

Exploring rebound effects in second-hand clothing consumption

Understanding consumer decision-making through in-depth interviews

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Project description

Second-hand clothing shops are one of the most established and widely recognized circular business models. It is commonly believed that second-hand clothing is a sustainable option because it displaces new garments. However, prior research shows that nearly one-third of second-hand clothes did not result in reduced consumption of new garments. This can be explained by the high heterogeneity among consumers. While some individuals reduce their consumption of new clothing thanks to second-hand purchases, others tend to increase their consumption volume. Yet, despite the relatively high popularity of second-hand clothing shops, there remains a knowledge gap in understanding the consumer decision-making processes that contribute to rebound effects. Which consumer segments rebound most and why? What factors influence their decision-making? What determines which consumer groups are the most likely to cause rebound effects?

This project, as part of the assistantship, is part of the research on consumer-level rebound effects of circular business models ([link](#)). Specifically, the aim of this project is to deepen our understanding of decision-making processes in the context of clothing purchases and rebound effects. To capture the breadth of factors influencing these decisions, the project will employ interviews with consumers. The main tasks include: (i) developing an interview guide based on the Capabilities, Opportunities, Motivation and Behavior (COM-B) model, in collaboration with the supervisors, (ii) conducting interviews with consumers, (iii) analyzing and synthesizing main findings from these interviews. The output of this project will be used to enhance the decision-making module of an agent-based simulation analyzing rebound effects of second-hand clothing consumption.

Job requirements

- We are looking for a student eager to gain experience in the field of circular economy or consumer research.
- Prior experience in the field is not necessary but a willingness to conduct interviews is essential.
- Proficiency in Dutch and English is required for conducting and transcribing of the interviews.