. The questions devised were not deceiving nor inhibiting the welfare of the respondents and in order to use the collected data, the researchers requested a signed consent from the participants that allowed them to do so.

3.6 Relevance and Limitations
The relevance of this dissertation to the fashion industry and the community of research is based upon the combination of sharing events and practices that successfully extend the use phase of a garment, in accordance to the demand for a more sustainable and Circular Fashion industry. Further, value is created as the perspective of both, sharing event organisers as well as participants is taken into account.

This study could be proven applicable to larger scale business models and could be applied to different industries, if further research built on grounded theory is conducted with additional case studies (Dudovskiy, 2019). Therefore, the relevance of this thesis to the fashion management discipline is that insight is provided on how alternative sustainable business and consumption models can be feasible through community building and unique experience. The relevance towards the public is considered to be the dissemination of knowledge on alternative ways of garment use that comply with sustainability and the individual’s fashion needs.

A limitation of this research lays in the response rate of the event participants, as it is recognised that ten responses are low, compared to the total number of participants, and could not be increased due to time limitations. Therefore, the participants’ view builds in this research an addition to the organisers view and can just indicate the participants perspective
on sharing events, since small sample sizes undermine opportunities to draw useful generalisations from, or to make broad policy recommendations based upon the findings (Dudovskiy, 2019). Because of that, the small sample size can only provide representative results of small scale that could be proved useful for pilot / experimental sharing services or events. Also, as the event took place in Germany, a limitation can be seen, as the general openness towards alternative consumption possibilities might be higher compared to other countries.

Further research with larger samples of participants as well as organisers and more examples of sharing events could benefit the depth of research and provide further insight on this specific research topic. The researchers focus only on the perceptions, opinions and experiences of participants and organisers. Also, through the semi-structured interviews, the research tried to discover the monetary value of sharing events but none of the organisers is actually applying them as a business model; thus, only speculations were provided upon that regarding their experience with sharing events and Circular Economy. What is more, due to time limitations and the scope of this research, psychological factors behind the reason why garments are not used were not considered when evaluating sharing events in accordance to prolonging the garment use.

3.7 Research Reflections

To conclude the methodological considerations of this research, in this chapter the authors describe shortly the journey of this research, the implications faced and how they were overcome.

The authors sought inspiration for this thesis in several ways either through their academic experience and available resources, areas of interests and contemporary issues that needed further research. It was an event that focused on Circular Economy called ‘DeFINE’ and took place in the premises of the Swedish School of Textiles in Borås (Sweden) that generated the inception of this research. Namely, the event evolved around the rise of new business models with regard to alternative ways of consumption that promote Circular Economy in the Textile Industry. Due to time limitations, the authors had to consider the narrowing down to a specific aspect that needed to be enlightened on further. Thus, the case study of F/ACT Movement was selected due to its research relevant context. It was planned that the empirical data would be collected through the sharing event that F/ACT intended to organise. The unpredictable occurrence of the postponement of this particular sharing event resulted into the immediate change of the research strategy regarding the purpose, the research question and the empirical data of this thesis, during which a flexible, agile and appropriate solution was devised.

However, time restrictions did influence this dissertation. Because of that, the participants’ convenience sample was accepted, which the researchers managed to obtain in a small time frame. Therefore, it is acknowledged that findings provide in-depth information, which are nonetheless indicative in this case.
4 Analysis

This chapter will analyse the gathered data of the personal interviews with the sharing event organisers as well as the self-completion questionnaires from participants of the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap It! Festival. This will be done according to the detected questionnaire themes, as described in the Methodology.

4.1 Interviews with Sharing Event Organisers

In the following, the collected data of sharing event organisers is going to be analysed. As stated in Chapter 3.2.1, the interviewed organisers were Boner (F/ACT), Drennan (Fashion Takes Action), Fridunger (Eskilstuna Folkhögskola), Scharl (Green City e.V.) and Zethraeus (Re:texstil, F/ACT).

The analysis is structured according to the different themes of Table 3, which are Event Planning (Question M1), Garment Assortment (Question M3), Aspects during the Event (Questions M2+M4+M5), Outcome of the Event (Questions M6+C1), Future of Sharing Events (Questions W1+M7+M8+C2). Further additional information were given by the personal data section at the end of the questionnaire.

4.1.1 Event Planning (Before the Sharing Event)

Strategic Planning Key Steps (M1)

For the majority of the organisers the most important steps when planning an event is the communication to the specific target groups of the event and thereafter the organising of workforce in form of volunteers. Volunteers help in transporting equipment and building up the event, which according to the size of the event can be a tedious and time-consuming procedure, as the experienced Fridunger states. For example, the Recycle Design sharing event has been running for eleven years and it takes place two times annually – spring and autumn. During the last event, 2,000 pieces were swapped and 400-500 people visited the swap on an average; therefore the garment collection, sorting and clean up was exhausting and required many volunteers, as the organiser stated.

Another key aspect is to be active in promoting the event. Organisers explain that they use online (such as website, newsletter) and offline (such as posters, promotional T-shirts) means, however they have to be consistent and realise that ‘many times people do not show up at the event, even though they know it is happening’, as described by Fridunger.

Moreover, another important aspect is that organisers try to instil a boutique-like feeling into the sharing event, so that the stereotype of “thrifty swaps” is reversed. The organisers use steamers to make the garments look neat and polished, they rent hangers and racks, in order to create a store layout in their swapping ‘party’, as the organiser from Fashion Takes Action calls it. Also, another priority for the organiser is finding a venue that addresses the needs of the sharing event and essentially affects all the aforementioned steps. But in the end the
organisers’ aim is to create something positive for the people who participate; either the
guests or the volunteers. Leaving the sharing event with a good feeling is crucial for any type
of voluntary event, as Fridunger - a long time activist - states and makes guests want to come
back.

4.1.2 Garment Assortment at the Sharing Event
Quality - Fit - Style (M3)
The organisers see the garment assortment as vital for the success of a sharing event and part
of the interviewees would also add “brand” apart from quality, fit and style. Having a
meticulous examination of the garments, levels up the quality of the assortment and thus,
fades the stereotype of swapping events being ‘full of junk’, as Drennan from Fashion Takes
Action states. For Fridunger, it is important that the garments are faultless and clean and the
division is according to seasons - spring and autumn; also, in the ReTuna Galleria swap the
organisers very consciously have no gender division in the garments.

However, according to the interviewees, in the end it is strongly connected to who actually
participates in these events, namely the target groups and their sense of what is fashionable.
This is affected mainly by socioeconomic backgrounds, class, gender and age as the
organisers state. And also, a swapping event has to cater for the needs of the consumer, which
are not covered by retailers such as the lack of bigger-size garments. This is something that
Fridunger has noticed, since a lot of guests, who attend the swap, are seeking clothes in bigger
sizes that fit them.

4.1.3 Aspects during the Sharing Event
Guidance (M2)
Regarding the guidance during sharing events and whether it is vital for their function,
organisers think it depends on the size and target group of each event. For bigger events the
atmosphere can get ‘hectic’ and ‘chaotic’, therefore volunteers can help with the garments
being presented in a neat manner, while the rules of the event - if any - are made explicit to
the guests and volunteers, as Scharl explains. This helps to avoid any complains and that all
parties involved are being treated in an equal manner. For instance, for Fridunger’s
organisation, who manage large sharing events, the framework of their swap is very clearly
structured; namely there is a limit of five clothes to be swapped and the swapping can be done
through a ticket the guest receives, so there is always a check in and a check out. For
Fridunger the structure has to be flexible on some aspects, but overall consistency aids the
event to continuously improve. Also, for Zethraus from Re:textile, guidance could enhance
the experience by adopting some tools retailers use, like setting up a layout that guides the
guests through the venue, moodboards or helpful personnel, like a stylist. This helps
contemporary swapping events lift the experience from ‘flea market’ to a store feeling.
Activities and Atmosphere (M4)
The different activities that a sharing event can offer form what contemporary swapping organisers are trying to achieve, as detected though the organisers’ interviews; meaning to lift the experience from a grass root level to a place where people interact with peers similar to their ideologies, experiment with their fashion style and mainly have a good time; and simple steps like offering drinks and displays with informative content are an easy way to create a positive atmosphere.

Boner from F/ACT mentions how venue and extra activities ought to be consistent with the event, the target group and location. On the other hand, Fridunger, who manages a bigger event, states that these add-on activities have not been popular in the past, as there is not a calm atmosphere during the event, so that people would not say: ‘Ok, now I will sit down and mend’. However, this particular sharing event, which is held in ReTuna Galleria, is able to offer an experience to the attendee since the recycling mall has a restaurant, a cafe and other shops.

Community Building and Networking (M5)
For some event organisers networking could be done through the additional activities, but maybe not during the sharing itself. Also, it is considered to be more part of a culture, such as an individual’s affiliation in attending these events and being a part of these groups and tribes; so for Zethraeus for example, it could be said that interaction is more ‘embedded in the community’. Of course, if the event organisers wish to focus more on community building this could be orchestrated through the event, like in the case of Fashion Takes Action, where events called Share & Social are built around the encouragement to network. Other times, collaboration with external sustainable fashion vendors is very efficient in community building and growing the network of sharing events. On the other hand, Fridunger, as a bigger event organiser, sees it differently: volunteers and participants are busy with the swapping event itself and there is limited time to promote networking. Also, in such big numbers of attendees interests vary; that is, not everyone is interested in networking and sustainability when swapping, but more like the free clothes. Nonetheless, during the big event in ReTuna Galleria people do reach out to the organisers in order to share their activist ideology or share their passion for such initiatives, which is in a way community building. For Fridunger it is about empowering people whose peers perceive second hand clothes as shameful.

4.1.4 Outcome of the Sharing Event
Value regarding Organisation’s Vision and Mission (M6)
Every organisation has a different mission and vision to fulfil. For some of the interviewees it has to do with how people experience clothes in a different way than before, how to advance sustainability in the entire fashion system through education, awareness and collaboration. Others use sharing events as experiments to discover how Circular Economy can provide value for companies. Meaning that for instance, by organising such an event, it will contribute to Re:texture’s mission by showing a good practice or a lead by example.
Further, for the course Recycle Design the entire mission is to work with sustainability, with recycled crafts in different ways, to try to learn different aspects of sustainability in order to change the mindset of people. For this change, Fridunger suggests that active participants are needed, fun, positive atmosphere; all of these aspects that are essential in community building according to Frindunger’s experience as an activist. In that way, as Boner mentions ‘it can be created something that people want to be part of and they feel that they are contributing to something positive’.

**Do Sharing Events prolong the Use Phase? (C1)**

All interviewees agreed on the suitability of sharing events to prolong the use phase of garments, they see them as valuable for Circular Fashion and state how they could be the advanced way of getting new clothes. The nature of sharing events is the core of the circular model theory, which is to minimise the input of material into the system; if not, then it is not an efficient circulatory system. And in this case, passing clothes on without further redesigning addresses this requirement.

Further, for Scharl from Green City e.V., people start viewing garments as valuable items, they want things to be useful and think of how someone else might need them, even if they do not. For that matter, sharing events are opening up the possibility for many garments that have never been used, even though people have bought them, to be available for another user. This ‘cognitive dissonance’ is typical for Fridunger when thinking of people buying excessively; that is, people know that they have done something ‘incorrect’ and through sharing many find a relieve or gain a feeling of doing something good.

### 4.1.5 The Future of Sharing Events

**Monetary Value (M7)**

All of the interviewees recognise the difficulty of sharing events being profitable. Namely, the event organisers do not see the event itself as generator of monetary value, but more like the driver to create good will, to expose the brand/organisation and thus, create a stronger customer relation. As a result, the potential of sharing events could be ‘a brand value to one piece of a puzzle’, it could be a provided service for the brand’s customers or a good communication tool/opportunity, as Zethraeus mentions. Moreover, if additional activities or collaborations are available through the event, the local economy could be promoted according to Scharl. For the interviewed organisers, sharing events are still in the voluntary sphere for most cases and are able to generate some monetary value from ticket sales or sponsorship in order to cover minimum expenses such as rent or personnel.

**Connection of Sharing Events and Circular Fashion (W1)**

The organisers believe that sharing is the closest to the Circular Economy model theory. Namely, as Zethraeus states ‘we need to start from the product and out and make sure that we keep the level of resource input low’- which is the essence of a sharing event, where garments are being passed on just as they are, Boner discusses. For most of the organisers this is manifested by communicating the journey of a garment, the social and environmental
consequences, as well as that while sharing the individual is not abstaining from fulfilling its needs and it is also ‘fun’. Moreover, sharing events promote different ways of transaction and consumption, such as swapping, lending and mending as discoursed on by Fridunger.

That shows that sharing events do not require further extraction of natural resources, can raise awareness regarding the sustainability of fashion industry and are a vital part of circular processes.

**Influence from Buying to Using, Role of Participants as Ambassadors (M8)**

The interviewed sharing event organisers believe that it is hard for participants to change their behaviour on their own. Namely, consumers need to be orchestrated by some agent and many factors need to move simultaneously, as Zethraeus describes. Most organisers express that if the experience is inspiring, and people find garments that they might like and end up using instead of not using, then it could be very influential to alter the behaviour. More specifically, consumers could recognise that they can change their style or refresh their wardrobe without investing so much money to it, while having a great experience. Nevertheless, if they see that the garments they received were unfashionable or they were simply carried away by the moment when swapping and made impulsive choices, then the event might not contribute to a change in consumption patterns. Also, it has to be considered that people could have mixed consumption patterns through which they do both, buy new and swap. Thus, for Fridunger, swaps promote Circular Economy as long as a swapped garment replaces a newly bought item; then the event is important in relation to excess production and resource extraction. As the consumption behaviour is complex, the shift could be easier recognised in target groups, for instance children wear and toys is a segment where sharing is creating a change. But this shift is yet to come in the larger fashion industry and consumer habit, Fridunger denoted.

**Future (C2)**

Again there is some uncertainty in how sharing could be a feasible business model in the future of the textile industry, however it is recognised that sharing and reusing our belongings in general is a very important way to reduce waste of resources as per Scharl from Green City e.V.. In that context, according to the Fashion Takes Action sharing event organiser, there is so much value in our used clothing that it makes environmental and economic sense to swap.

However, the organisers have recognised some obstacles that need to be made visible in order to enhance the establishment of sharing events. Firstly, as aforementioned these events are in a great part still in the voluntary sphere, while at the same time they require a lot of work, time and workforce. So motivation can sometimes be hindered and the numbers of volunteers are not stable during each event. Also, according to Zethraeus from Re: textile, for certain communities swapping replaces buying new products and is the way ‘they fill up their wardrobe’. But for many, especially more commercial consumers this is not the case. That is because the influence for such a consumer comes from the trends or catwalks, an influence, which maybe cannot be found in such way at a swap. So for some customer groups sharing might just be an add-on and they fulfil their wardrobe in multiple ways.
4.2 Questionnaires of Sharing Event Participants

In the following the collected data of the participants of the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival, introduced in Chapter 3.2.2., is going to be analysed. This is done according to the different themes Garment Usage Behaviour (Questions M1+M2), Garment Assortment at the Event (Questions M3), During the Event (Questions M4+M5+M6), Outcome of the Event (Question M9) and Future of Sharing Events (Questions M7+M8+W1). Further additional information given (Questions M10+C1) are distributed to the respective category.

4.2.1 Garment Usage Behaviour

Underutilisation Reasons (M1)
When asked about reasons for garment underutilisation, the majority of the respondents argued, that the clothes are not their style anymore or are out of style. Also a main reason stated is, that the garments are seen or were purchased only for special occasions. Others argued, that simply the wrong purchase decision was done. Further two respondents named fit issues as reasons, why they do not wear garments they own.

Utilisation Reasons (M2)
According to the respondents, reasons why they use garments already for a long time are that they fit well and can be combined well. Also few respondents stated, that the garments suit their personality, style and ‘feel well’.

Maintenance and Care (M2)
Regarding the maintenance and care for garments, which are in use, the answers are more varied. Most of the respondents state, that they care for the clothes ‘cautiously’, some try to wash them as less as possible. Also repairing and good storage were mentioned, however some respondents also state to not care about their garments in a special way.

That shows, that the main reasons for garment utilisation and underutilisation seems to be the style of the garments: Because of that many consumers state that they do not use it, as the garments might just be suitable in their eyes for special occasions, the own or general fashion style changed or the garments cannot be combined well. Further fit issues are main reasons. Other named reasons have rather a less definable psychological - like the fact that the garment seems to suit the wearers personality.

The maintenance and care seem to be really varied from no special care to different caring and maintaining possibilities. In general no pattern seems to be detectable.

4.2.2 Garment Assortment at the Sharing Event

Quality-Fit-Style (M3a/b/c)
The participants were asked for the garment assortment at the event, focusing on the three different factors quality, fit and style. Regarding garments in a good quality, the opinions are mixed: The respondents mainly argued that the garments were sometimes worn or washed out or had bigger defects. However, in general the done preselection seemed to have achieved a
satisfying quality. Focusing on the fit of the garments, the respondents mostly found garments in their sizes; with the constraint that mainly standard sizes were available. Opinions to the fashion style of the available garments are also mixed with participants, who found many garments and others rather less.

Summarising, it can be said that the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival’s garment assortment was not completely satisfying for the ten participants regarding quality, fit and style.

4.2.3 Aspects during the Sharing Event

Organisation and Guidance (M4)

Regarding the event’s organisation and the participants’ guidance during the event, the respondents stated without exception that the event was organised well for them and they felt guided in a good manner with friendly and caring members of the organising team. However, generally disliked was the crowdedness of the event, especially in the swapping area in which some participants criticised the clothing piles in which the garments were arranged. In general, the organised additional activities, workshops and information booths were seen as positive.

Peer influence (M5)

Focusing on a possible peer influence by other event participants regarding swapping choices, the interviewed respondents stated without an exception, that they were not influenced by other participants, if so only by friends they visited the event with.

Community Building (M6)

Further the participants were asked for their interaction and networking with other event participants: Most of the participants state, that they had some pleasant conversations; as one respondent describes it: ‘[...] What was nice to see was the amount of like-minded people, with similar interests and views, so I think it is actually quite easy and interesting to interact and network!’ As further described, mostly the conversations were rather brief and focused on giving advice to others about the garments and the swapping choices.

Summarising impressions and experiences of the ten participants during the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival, it can be said, that the respondents describe the event as well organised and guided through ‘friendly staff’. Also the additional activities, workshops and info areas were evaluated positively in contrast to the crowded garment sharing area and general event. Some interaction between the participants took place, mainly regarding giving advice, however the respondents in general did not feel any influence of the other participants regarding their swapping choices.
4.2.4 Outcome of the Sharing Event

Main Take-aways (M9)
Further, the respondents were asked for the take-aways they got from the event. All respondents state that it was ‘nice’ to attend the event for them. Many describe a pleasant atmosphere, also regarding the location and music. They state that a sharing event builds a suitable way to receive garments, while ‘getting rid of your clothes with dignity’. As described by another respondent, it gave a ‘good feeling to exchange clothes and bring more clothes into the loop’. Besides the offered food/drinks, especially liked were the additional activities, workshops and information areas with focus on sustainable actions.

4.2.5 The Future of Sharing Events

Openness to Sharing (W1)
In general the participants feel open to share their garments with other people: They state with no exception that they like the idea, some argue that they see it as a practical and sustainable way of consumption and that this influences their feelings, one participant states being ‘happy that my clothes do not end up in the landfill’. Others argue that the saved monetary value is an advantage, as well as that the clothes stay within the local community and they ‘feel good to wear clothes with a past’.

Joining or Organising other Event (M8)
Having participated at the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival, all respondents state that they can imagine to visit another event or organise one themselves; as some specified, they already did or plan to do so. Some respondents see an advantage in private events compared to public ones.

Consumption Change (M7)
The participants were further asked if they imagine their consumption to change from purchasing new clothes to swapping more. Almost without exception, the respondents state that they can imagine their consumption to change or that it already changed towards a more sustainably conscious one. Some participants argue, that they feel an influence from visiting sharing events; as one respondent states: ‘I am convinced that offering people a lot of alternatives (like sharing events, second hand and stores) with high quality will help to create a shift to a more conscious consumption’.

To sum up, regarding the future of sharing events, all ten respondents state that they are open to sharing and see different advantages in it, mainly regarding a more sustainable consumption, monetary savings and also additional value seen in second hand garments. Also, all participants would join another event, would organise, plan to organise or already organised in the past an event on their own; sometimes an advantage is seen in private events. Some respondents state that their garment consumption behaviour already changed towards a more sustainable one, others argue, that they could imagine that it changes with alternative consumption models.
5 Discussion

The following chapter combines the findings of the analysis of the organisers’ as well as participants’ data with the concepts and ideas of the laid down Theoretical Framework and discusses the contribution towards this, while answering the developed research question.

5.1 Garment Usage Behaviour

The problematic of garment underutilisation was laid down in the Introduction as foundational consideration for this research. In order to answer the developed research question, as a first step it was necessary to detect reasons for this underutilisation. Those detected reasons were then turned around in order to investigate, if a sharing event provides the consumers with garments they can be expected to use. Said it differently, it is researched if a sharing event enables a match between consumers and garments. As this considerations build an important part of answering the central research question - How do Sharing Events influence Garment Usage out of the perspective of organisers and participants? - it is investigated through the explored garment usage behaviour of participants.

As laid down in literature (Armstrong & Lang, 2013; Laitala, 2014; WRAP, 2017) the main reasons why consumers do not use the garments they own, can be found through the consumers’ perspective regarding visible or sensed deficits of the garments quality, its fit and style and aspects that belong to it. Gaining a practical indicator to these findings and confirming or rejecting them, according to the asked participants of the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival, the main reasons for underutilisation of garments can be drawn back to issues with the garments’ style, while also the fit was named relevant.

This displays, that especially the appearance of garments, described as their style, is indicated to be in focus when considering underutilisation reasons of garments. However also the fit and quality are important, while the last might be often taken for granted like the respondents indicate. However, besides those practical reasons, the literature as well as the analysis of the empirical data collection hints, that psychological reasons are important factors, which should be taken into account and are way more complex to investigate, which in summary shows that the garments usage behaviour is highly complex and has a lot of internal and external influences that need to be considered.

That shows that the use of garments is to a large amount decided by designers and during production, so that ideally garments should be created which should match the consumers style - that for instance can be a minimal and good combinable style as the participants indicated - and a satisfying quality and fit. However, what has to be considered in this context is, that the consumers themselves have the power to influence reasons why they might not use garments: As hinted by the participants, the garment maintenance and care seems to be really varied, which shows that knowledge about the correct garment care could be increased and which could already promote increased garment usage.
5.2 Event Planning (Before the Sharing Event)

The theoretical framework of this thesis turns to Event Management Theory for the acquisition of existing knowledge on how to plan and design a sharing event, which is then analysed by the collection of empirical data through interviews with event organisers.

During the initial steps of event planning, communication and people (staff / volunteers) are considered of vital importance from the organisers’ perspective as detected in the conducted interviews. Also, being consistent and persistent with the event’s structure and identity could possibly help reduce the hectic environment, which is many times observed during an event. In the literature findings, Daniel et al. (2012) provide a detailed guide for event organisers to consider when planning an event. In addition, through promotion and good communication the organisation can attempt to make it as known as possible, both literature and organisers explain. Further, in-store feeling is mentioned by some of the organisers in order to scale up the quality and maybe lead consumers to feel that they are not deprived of anything that a regular shopping experience offers, when participating in a swapping event.

As stated in the theoretical framework in Chapter 2.2.3, Sharples et al. (2014) highlight how planning is the basis for all successful events. A carefully thought through design, planning and coordination (Orefice, 2018) could strengthen the image of sharing events in the consumers’ mind; an event like the one hosted by F/ACT Movement is a great lead of example as the organisers focus on creating a meaningful experience in order to disseminate their social message and create a change of habits in the long run, as Toledano and Riches (2014) also discuss in their research. For that matter Boner and Zethraeus - the two project leaders of F/ACT - make sure that they have a consistent strategy where everything they do fits with their goals and objectives. Therefore, the empirical data agrees with the view of researchers, that as according to Orefice (2018, p.20) there is a shift in Event Theory, which is highlighted by the growing perception of events ‘as socially constructed staged experiences lived differently by different audiences that require designing instead of managing’.

5.3 Garment Assortment at the Sharing Event

As detected, reasons for garment underutilisation - and with that also utilisation - lay in the garments’ style, fit and quality as well as psychological reasons, which are - like described before - not further considered in this research. In how far do those factors promote the practical reason behind the sharing event to provide consumer with garments they are expected to use? And in how far are they relevant at all for the garment assortment at the event?

As the different participants indicate, during the exemplary sharing event, the assortment was rather variable satisfying regarding the factors of quality, fit and style. However all of them stated that they enjoyed the event and would join another one. Does that mean that those three factors are not important for the assortment?
For the event organisers it is important to devote time in this category. In general, a good garment assortment with regard to quality, fashion style, sizes and neatness can only fortify the cluster of sharing events in the eyes of the consumer. As is stated, also the brand can be added. Out of organisers perspective, there is also more to the assortment which promotes that the customers detect satisfying garments: Those mentioned factors are expected by the consumer to be found in a conventional store and possibly create a sense of security to the consumer when in a retail environment. If sharing events try to borrow some retail tools there could be the possibility to scale up their quality and reduce their level of untrustworthiness in the eyes of the consumer.

Also, in all interviewed sharing event cases, there is a pattern that a good garment assortment can match with the dissemination of the organisation’s or event’s message to the public. A strong message like the one of Recycle Design course is their ideology regarding the absence of gender division in their garment assortment: ‘For us the main thing is that the clothes are there for whoever wants to wear them, we very consciously do not want to code the garments in feminine or masculine’ as the organiser states. Further, different target groups have different fashion sense and needs, but through observation and consistency, a sharing event could fill gaps in consumer needs that retail has failed to do so and also prolong the life of the sharing event itself.

Therefore it can be said, that the match between consumer and garment does not only seem to be determined by the detected usage factors but more by the garment assortment itself, its presentation and what this communicates regarding the events message which is more connected to psychological factors again. Because of that, the factors quality, fit and style are indicated to be important - and could be completed with brand - however, there is more to take into account regarding sharing events than the practical reasons, which let consumers detect garments they are expected to use.

5.4 Aspects during the Sharing Event

Aspects during the Event will be discussed below from the participants’ and organisers’ perspective in connection to the Literature Framework of this dissertation. In research it was found that during the event some main themes are the creation of a unique experience (Toledano & Riches, 2014; Orefice, 2018), promotion of social causes (Toledano & Riches, 2014) and the building of community (Richards, 2014).

The analysis of the participants impressions and experience during the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival transmits that the respondents found the event well organised and were guided by the personnel. Further, the additional activities, workshops and info areas were perceived positively, which shows the dynamic of an elevated experience as stressed in Event Management Theory by Daniel et al. (2014), Orefice (2018) and the organisers’ interviews. On the other hand, the garment sharing area was considered crowded, which reflected a more negative feeling for the participants. This is also stressed by all of the event organisers that were interviewed for this research and stated that structure and guidance could
enhance the experience to a more concept store feeling; that is if structure and personnel are lacking a swap can easily get chaotic and people become frustrated.

Regarding interaction, the participants mention that they were interacting on some level. However, in general other participants did not influence the respondents’ swapping choices. Literature also sees events as a great tool for a deeper connection between the attendees, namely community building as laid down by Toledano and Riches (2014) and Richards (2014) in Chapter 2.2.4. From the organisers’ perspective the community building mostly happens within an existing community meeting at the event and does not occur during the actual swapping; in that way, people exchange, apart from clothes, their concerns and passion regarding their ideologies; this leads to the empowerment of people who value second hand clothing, but is still considered shameful in their communities or peers, like an event organiser pointed out and Richards (2014) named this phenomenon as the form of the neo-tribal event experience, which potentially has a transformational role to societal norms.

5.5 Outcome of the Sharing Event

To evaluate sharing events and their ability to prolong the use phase in Circular Fashion, the perspectives of participants and organisers should be also taken regarding the outcomes they get from attending a sharing event or organising one.

Asked for their takeaways of the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival, all participants state, that the event built a positive experience for them, while different aspects were given as reason for that. Thereby described was the ‘pleasant atmosphere’, which is important and was, according to the respondents, created for instance through socialising, music, furniture and the location, as is also described in literature (e.g. Daniel et al., 2012). While also the sense behind the event - sharing belongings within the community - is valued by the participants, especially the additional activities and workshops were thereby received positively; as was also the often mentioned fact that they promoted sustainable and conscious consumption and informed about ways to achieve that.

Also for the organisers, the sharing events communicate a message regarding their organisations’ vision and mission: A sharing event within a for-profit organisation could be a mean to add value in the consumer's mind or a mean to show a more philanthropic aspect of the textile/retail environment. Moreover, for organisers who are more in the non-profit sphere, sharing events can expand the awareness regarding their activist ideology and in the end help them to deliver their mission.

That shows, that not just the purpose of the events themselves, but especially the communicated message, often connected to additional activities, are indicated to provide a positive outcome for both, participants and organisers.

In that context, the organisers believe, that sharing events can increase the use phase of a garment: it is an effective Circular Economy method and creates a good feeling to the
consumer, since garments become more valuable in their mind and they consider that someone else might find them useful. This is also confirmed by literature, which states that events are able to influence the behaviour of people as described for instance by Toledano and Riches (2014).

5.6 The Future of Sharing Events

Concerning the future of sharing events in the eyes of the participants, there is a general openness to sharing with different values and advantages. Thereby, privately held events seem to create more trust from the perspective of the asked participants. This could be an indicator that a private event could provide more security regarding style and quality of assortment, atmosphere and rules, however some important aspects of sharing events could be missing in a private event, such as unique experience and community building, points that Richards (2014) and Daniel et al. (2012) consider also important. Further, many respondents recognise a shift in their consumption habits, they would pass it on to their peers and can imagine such alternative consumption models to increase in the future.

Looking upon the organisers’ perspective on the future of sharing events, an important topic concerns their monetary or non-monetary value. The majority of the organisers question the possibility of sharing events being profitable. This uncertainty seems to emerge from the fact that sharing events are still in the voluntary sphere, they are legitimate events as Toledano and Riches (2014) name them. However, they are recognised as strong communication tools that could strengthen the value of an organisation and pertain a powerful philanthropic dynamic, due to the fact that they create a good feeling to the participants - either the volunteers or guests - which was also discussed through the research of Daniel et al. (2012) and Toledano and Riches (2014) in the literature framework of this dissertation.

However, the agent that will elevate sharing events from the voluntary ground to revenue generators, still remains unclear according to the collected theoretical and empirical findings and leaves space for further research within a different research scope.

Moreover, the researchers were interested to see the connection of sharing events and Circular Fashion through the scope of the organisers. All of the interviewed organisers admit to this association. For Zethraeus and Boner, sharing events are one of the most efficient Circular Economy methods as there is zero input into the system, which is connected to the laid down theory of decoupling production from resource consumption (Sauvé, Bernard & Sloan, 2016; Ghisellini et al., 2016; European Commission, 2017; WRAP, 2012). Also, such events are considered as valuable for the dissemination of sustainability and raise awareness to the public regarding social causes, as already discussed by Botsman and Rogers (2011), Albinsson and Perera (2012) as well as Toledano and Riches (2014).

When organisers were asked about the role of the participants and their proneness to changing their consuming habits, it could be said that a lot of factors come to their mind. For instance, in consuming the aspect of impulse is frequently present; and that would concern
both buying new products and swapping. Also, organisers realise that consumer behaviour is highly complex especially when it comes to fashion choices, as confirmed by Tukker (2015) as well as Baldwin and Roberts (2006). For the organisers, this uncertainty could be alleviated with the focusing of sharing events on specific target groups and on what their needs are, the creation of a unique experience, the borrowing of retailing tools and the realisation of sharing as a great opportunity to refresh one’s wardrobe without spending a lot of money. The aforementioned objectives were denoted in literature by Kotler and Lee (2008), Albinsson and Perera (2012) as well as Toledano and Riches (2014). A speculation could be, that in the near future sharing and reusing may become compulsory in all types of products and services where people consume excess resources, as Gansky (2010) and Pedersen and Netter (2015) argue. If that is the case, sharing events could be transformed into services and become embedded into the business plan of an organisation, which is partly seen through the ‘mushrooming’ of such initiatives.

5.7 Discussion Summary

In the following, the findings are summed up in order to answer the research question of this thesis:

How do Sharing Events influence Garment Usage out of the Perspective of Organisers and Participants?

First of all, the research outcome hints, that there are complex practical as well as psychological factors, which let consumers use garments. They should be seen as foundation for a sharing event and are relevant during the event regarding the available garment assortment and arrangement.

In that context, the guidance during the event is indicated to be an important aspect, which seemingly leads to the event’s positive outcome regarding garment swaps. As hinted by the organisers and participants, all that makes it possible for the event participants to detect garments and can create a store-like feeling, which answers to the classical shopping habits of consumers and promotes thereby a match between garment and new user which in the end influences the garment usage positively.

An important factor in that context is hinted to be the premise of a sharing event, which builds its planning and design, which can - with a consistent strategy - play a crucial role regarding the event, its success and especially the message which is communicated.

That leads to significant aspects, as besides a sharing event’s practical outcome - the sharing of garments through different users within its lifetime - it was indicated that especially the event’s imperceptible aspects and outcomes are relevant and influence in the end the garment use: as hinted, the events make it possible for organisations to communicate a message regarding their mission and vision as well as sustainable and conscious garment consumption behaviour. In that context, an atmosphere created with consistency, through aspects like
music, catering, interior and location and an arrangement, which evokes a store-like feeling seems to be important.

Further, especially the additional activities at an event, like workshops, are not just hinted to make the event valuable for participants, but seemingly promote a change in the consumer’s mind-set and also foster networking and community building. Therefore, it is indicated, that one of the asset tools of sharing events is this communication, which builds on the experience and generates value in the long run, as stated in literature. As implied, those are relevant aspects regarding sharing events and influence the use phase of garments as an effective model based on the Circular Fashion concept, which lets garments become more valuable in the mind of consumers - for themselves and also someone else - and increase the use of the former thereby.

Thereafter, based on the detected participants’ openness to sharing and indication that their consumption behaviour might change by the participants themselves as well as organisers and literature, it is shown, that sharing events as services seem to be able to increasingly influence the garment use in future: they are indicated to have the ability to become a founded business model, based and part of collective garment use, as communication tool, which creates a philanthropic dynamic. As stated before, the elevation of such models towards a revenue creating sphere remains a valuable research gap, as detected during the course of this study, and could be part of further research. Thereby, as found out in literature and by mirroring the interviewed organisers statements, garment sharing events are indicated to be connected to Circular Fashion as building on the one side the simplest form of use promotion - through sharing garments as they are – and on the other side using the dynamics and influences of events by leveraging the garment usage in changing the consumer to a user.

Figure 9 summarises those aspects, as described in literature and indicated by organisers and participants, of garment sharing events visually as an answer to the before stated research question. As can be seen, the organisers and participants are indicated to influence or get influenced as well as shape the garment sharing event in different ways. As illustrated by the figure, through a concise planning as well as a strategy, the organiser determines the event’s promotion, swapping area, volunteers/staff, the garment assortment, workshops, the surroundings (in terms of for instance location, furniture and decorations) as well as guidance and can promote social interaction thereby.

During the event, this is hinted to be transformed into a certain atmosphere and experience for the participant, during which community building, value for the organisation as well as awareness for garment value can be promoted. This might influence the participants, however, also the participants themselves are seen to be influencing those factors, as shown through the dash bidirectional arrow. Further, based on their vision and mission, the organisers seem to be able to send a message the participants might perceive.
Besides those influences on the participants, the garment sharing event allows them to give away and receive garments, which influences the *garment use*, based on practical and psychological reasons. Thereby, in the long run, the sharing event participants are indicated to be changed from garment consumers to garment users.

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**Figure 9: The Functionality of Garment Sharing Events, authors’ figure**
6 Conclusion

The following chapter shall present the final conclusions of this dissertation, while taking into account practical and theoretical implications, research limitations, indications for further research as well as a future outlook.

This thesis has aimed the centre of attention towards Circular Fashion, as well as Collaborative Consumption and sharing. These concepts were regarded from the scope of the fashion industry and the use phase of garments, in order to fulfil the purpose of how to influence the use phase of garments in Circular Fashion by investigating garment sharing events out of the perspective of participants and organisers.

The research within sharing events has indicated the potential they obtain in promoting the use phase of garments. Literature has already denoted the characteristics of such events that render them as the closest to the Circular Economy model theory, as sharing does not require any input of resources into the system, but the wearer uses garments just as they are already produced. Moreover, as consumption habits are considered a complex phenomenon that is formulated by various social, psychological and economical influencers, literature findings combined with the collected empirical data indicate that sharing events pertain a dynamic intermingling of those influencers. Thus, implied within literature and by the analysed empirical data, the former are indicated to procure a change in habits, which in this case would be an efficient use phase during the lifetime of a garment by the user.

Some major influencers are considered community building and direct communication within the group of people that are found in these events, where ideologies and activism are cultivated. Also, the ‘feeling of doing something good’ is a key driver for the participant to remember the sharing event positively in hindsight, which in turn hinders the ‘throw away culture’ of linear economy. Although, it was not mentioned in the literature, the findings in the Analysis also demonstrate how an in-store atmosphere and garment assortment at a sharing event create the security a consumer is looking for at a conventional retail store, meaning quality, width in sizes, fashionable pieces and a well-presented area; these tools offer an elevated experience and could be proven valuable for the establishment of sharing events and sharing of garments in general. As the research outcome hints, this value encompasses intangible aspects rather than monetary revenue, which therefore leaves space for further research within a different research scope.

Thus, with respect to academic implications this research is contributing to the Event Management Theory of Daniel et al. (2012), Sharples et al. (2014) and Orefice (2018), as well as theories regarding Collaborative Consumption and sharing by Pedersen and Netter (2015), Albinsson and Perera (2012), Tukker (2015). Also, this thesis contributes to the research on garment disposal behaviour of Armstrong and Lang (2013), Laitala (2014) and WRAP (2017), as findings have supplemented and expanded these theories.
Moreover, this research is considered to have practical implications to the professionals in the field of business and management as both event organisers and literature recognise the emergence of new business models with a core in Circular Economy, waste reduction, data extraction, alternative ownership and subscription models. Thus, looking into initiatives like sharing events is an opportunity to investigate patterns that will create a base for the feasibility of those new business models. Also, the findings indicate that sharing events could be a boost for the local economy, through collaboration with vendors, garment updating service providers and in general the creation of a network of professionals that would benefit from a well designed sharing event. Moreover, practitioners that have the economic means to further experiment with regard to their business strategy could be proven valuable for the elimination of the uncertainty regarding the profitability of sharing and sharing events, which has been remarked in the Discussion.

Furthermore, the researchers recognise that the findings provide a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching other empirical instances in future research, especially due to the small sample size of the participants, a limitation that is already discussed in the Methodology. What is more, the collection of data was built according to findings in the literature regarding Circular Economy in Fashion, Collaborative Consumption, sharing events and Event Management Theory, thus other important aspects could further add to this research. Specifically, some aspects could deepen the psychological factors of consumer behaviour or motivation regarding sharing. Also, the discipline of Digital Marketing could investigate how to implement sharing as a service within an organisation and through online tools, such as platforms and services that could be a pool of consumer data not only regarding sartorial likes but also other personal interests; data that would be available to be used by the organisation through these tools.

As laid down in the Introduction, the increased demand for sustainability regarding garments is a key driver for this thesis and the researchers attempt to enlighten a part of the lifetime of a garment, which is the use phase. The empirical findings also investigate a future outlook of Sharing Events as laid down in Chapter 5.6. As mentioned, the consumer is considered an important agent for a shift towards Circular Fashion in this phase and findings also indicate that this agent in coordination with other important players in this system can make circular initiatives influential to the textile industry - such as a well organised sharing event.

In that manner, issues that were specified in the Introduction, such as microplastic pollution, the sartorial needs of a growing global consensus, the excessive landfilling and resource input into the system could be addressed, not to solve these problematics once and for all, but to some degree alleviate them and indicate guidelines for a more efficient use phase of garments that already exist.
Bibliography


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Appendix

1. Questionnaire Organisers

Dear Sir or Madam,

The following questionnaire was developed in context of our master thesis research at the Swedish School of Textiles.

In this interest we research garment sharing events, their strategy and outcome related to ‘Prolonging the Use Phase in Circular Fashion’. Because of your expertise and experiences in that context, we highly value your responses to the following questions.

The completion of the questionnaire will take around 20 minutes. We encourage you to take your time doing so and would be happy if you share your opinion, knowledge and experience with us freely. The questions are structured with focus on “before, during and after the garment sharing event”. You can fill in your answers directly in this pdf form.

To allow us the usage of your given data for the intended purpose of research in context of our master thesis, please also fill the attached “Consent for the collection and processing of personal data” according to the GDPR.

Please return the completed questionnaire until Sunday, the 12th of May to following email address: s182199@student.hb.se

We thank you for your participation!

Christina Adriami & Johanna Stock

W1: You are organising events on which people can share garments with each other. How are those Sharing Events and Circular Fashion connected in your eyes?

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→ Before the Sharing Event:
M1: What are in general your strategic key steps when planning Sharing Events?

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→ During the Sharing Event:
M2: How important is it that the participants are guided during the event? How can this be done? Please consider e.g. swapping rules, personnel, room layout, garment presentation...

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__________________________________________________________________________
M3: Please think about the garment assortment at sharing events: In literature it is stated that the three factors quality, fit and style are decisive for consumers to use their garments (e.g. Armstrong & Lang, 2013; Laitala, 2014).

In how far do you consider those three factors - Quality, Fit, Fashion Style - as important for a successful swap?

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M4: Often during Sharing Events workshops and activities are offered, like e.g. movie screenings or a possibility for garment updating. Further, music might be played and food/drinks are offered.

How do those additional activities and a certain “feel-good” atmosphere add value to the Sharing Event?

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M5: In how far is community building/networking promoted during the events? Do you as an organiser prompt this during the event? If so, how?

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→ After the Sharing Event:

M6: Please think about your organisation’s vision and mission: What are those? In how far do Sharing Events create value which fulfil them?

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M2: In how far can sharing events create monetary value? Do you see them as the foundation of a feasible business model or are there obstacles?

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M8: Studies show that an unique event experience and a strong event message can influence the participants perception/behaviour (Toledano & Riches, 2014; Grunig, 1993).

In how far can a sharing event influence the participants garment consumption behaviour from buying to using? Which role do Sharing Event participants as “ambassadors” play?

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C1: Considering everything just discussed, in how far do you think are Sharing Events suitable to prolong the use phase in Circular Fashion?

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C2: How do you see the development of Sharing Events regarding a more sustainable future?

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C3: Do you have any more remarks regarding Sharing Events, organising them and their outcome?

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__________________________________________________________________________

Personal Data:

Name:________________________________________________________________________

Organisation (Name + Country):__________________________________________________

Number of organised sharing events:_____________________________________________

Average participant size of organised sharing events: □<20 □20-100 □>100

Thank you for your participation!

Sources:
2. Questionnaire Participants

Dear Research Participant,

During the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival on the 28th of April in Köln you **swapped garments** with the other participants. In the following, we are going to ask you about your experience doing so, the garments you swapped and your clothing usage behaviour in general.

The completion of the questionnaire will take around **20 minutes**. We encourage you to take your time doing so and would be happy if you share **your opinion and experiences** with us freely and straightforward, there is no need to worry about formalities. You can fill in your answers directly in this pdf form.

The questionnaire is completely anonymous and the gathered data is only used for the purpose of our academic research.

Please return the completed questionnaire **until Sunday, the 12th of May** to following email address: s182199@student.hb.se

____________________________________________________

We thank you for your participation!
Vielen Dank für Deine Teilnahme!

Christina & Johanna
W1: In general, how do you feel about sharing your clothes with other people? Please motivate your answer freely.

M1: It is said, that the usage of garments is declining steadily and people do not use the garments they own (source: Ellen MacArthur Foundation). Please think about the garments you own but not use: What are the reasons that you do not use those garments? Please state them.
Kleidungsstücke werden immer weniger genutzt und die meisten Menschen tragen nur wenige Male die Kleidung, die sie besitzen (Quelle: Ellen MacArthur Foundation). Bitte denke an Kleidung die Du besitzt, aber nicht trägst: Was sind die Gründe dafür? Bitte nenne sie.

M2: Please think about garments you already use for a long time. What are the reasons? How do you maintain/care for those garments?
Denke bitte an Kleidungsstücke, die Du schon seit langer Zeit trägst. Was sind die Gründe dafür? Wie pflegst du sie?

The following section focuses on the garments you swapped at the F/ACT sharing event.
Die folgenden Fragen beziehen sich auf die Kleidung, die Du auf dem Swap it! Festival ertauscht hast.

M3a: In how far did you find garments in good QUALITY? Please consider e.g. if the garments’ colours changed, fabric abrasion, broken parts, poor stitching.

M3b: In how far did you find garments with a satisfying FIT for you? Please consider e.g. if the garments have the right size and dimensions.

M3c: In how far did you find garments that match your FASHION STYLE?
Inwiefern hast Du auf dem Event Kleidungsstücke gefunden, die Deinem persönlichen Modegeschmack entsprechen?
The following section focuses on the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival. Die folgenden Fragen beziehen sich auf das Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival selbst.


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→ Please reflect on your experience with the other participants during the Swap it! Festival. Bitte berücksichtige im folgenden die Erfahrungen, die Du mit den anderen Eventteilnehmern gemacht hast.

M5: In how far were your swapping choices influenced by other participants? Inwiefern wurden Deine Tauschentscheidungen von anderen Eventteilnehmern beeinflusst?

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M6: In how far did you interact and network with the other participants during the event? Inwiefern hast du während des Events mit den anderen Teilnehmern interagiert und Kontakte geknüpft?

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→ Please reflect, on your thoughts AFTER the Swap it! Festival. Bitte berücksichtige im Folgenden die Gedanken, die Du NACH dem Swap it! Festival hattest.

M7: Would you say that your fashion consumption would change in future to more swapping instead of purchasing new clothes? Please motivate your answer freely. Wird sich dein Modekonsum zukünftig ändern zu mehr tauschen anstatt neu zu kaufen? Bitte begründe deine Antwort.

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M8: After your participation at the sharing event, would you join another sharing event or even host one yourself? Please motivate your answer freely. Würdest Du durch Deine Teilnahme am Swap it! Festival ein anderes Sharing Event besuchen oder eventuell sogar selbst eins organisieren? Bitte begründe deine Antwort.

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XVII
M9: What are your personal main take-aways of the Swap it! sharing event? Please motivate your answer freely.
Was ist dein persönliches Fazit des Swap it! Sharing Events? Bitte begründe deine Antwort.

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M10a: In general, what did you like during the event? Please state it in keywords.
Was hat dir während des Events besonders gefallen? Bitte nenne Stichworte.

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M10b: In general, what did you NOT like during the event? Please state it in keywords.
Was hat dir weniger gefallen? Bitte nenne Stichworte.

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C1: Do you have any more remarks regarding the Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festival or sharing events in general?
Hast du weitere Anmerkungen zu dem Kleiderei X Fashion Revolution Swap it! Festivals oder Sharing Events im Allgemeinen?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Personal data / Persönliche Daten
Age / Alter: □<25 □25-35 □35<
Monthly income range / Monatseinkommen: □<1000€ □1000-3000€ □ >3000€

Thank you for your participation!
Vielen Dank für Deine Teilnahme!

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