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AN EXPLORATORY APPROACH ON THE DYNAMICS OF CLOTHES PRACTICES INVOLVING IMPORTED SECOND-HAND CLOTHING SEEN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF YOUNG ADULTS IN CAMEROON

Master Thesis, Culture Communication and Globalization

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Abstract:

The world trade in second-hand clothing has grown tremendously, with sales now exceeding $ 1 billion per year. In the context of Cameroon, the purchase of second-hand clothes is no longer reserved for the poor. Because it fulfills the clothing needs of people from all stratum of the society depending on occasions and contexts. Young adults in Cameroon have developed skills to simply mix and match goods to suit their personal preferences.

This study attempts to move the conversation from the current economic view under which second-hand clothes consumption is being treated by scholars, to a more consumer centered view. To find out how young adults perceive and practice this form of consumption. That is, this study had as objective to contribute to the understanding of the motivation and barriers towards second-hand clothes consumption practice by young adults in Cameroon. This study is using a qualitative research method to explore these motivations among second-hand consumers in Yaoundé, Douala and Garoua in Cameroon. The data was gathered through in-depth interviews with consumers of second-hand clothes. the elements of the social practice theory of Elizabeth Shove were used to give meaning to the findings and to understand the drivers behind second-hand clothes consumption by young adults in Cameroon. It was revealed that there are various drivers of motivation for second-hand clothes consumption. Empirical findings from this study demonstrate that although second-hand clothes are sometimes offered at lower prices, or at the same price, buying a garment that is certainly already worn but ultimately of better quality is perceived as more interesting by consumers. Moreover, consumers go for second-hand apparels to complement their wardrobes as the ability to stand out by owning a unique piece will certainly give character to his / her owner.

Keywords: Second-hand clothing (SHC), social practice theory, young adults, motivations, barriers, Cameroon.

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Table of Content

Chapter I: Introduction

In the last 40 years worldwide, there has been a resurgence in second-hand consumption among consumers (Guiot and Roux, 2010). Half a century ago a buyer's shopping experience was in a traditional mall and pop-stores (Lin, 2020). Currently, consumers in general have more and more of their wardrobe's items bought through a new channel: which is second-hand clothes (SHC) resale distributors. The second-hand fashion industry has created a space where there are no compromises between authenticity, sustainability, quality, and price (Lin, 2020). Kesterbaum (2017) revealed that the second-hand clothes sector can boost about 11 % growth with a projected value of $33billion for 2021.

The growth of the consumers in the resale market has been fuelled by changing customer buying habits and expectations. According to reports from ThredUP (The world's largest online resale platform), 70% of women are increasingly inclined to buying second-hand clothes, an increase of 64% as compared to figures in 2018. For millennials (a person reaching young adulthood in the early 21st century) who make up most of the resale market, the traditional stigma surrounding second-hand apparel has largely subsided, and scores of consumers now find pride in owning second-hand stuff. With one of the largest inhibiting factors(stigma) removed, first-time consumers have begun to diversify their wardrobe while staying within their budget (ThredUP, 2020).

Today's world is a world where we live to shop, encouraged by the opening of shopping malls, mega centres, and currently the internet. We live in a disposable society where it is easier to throw things out than to fix them. From paper cups, plastic bottles, to cars, and computers, created speedily and for convenience. These objects are immediately discarded and replaced once they lose their attractiveness and perceived usefulness. In this era of craze shopping and urge to acquire new things, it is then curious to see how popular second-hand clothes shopping has become. The sale of second-hand clothing is a huge global industry. Research has estimated that almost 70% of clothes that are donated in the world are shipped to the African continent (OXFAM, 2015). Moreover, Katende-Magezi (2017) points out that these clothes begin as a charity, before being sold by specific corporations and lawfully shipped to its export destination as legitimate trade between countries.

Recent literature also lays emphasis on the positive aspect of second-hand clothes usage on the environment. For example, Farrant et al. (2010) found that purchasing 100 used garments results in a 14 percent reduction in global warming impact and a 45 percent reduction in human toxicity for cotton and polyester garments. Furthermore, according to SHC's life cycle study, the entire process of acquiring a batch of SHC, from collection to processing to transportation, has a negligible environmental impact. As a result, using SHC has a huge positive effect on the climate.

However, in the African context SHC is usually picked at for its negative aspects. For instance, Moulemvo (2011) argues that the immediate consequence of the liberalization of trade at the world level is the development of the world trade in second-hand clothing. Which, according to the United Nations has been "multiplied by 10" between 1990 and the 2000s, its turnover now exceeding one billion dollars per year (500 billion FCFA). Unfortunately, the rise of the trade has had a toll on the local industry in developing countries (Baden and Barber, 2005). For example, in most parts of West Africa (that is, Zambia, Kenya, Rwanda, Ghana, Zimbabwe), the second-hand clothes industry has played a crucial part in the economic sector as it has provided jobs and livelihood for most of the population (Baden and Barber, 2005). In Africa, second-hand clothes are, in many cases, highly represented in the wardrobe of less privileged people. It is not surprising that Cameroon is not exempted from countries that massively import SHC. The SHC market is now experiencing a real explosion in Douala (the economic Capital of Cameroon) and throughout the country. For instance, reports reveal that Cameroon spent in 2019 nearly 40 billion FCFA to import 73,170 tons of second-hand clothing, among its textile imports, which amounts to more than 100 billion FCFA (Ecofin Agency, 2020). Cameroon spent a sum of 101.71 billion FCFA in 2019 for the import of 121,935 tons of textile materials and their articles including SHC, an increase of 6.4% (Ecofin Agency, 2020). Despite the perceived popularity of this market with the huge presence of clothes imported from China and Turkey, there is still room for development in the area of consumer fidelity.

The above literature suggests that the impact of the consumption second-hand clothing and the factors triggering SHC consumption varies from country to country and from study to study. We note, however, that there is too little literature on the case of Cameroon which partly explains why the researcher decided to take on this task. This study aims to depart from this controversy about SHC being good or bad to focus on how the practice is viewed

and carried out by young adults in Cameroon. Also, it intends to explore the dynamics of this practice, how the internet and the recent Covid19 pandemic has changed the way this form of consumption is being practiced. Hansen (2010) describes youths in Zambia in relation to their SHC consumption as a new generation of fashion-conscious young people who use their talent and imagination to refashion second-hand clothes into fashionable outfits while also earning a living (Hansen, 2010).

The focus will be mainly on young adults within the age range of 25- 35, who are educated and financially independent. As they are not constrained by their finances to shop only SHC and they can better explain their clothes consumption choices. The main task set out for this study is finding out their motivations and obstacles to buying second-hand clothes besides the obvious economic reasons. This is because, conventionally, second-hand clothes consumption was deemed to be for those with limited purchase power due to economic constraints (Winakor, 1969). But current research has discredited this perception by implying that purchasing at second-hand stores may be motivated by more than just economic reasons (Roux & Guiot, 2008). This is proven by the fact that second-hand clothes shopping is still striving even though there is an adequate supply of new and less expensive clothing in the market. People still go for second-hand clothing (Kavillanz, 2020).

Background

Research has shown that young adult consumers shop at second-hand channels for various reasons (Ferraro and Sands, 2016). For instance, young adults' shop at second-hand stores with expectations that they might be able to find unique or quality products that are not usually available through traditional shopping channels (Flores, 2014; Jenß, 2004 as cited in Yan et al., 2015; Ferraro and Sands, 2016). Young consumers can also use the second-hand channels to discard clothing that is old or out of fashion (Morgan and Birtwistle, 2009). In the African context contrasting views have been highlighted by different authors. Some blame the SHC sector as being the reason for the collapse of the local textile industry (Wetengere, 2018; Baden and Barber, 2005). Whereas other scholars have praised it as being a source of income and a means through which youths can be creative and stylish (Hansen, 2010).

Moreover, Brooks and Simon (2012) have delivered a more nuanced account of the SHC sector and its impact in Africa. For them, the blame should not be on the SHC industry, but rather on the local textile industry's inability to operate a thorough renovation through investment in its work techniques and machines. In addition, Brook and Simon (2012) highlighted the invasion of the African market with cheap and low-quality products from Asia (Brook & Simon 2012; Moulemvo 2011). Despite the growing number of young consumers interested in shopping at second-hand stores, little research has been conducted to further understand the preference of used clothing among young adults in Cameroon.

Problem statement

The researcher's interest in this topic stems from the fact that during her Bachelor studies, she was engaged in the sales of second-hand fashion to support herself. Back then, Second-hand clothing is one of the indicators an ongoing transition in Africa, marked by its people's constant adaptability to changing circumstances (Linge, 2018). Second-hand clothes have become more of a problem as global clothing demand has increased because of rapidly evolving fashions and the availability of low-cost, low-quality clothing (Katende-Magezi, 2017). The study of different commercial operations related to second-hand clothing, the complex distribution channel, and various population expectations allows many hypotheses regarding the future of second-hand clothing in Africa in general and Cameroon in particular (Linge, 2018). The rise of second-hand apparel around the world has made it possible to give new life to used clothes by revaluing it. In some studies, the challenges posed by the importation of used clothing to local textile industries is critically examined. This is particularly the case of Field (2004) for whom it is too simplistic to consider that "the second-hand clothing trade is killing the textile and clothing industry". Likewise, Hansen (2004) while acknowledging that the second-hand clothing trade is likely a factor undermining local textile and clothing production, shows that it suffers much more from the consequences of the current globally competitive environment. It is not obvious that local production would recover in the absence of the second-hand clothing trade, especially with new imports from Asia, which are cheaper than locally produced products (Baden & barber, 2005). In addition, Field (2004) notes that in Zimbabwe's informal sector most tailors and garment producers have displayed neutrality in competition with the second-hand clothing trade. Second-hand

clothing and traditional clothing are two separate markets for them (Field,2004; Moulemvo, 2011).

This research will address three specific themes, which are, the growth of exportation of second-hand clothes from the west to Africa, with a focus on Cameroon. Secondly, the specific group of young adult's consumers in Cameroon, their second- hand clothes shopping practices and its dynamics. Lastly, the attention is going to be shifted away from this divergence that exists in the current discourse about second-hand clothes and its impact on the local textile industry in Cameroon. This study will focus on uncovering the experience of youths involved in clothes shopping, their dress practice and what influences their decisions to either shop for new clothes or go for second-hand clothes.

The following table explains the elements that constitute social practice theory, as they relate to the subject of second-hand clothes shopping.

Table 1. Elements of social practices and illustrative examples for second-hand clothes shopping practice, inspired by the model from Shove et al. (2012).

Elements	Definition	Illustrative Examples
Material	The things, technologies, tangible physical entities and the stuff of which objects are made	Thrift shops, accessible markets, Facebook markets, flea markets, clothes exposition stands, shops, online second-hand shops
Competences	The skills, know-how, and techniques used to enact practices	Knowledge about the specific markets to find specific goods, place a bid on Facebook markets, the patience to sort the pile of clothes, have the information about new arrivals, the ability to determine what will please the customers.
Meanings	The social and symbolic significance of participation at any one moment.	The symbolism and meaning attached to clothes consumption and sustainability or clothes consumption and sense of style; the value placed on contributing to fight against waste; and the value of shaping their identities through their clothes.

Research Questions

Leading research question: How do young adults in Cameroon perceive second -hand clothes shopping?

research question 1: What motivates or deter young adults in Cameroon from engaging in the second-clothes shopping practice?

research question 2: How can this shopping practice gain more followers within Cameroonian young adults' market?

Research Goal

This study is aimed at gaining a deep understanding of the clothes practices of young adults in Cameroon, to provide a clear interpretation of the structure, order, and comprehensive patterns that influence my respondents' choice of SHC. Enlightened by the social practice theory of Elizabeth Shove and Pantzar (2012).

Value

Little research has been conducted to understand second-hand clothes shopping decision making among young adults in Cameroon. This study will explore the multiple variables that come into play in their shopping experiences and will provide insights into young adults' second-hand shopping decision making process. This practice that was regarded years back as reserved for the poor, has now gained a huge popularity. As alternative means of shopping for used apparels have emerged (Ferraro and Sands, 2016). For instance, with the advent and vulgarization of the internet and the use of mobile devices such as smartphones, laptops, and iPads, the Cameroonian market sphere have gained traction in terms of clothes shopping, leading customers to seek out other outlets for shopping, albeit to a limited extent (Alangeh, 2014).

In today's economic climate, it is important, if not paramount, to understand the reasons for second-hand consumption because the second-hand clothing sector represents an alternative mode of consumption making it possible to meet the environmental and economic challenges. The literature mentions various barriers to SHC consumption: such as, health issues, hygienic concerns, unbalance price/quality ratio, and the lack of skills/ experience. Studying the relativity of these obstacles to buying clothes will allow the implementation of

marketing strategies to remove these barriers and encourage consumers to consume more second-hand to increase the profitability of this market at the expense of the conventional market, threatening the planet and its inhabitants.

Moreover, regardless of whether a large organization or a small business, understanding the needs of consumers, both current and potential, is critical to retaining vitality, growth, and momentum. For second-hand product retailers, the sooner they learn about the reasons and obstacles for second-hand shopping among the younger generation, the more likely they are to succeed.

Also, investigating the decision-making process enables customers to obtain a deeper understanding of themselves. When consumers realize how serious the situation is, they are more likely to move from normal consumption to sustainable consumption. Better comprehension leads to more informed buying decisions. Consumers, especially young consumers, sometimes purchase items they do not want or need. In the same vein, a report from The Financial Times affirms that "The global second-hand clothing market is set to double to $51 billion in the next five years surpassing fast fashion within a decade" (Glover, 2021).

It is not yet feasible to predict how used clothing markets globally will be impacted by changing consumption patterns in rich countries. However, it is obvious that Cameroonian and African consumers will not stop requesting the right to enjoy the same quality, brands, and styles like those consumed in high-income countries, even though they will be second users.

The case of Cameroon is important because, by thoroughly exploring the current discourse around the emerging Cameroonian second-hand fashion consumption as compared to more reputable ones, and to throw more light on this specific market. This expands international knowledge, but equally serves as a preliminary attempt at mapping the Sub-Saharan Africa's viewpoint. As Hansen (2000), insists that, while ideas coming from the United States and Western Europe very often frame second-hand clothes consumption within the sphere of constructed identity and some other "postmodern" ideas, the feelings of African youths could be situated at the juncture of the sequence as they embrace used clothing for functional and well thought economic reasons. In addition, their consumption practices are guided by local culture. (Hansen, 2000).

Ultimately, we have laid down the aim, value, the research questions, and the context in which the researcher took interest in the subject of second-hand clothes shopping practice. We will now move on to provide an overview of existing research on the topic of second-hand clothes consumption practice. Moreover, social practice theory as the theoretical framework will be outlined. Then, the method used for data collection and analysis will be thoroughly described. After the method, the main findings will be presented and discussed. The thesis will end with the conclusions and limitations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and theory

Section I: Literature Review

Having identified the problem at the introduction, the thesis will now explore the literature regarding the topic and the theoretical considerations. This chapter will present the various ways in which this area of study has been tackled by other scholars and the existing knowledge gaps pertaining to this topic will be identified. This chapter contains two sections with the first section dwelling on consumers' second-hand clothes shopping experiences and the second section will rely on Elizabeth Shove's elements of practice theory guided by the research questions to bring out what the focus of the study will be.

To study this consumer practice, the researcher is going to mainly use Elizabeth Shoves' social practice theory as a method and theory. Since it offers an integrated approach to understanding consumer behaviour. Social practice is concerned with the everyday practices that are habitually and typically carried out in a society. Preferences, routines, and behaviours of consumers grow in a specific social context and to comprehend widely shared social behaviour it is thus not sufficient to study an individual. Alternatively, the "social" is established by the behaviour of individuals who are somewhat free to choose among alternatives and hence the individual and his/her motivations and decision-making strategies cannot be neglected.

So, the dynamics that plays out in clothing consumption will be analysed through a practice theory lens, which is concerned with the shaping of everyday life activities. According to

Røpke (2009) as cited in (Jørgensen & Jensen 2012, "individuals face practices-as-entities as these are formed historically as a collective achievement; through their own practices-as-performance, individuals reproduce and transform the entities over time. Individuals thus act as 'carriers' of practices" (Røpke, 2009). Dressing is seen as an activity with certain patterns and rituals that are played out when deciding what to buy and what to wear daily. Thus, doing a certain activity in everyday life does not always make people aware of their actions (Røpke, 2009).

clarification of the concept of "Second-hand clothes"

Definition

Before continuing, it is critical to grasp the key principles underlying this study. At what point does a garment become a second-hand item? A comparison will be made from two definitions taken from different sources and a case specific definition will be derived. This will cover the fundamentals of second-hand shopping within the framework of this study. It is assumed in this case that the terms "second-hand" and "used-goods" are synonyms and thus have the same definition. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a second-hand good is defined as "object, piece of furniture, vehicle, etc., which is not new, and which is bought second, third hand". Thus, a second-hand good is synonymous with a second-hand, this term allows the metaphor of the transition between two parts, the passage to the hand of the secondary owner. In the context of this study, two key elements pertaining to the used items will be retained. It is defined as an object whose owner transfers ownership by resorting to the market. Second-hand shopping is defined as *the acquisition of second-hand objects through methods and places of exchange that are generally distinct from those for new products (Guiot and Roux, 2008).* It is important here to specify that some "new "clothes still carrying their price tags are often found in second-hand shops. Therefore, this definition does not take into account clothes that are obtained through swapping and family clothes exchange. Because there are no financial interests involved.

By examining this form of shopping practice through positive lenses, it is important to use the concept of motivation to bring out what determines a person's actions, including needs, wishes, emotions, feeling, passion, areas of interests, beliefs, life values, personal complexes,

conditioning, habits, imaginary representations, fantasies and aspirations (Guiot and Roux 2010).Throughout this study, the term 'second-hand clothing' (SHC) is used to describe the trade and use value of used clothing imports from the "West", through legal and illegal means, as retail stock traded to Cameroon to be (re)produced and consumed (Brooks, 2013).

While academic and managerial interest in the second-hand has diminished due to its marginal location, research on the motivations has exploded in recent years (Belk et al., 1988; Cervellon et al., 2012; Chu & Liao, 2007; Ertz et al., 2016; Gregson & Crewe, 1997; Bardhi & Arnould, 2005; Guiot & Roux, 2008, 2010; Pierce & Paulo) and the obstacles linked to the practice (Bezançon, Guiot & Le Nagard, 2013; Bezançon, 2012; Hiller Connel, 2009; Roux & Korchia, 2006; Steinbring and Rucker, 2003; O'Reilly et al., 1984) inherent to second-hand buying. However, as Durif et al. (2014) points out, these two concepts are often analysed separately, while studying them together would allow for correlations and teaching. During this research, second-hand shoes will be included in the category of SHC. This is because both are declared as "second-hand goods" at the Cameroonian Customs agency (Fodouop, 2005). Also, other scholars have included both in the same category in their research work (Hansen, 2015; Wetengere, 2018; Brooks and Simon, 2012).

Elements of practice in second-hand clothes shopping

Competence and skills

Hansen (2010) asserts that clothing competence entails a good knowledge of fabric quality and texture, aesthetic sensibility, style, and the ability to create and come up with an overall look. Moreover, Clothing competence, which involves making discriminating decisions about quality, design, value for money, garment alignment to match unique occasions and contexts, and being influenced by global styles and trends, promotes an identity construction that does not simply imply that everything goes (Hansen, 2006a).

Hence, Zambian consumers' expertise of dressing is primarily practical, having been acquired through involvement in various facets of urban life – home, work, leisure and entertainment, markets, and streets – where clothing issues are frequently discussed (Hansen, 2006b). Although the sector does not exclusively serve poorer customers, a handful of Zambians with

higher incomes have more options. They shop in upscale shops and boutiques in shopping centres, as well as second-hand clothing markets and tailor-made clothing (Hansen, 2006a, 2006b).

Used clothing has made room for self-fashioning, which was previously inaccessible due to financial constraints (Norris, 2005), and has also become a symbol of cultural capital and resistance (Langman, 2003). It is no longer just a matter of practical efficiency when it comes to purchasing products, but also of aesthetic appeal, taste, and experience.

Moreover, the consumption of second-hand clothes is more than a mindless imitation of western fashion (Hansen, 2010). It is attractive because it is inexpensive, it meets practical clothing needs, and it is a source for identity creation, in which second-hand clothes are localized and refashioned to display one's social status, express desired characteristics, and satisfy desires. Furthermore, it enables customers to demonstrate clothing competence and thus be trendy, resulting in feelings of well-being, belonging, confidence, and pleasure (Hansen, 2010).

Material and infrastructure

The second-hand trade space ranges from garage sales and flea markets to estate sales and high-end auction houses, and to eBay (Hansen, 2010). Second-hand stores and trading methods include vintage shops/boutiques, consignment shops, thrift/charity shops, online auction sites, flea markets, antique fairs, yard sales, car-boot sales, and classified advertising. There are three types of markets: informal, independent, and fringe markets (Gregson and Crewe, 2003; Hansen, 2000a; Mhango and Niehm, 2005 in Han, 2013).

Matos and Barbosa (2016) carried out a study in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil and discovered that despite the second-hand clothes sector recently gaining more popularity, shop owners still lack a more professional approach to draw more customers to their stores and have a friendly emotional experience for the customer. They hold that it is important to create an evocative environment that encourages the client to reminisce about their childhood (Matos and Barbosa, 2016.p.151). Recollections and concerns about product appearance – sanitation, organization, and preservation – which are measures aimed at reducing discrimination against goods that have already been used by others. For the unknown origin of the piece of clothing, it may cause discomfort and even rejection (Bôas & Lemes, 2012).

Noticeably, the enjoyment derived from shopping in second-hand clothing stores is the one important field in which discussion is genuinely global or similar around the world (Matos and Barbosa, 2016). Second-hand clothing stores do not have the same physical appearance as first-class shopping malls in the twenty-first century (Silva et al. 2021). Used clothing stores appear to be well-organized, but they are small, with overcrowded clothing shelves, boxes of products lining the floor, and dusty floors and cabinets. Thus, pleasurable consumption stems from the thrill of discovering riches among the rags, not from ease, comfort, or orderliness. Having a good deal and being able to score in a "game of haggling" brings pleasure (Isla, 2013).

Silva et al. 2021 discovered that consumers' perceptions of the barriers are influenced by previous experience buying second-hand Clothes. The findings also show that social shame, as well as consumers' lack of awareness about the available outlets, are the factors that have the greatest negative impact on second-hand clothes purchases.

In Cameroon, Fodouop (2005) reveals that there are many sales points for SHC. Some are entirely built while others are found in the open air. But most of their perimeter is occupied by buildings and the other part being allocated to outdoor displays.

Meaning and Image

In a study conducted by Lee et al., (2010) the aspect of image interactivity and appearance in the field of shopping was investigated. The study found that the degree of interactivity and appearance had a positive impact on consumer satisfaction with their shopping experience. As well as that the combination of perceived danger and shopping pleasure had a significant impact on customer-retailer conduct, implying that it plays an important role in maintaining customer loyalty (Lee et al., 2010).

Even though many products are worn or soiled, the material quality of second-hand clothes and shoes may be higher than locally inexpensive new goods since they were originally designed for a more affluent class of buyers in Australia, Europe, or North America (Besnier, 2004). When they see a new item among used shoes, African consumers react to their desire for locally trendy trainers by purchasing it because they believe it is stylish and the model appealing. They do, however, consider it to be of better quality because they were duped by

the manufacturer into thinking it was a used trainer from the global North. (Guiot and Roux, 2010).

Haggblade (1990) carried out a study in Rwanda where he compared the second-hand garment trade with local manufacture of clothes and importation of new garment. The scholar discovered that the second-hand clothes business had a positive impact as it created jobs and produced some revenues for the poorest population and the State. Baden and Barber (2005), on the other hand downplay the difficulties to determine whether the trade of second-hand apparels has a positive or negative impact on the local textile industry. Overall, these authors hold that factors like the history, context, maturity of the local industry and the magnitude of production of informal dress, should be studied at length in order to determine precisely if second-hand clothes business has a positive or negative impact on the local industry.

The second-hand clothes consumption

Acquiring second-hand clothes entails buying products that already belonged to someone else, regardless of whether they were used many or a few times (Machado et al., 2019). This mode of procurement has been the subject of several research studies in the past, which are especially keen on understanding the positive motivations to buy second-hand.

Barrameda, (2001) conducted a study on the motivation behind second-hand clothes consumption. Her research revealed that, in addition to saving money and obtaining a "good deal," there are several other reasons to buy used clothing: expensive labels are available, unique designs/styles are found, products are stylish, and recycling or reuse benefits the environment. A decade later, research conducted by Machado et al,. (2019) produced identical results. The primary motivation for the informants to shop at second-hand clothing stores is to save money and stretch their budget, followed by a desire to be fashionable for the least amount of money, to be able to afford luxury brands, and to have fun and satisfaction in discovering something unique and not mass produced. The work of Roux and Guiot (2008) show that these motivations are interrelated and generally apply to all circuits and second-hand products. Their scale for measuring motivations towards second-hand buying (Guiot and Roux, 2010) thus has a critical dimension (distance from the system, ethics, and ecology), an economic dimension (allocative role of the price, paying the fair price) and a hedonistic or recreational dimension (treasure hunt, originality, contact social, nostalgia). In

contrast to research on positive motivations for second-hand shopping, there is little research into the barriers to second-hand buying in the marketing domain. Few authors like Roux (2002, 2004) have taken on this aspect by discussing why consumers do not buy second-hand with a specific focus on the role of perceived risk (Bauer, 1960). In addition, research specific to the purchase of clothing mentions several reasons not to buy second-hand that suggest various obstacles to this form of buying. In the first place, some people avoid buying second-hand clothes because they consider these products as dirty or even contagious (Steinbring and Rucker, 2003; Hiller Connel, 2009; Roux and Korchia, 2006).

Second-hand clothes have been considered by certain people as the load of destitute. Traditionally, consuming second-hand clothing was/is a money saving way. For consumers with little money purchasing second-hand clothes is a way to avoid conflict, it is an intermediary way to get out of the burden of poverty (Hamilton, 2009 in Han, 2013). Consequently, second-hand clothes consumption has economic advantages (Guiot and Roux, 2010). It is obvious that some people consume second-hand goods because of financial constraints. Nevertheless, it is in human nature to want to pay less, a reasonable price. Customers ceaselessly try to get the most attractive deal, which meets all the demands they pursue at the least possible price (Bhimalingam and Shrivastava, 2008). Since second-hand goods are usually less expensive than the new one, this encourages frugal consumers to purchase second-hand (Anderson and Ginsburg, 1994 in Han 2013). Even the cheapest new garments sold in local stores are out of reach for many Malawians. Used clothes may be sold at a higher price than new clothing, mostly to middle-income city dwellers. However, low-quality, or out-of-style pieces continue to make their way down the supply chain. These products are then marketed by vendors in more rural areas, where customers with lower buying power have far fewer options (Banik and Gresko, 2020).

Economic factors are not the only reason why consumers buy second-hand clothes. Quality also accounts as a pull factor towards second-hand clothes. Banik and Gresko (2020), carried out a study in Malawi, and they observed that used clothing and accessories from high-income countries are thought to be much superior to brand-new products sold in local markets. Customers were always willing to pay more for used goods than for equivalent new goods.

Malawian consumers cited fashion trends and the "uniqueness" of imported used clothing as important factors in purchasing "kaunjika" (second-hand clothes in the local language). This

was especially true for the younger generation, who had been exposed to global trends and popular culture through social media. Consumers prefer "the latest fashion," which is frequently unavailable in local retail stores (Banik and Gresko, 2020). Malawians are very much aware of fashion trends even though the promise of feeling like Rihanna, Puff Daddy, and other celebrities who populate the dreams of young Africans does not detract from the fact that second-hand clothing connects Africa to the Western way of life but does not give it the opportunity to reach it (Linge, 2018).

Banik and Gresko(2020), also reported that clothing labels that indicated where products were made were regarded as less significant than the donation's source. Because of the sizes and designs that were more consistent with local tastes, vendors, and customers preferred kaunjika sourced from China. Many vendors also said that as compared to clothing made in China for African markets, clothing made for the Chinese themselves, or clothing made for Western markets, clothing made in China for African markets was inferior (Banik and Gresko, 2020).

The second-hand clothing is one of the symbols of an Africa in transformation, characterized by the permanent adaptability of its inhabitants to changing contexts. The development of second-hand clothing, all over the world, has allowed a used product to be relaunched in a new cycle of consumption by giving it a new market value (Linge, 2018). Some authors have rightly pointed out the effervescence of the second-hand clothing sector in Africa in the 1990s. Developing countries have become new outlets as Western countries no longer manage to absorb the economy on their own. For less developed countries, second-hand trade constitutes a specific form of informal economy, which aims first and foremost for an individual and a household to survive through "plain trade of articles and services" (Portes and Haller 2005, P. 405).

Motivating factors for buying second-hand goods

Hansen (2000) gives a thorough account of the complex global route that clothing relies on to arrive at its destination. The multibillion-dollar international second-hand fashion trade is fuelled by proven charity organizations. Consumers in the West donate clothing that they no longer wear to charity organisations. Every year, the average American discards 67.9 pounds

of used clothes and textiles, contributing a total of two quadrillion pounds to landfills and millions of pounds to charitable organizations (Mitchell, 2008).

Africa, especially Sub-Saharan Africa, is the world's largest importer, followed by Eastern Europe, particularly Russia, and Asia, which includes Japan, Malaysia, India, Cambodia, Singapore, and Pakistan. Tunisia in North Africa and Guatemala in Central America are two other major importers (Hansen, 2010). Large amounts of exports are also sent to developed countries like Japan, Belgium-Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, which re-export the goods (Hansen, 2010).

Isla (2013), notes that in poorer countries, ordinary retailers and consumers are generally satisfied because the used clothing industry creates much-needed jobs, raises living standards, and fulfils the clothing needs and desires of people from every stratum of the society. Richer countries' discourse, while different, is no less positive because it is linked to issues like environmental protection, alternative or counter-cultural lifestyles, and sustainability (Isla, 2013, p. 225).

According to Hansen (2000), poor Zambians have responded positively to the trade because it has given them dignity.

The economic dimension

From an economic perspective, the reason behind second-hand buying considers one or more of the following: price sensitivity and / or price awareness. One of the most important factors in the decision to buy used goods has proved to be financial constraints (Roux and Korchia, 2006). These acquisitions allow customers to meet their basic needs without having to spend a lot of money (Ferraro et al., 2016). Used goods are less expensive than new products, making them a way of easing the burden of poverty for low-income customers (Hamilton, 2012). As previously mentioned, traditionally, the second-hand market has been dominated by groups with lower buying power, which is why economic considerations are often the driving force behind second-hand transactions (Xu et al., 2015. p. 670). Consumers who are frugal are viewed as either price conscious, which Lichtenstein et al. (1993) describe as "the stage at which the buyer aims solely on the payment of low prices," or as value conscious, which is defined as a measure of "the price paid versus the quality obtained" (Lichtenstein et al., 1993.p. 235).

Paying the right price: *The* disposition to pay less, the pursuit for a good deal, and the contentment of having paid a fair price are all examples of the incentive for a fair price. The price disparity between used and new goods allows frugal shoppers to buy used goods (Anderson & Ginsburgh, 1994; Stroeker, 1995). Consumers expect a fair price and will not pay more simply because an item is new (Guiot & Roux, 2008).

Frugality: Frugality is described by Lastovicka et al. (1999, p. 88) as "a characteristic of the lifestyle of consumers, characterized by the degree to which they are both constrained in obtaining and using economic goods and services in an ingenious way to gain more long term." "The wise use of resources and waste avoidance," writes De Young (1986, 285). As a result, consumers who live a frugal lifestyle make decisions based on their values and invest their money wisely and carefully. Cervellon et al. (2012) validated that frugality is the primary driver for consumers to engage in second-hand shopping. Given that frugal consumers have a propensity to put more importance on the value of goods while buying, there is an incentive, not only economic, but also ecological and vital, as Guiot & Roux (2008) point out, and they prefer to obtain good value for money. They will find in the second-hand a way to reuse, at a lower cost, clothes that can still be worn. Here, it is about an awareness of value - a price versus quality (Lichtenstein et al., 1993, 235). Turunen and Leipämaa-Leskinen (2015) coined a theme called "The Real Deal", whereby being "thrift" and to watch out for a good bargain is the foundation of consumption.

The critical dimension

This dimension involves consumers who in a certain way revolt against the over consumption society by deciding to consume less new clothes or not at all. Consumers are increasingly becoming "rebels against hyper choice" (Roux, 2001, p.12). They may respond to the abundance of clothes by participating in waste reduction (Bekin et al., 2007) and purchasing parts that others no longer want. Ethical and environmental issues are gaining traction, especially among young people who cannot always afford to spend money on ethical and sustainable brands, which are often more expensive; second-hand thus provides an excellent alternative (Xu et al., 2014). Guiot & Roux (2010) in their work show that consumers also seek a certain distance and avoidance of the regular consumption system.

Distance from the traditional trading system*:* Some people want to take a step back, reduce their consumption, and put an end to the proliferation of goods (McDonald & Oates, 2006). It

is about "breaking free from the laws of the new home market" for them (Marzella, 2015, 118). As a result, second-hand items become attractive because they provide an alternative to current consumption and production modes (Hamilton, 2012). In a way, they are a machine recovery. For others, they are a kind of anti-consumerism. These signals, however, are difficult to differentiate from poverty, according to Etzioni (1998). In a case study conducted by Shaw & Newholm (2002), one respondent claimed that she had purchased second-hand clothes in an affluent part of town and then worn them in a "subversive" manner as a defiant move against the existing order. As a result, the second-hand market is regarded as an "anti-structure" market that poses a threat to the traditional market (Sherry, 1990, 28).

Ethical and ecological concerns: In the last two decades, ecological inspiration has gained popularity. People who are worried about ethical and environmental issues are perplexed as to why others discard goods that are still in good shape (Guiot & Roux, 2010). They can fulfil these needs for values by purchasing second-hand products. Upgrading previously worn clothing is part of a rehabilitation and "recycling" process, but it is also an act of dedication. These clothes bought second-hand help to save money while still extending the life of the products.

The recreational dimension

When looking for treasure in used items, recreational or hedonistic motives (Guiot & Roux, 2010) include the needs for entertainment, excitement, nostalgic pleasure, and authenticity. Second-hand shoppers expect to find objects that will become valuable to them and serve as a form of identification (Ferrero et al., 2016). The basic characteristics of second-hand stores, namely price, environment, and items, support these motives (Guiot & Roux, 2010). Buying second-hand objects is often interpreted as a method of rediscovering historical objects, to the degree that fashion is conceived as an everlasting restart (Marzella, 2015, p.117). By its singular nature, second-hand shopping can also respond to a need for adventure and entertainment (Armstrong et al., 2015).

" *Treasure hunt* ": Many consumers, but particularly collectors and vintage enthusiasts, dream of going on a treasure hunt and shiver at the prospect of finding a rare and good product price (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Bardhi & Arnould, 2005; Lombart, 2004; Cervellon and al., 2012). This is a driving force behind research and discovery: sifting through a plethora of

options to find something worthwhile, such as a rare and one-of-a-kind item. The treasure hunt, according to Guiot & Roux (2010), is "an intermediary between the need for uniqueness, nostalgic fun, and the intention to buy vintage clothes" ["a mediator of the relationship between the traits linked to uniqueness and nostalgia, and the intention to buy vintage clothing"]. This treasure hunt is essential to the nature of the offer (Guiot & Roux, 2008). Moreover, second-hand clothes buyers are characterized as "extremely economically-oriented bargain hunters" (Seo and Kim, 2019, p. 2), which makes this an especially compelling reason to buy.

 Originality: The terms "originality" and "uniqueness" are also used interchangeably. Second-hand shops, according to Yan et al. (2015), enable customers to find retro and antique pieces that are no longer available on the market. Vintage item buyers are thus inspired by the development of a distinct style. This desire for individuality (Guiot & Roux, 2010) is also a means of standing out, of wearing items that no one else has. This has the potential to convey unique qualities such as confidence, increased longevity, and higher fabric quality (Edbring et al., 2016). As a result, the brand image is crucial because it can provide the customer with the assurance, they need to make a good buying decision. The second-hand clothes market can offer the opportunity to find lower-cost clothing from well-known brands, as well as rare pieces that increase in value over time. Many people no longer want to wear the same thing as others, according to Catalani (2005), because objects and possessions tell the tale of our lives. As a result, clothing plays a role in the formation of our personality and serves as a means capable of identifying us (Belk et al. 1988). Furthermore, having something "new" - that is, a piece of clothing that the buyer has never worn - is one of the reasons for buying second-hand (Lang et al., 2018).

 Social contact: This aspect is about savouring the pleasure of social contact (Herrmann & Soiffer, 2004; Guiot and Roux, 2010; Gregson and Crewe, 1997), while shopping with relatives or simply by interacting with others. Perceived pleasure turned out to be a variable having positive effects on the attitudes and intention of consumers to participate in the collaborative economy (Davis et al., 1992; Hamari et al., 2016). The points of sale of the second-hand would be, even more than traditional distribution channels, capable of satisfying a wide range of needs: stroll outside, rummage through the products on offer, be surprised,

look for objects unavailable on the new market (G&R, 2008). The standards are different from traditional stores, with a more relaxed and friendly exchange.

Nostalgic consumers: Second-hand consumers, especially vintage consumers, have the pleasure and motivation to revive with nostalgia for "things from before" (Guiot and Roux, 2010; Debary & Tellier, 2004). Clothes can evoke memories, have an out-of-date aesthetic, or be animated by a specific story. Fans enjoy imagining and soaking up the spirit of this one. There is a desire for authenticity and a return to the past, all of which seem to be closely linked to second-hand goods.

The trend dimensions: Fashion motives, or patterns "dictated by designers to a particular moment" (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993, 105), are above all the act of creating a style by following trends or, on the contrary, the act of creating a personal and special genre by ignoring trends (DeLong et al., 2005; Reiley & DeLong, 2011). The need for authenticity has prompted some buyers to purchase second-hand products, which have become increasingly popular since the latter became attractive (Beard, 2008; Ferraro et al., 2016). Fashion responds to the need to reveal the body by special clothes, rather than to the need to cover it. Fashion is a measure of transition, of social change, and it primarily refers to a society's need to express itself (Catalani, 2005). Fashion objects, which symbolize and materialize the social changes that have occurred, are the result of this transition and alteration. Clothing has risen above all other indicators of individuality and has come to describe social status in our modern consumer culture (Martin, 1999)

Deterring factors towards second-hand clothes consumption

The literature relating to the barriers to second-hand purchase (Hiller Connel, 2009; Bezançon et al., 2013; Bezançon, 2012; Roux & Korchia, 2006; Roux, 2004; Steinbring and Rucker, 2003; Kapitan & Bhargave, 2013; Bardhi & eckhardt, 2012; Edbring and al., 2016; Lang et al., 2018; Laitala et al., 2018) is less rich than the one that records the motivations. According to Roux (2006), "unlike the previous informants for whom perception of waste is associated with an endless cycle of buying and disposal, other consumers perceived used clothes as rubbish. They hold that an item of clothing can only be worn by a sole owner the same way that food can only be eaten by one mouth" (Roux, 2006, p.33).

Safety issues: The most important safety barrier is linked to hygiene (Laitala and Klepp, 2018) and seems to be the immediate response to the need for security (Bezancon, 2012). Hygiene has been pointed out as one of the reasons why people do not consume second-hand products. People are afraid of acquiring clothing that could transmit contagious diseases (Roux and Korchia, 2006), as they fear not to share the same "hygiene standards" (Edbring et al., 2016). The element of contagion - in the sense of negative transfer- of clothing has been mentioned in several studies (Argo et al., 2006; Laitala and Klepp, 2018), more so when the previous owner is not a family member or acquaintance (Lang et al., 2018). Knowing that clothes have previously been worn instils doubts among potential consumers of second-hand clothes. Certain shoppers at the same time associate names such as "dirty, disgusting and afflicting" to second-hand clothes (Sandes and Leandro, 2016, p. 10).

Hedonistic barriers: Hedonistic obstacles come in a variety of forms and influence the leisure aspect of a purchase. Second-hand distribution channels are also less appealing than new clothes networks, according to Hiller Connel (2009). The layout and presentation are not always the same; there are often many clothes stacked on top of one another, often sorted by colour or form of product, often with no particular focus. As a result, completing the buying process can be challenging. As one must be patient to dig around the shop to get a good article.

The utility barrier: Bezancon (2012), equates utility to the efficiency of a purchase: obtaining a satisfactory result while using minimum energy, and thus obtaining the expected result. The balance between quality/price is often unsatisfactory and questioned. Geographical and logistical problems play a role in the second-hand industry, making it difficult to find successful second-hand. Individuals can also ask about the purchase's feasibility: is the product available or not? (Edbring et al., 2016).

The embarrassment barrier: The lack of membership is regarded as a social danger. The consumer is concerned that his purchase decision - in this case, purchasing through a specific channel, namely the second-hand channel - would damage society's social picture (Kang & Kim, 2013)**.** In addition, a study conducted in Norway by Laitala and Klepp's (2018)

concluded that peers' opinion and the stigma of being associated with the lower income class were considered obstacles to second- hand clothes purchase.

Second-hand clothes consumption in Cameroon

According to Fodouop (2005), before the current economic crisis began in 1986, second-hand clothing was only of interest to the poorest members of society who could not afford new ready-to-wear. Ninety percent of the population was dressed in new clothing, either produced locally or imported from Western Europe and North America by foreign trade houses or Cameroonian businessmen. Customers then purchased them from sporadic rural and urban markets, as well as commercial stores in towns. However, for the past two decades, the Cameroonian population has relied heavily on second-hand clothing because of a significant erosion of their income and thus of their buying power because of the 1986 economic crisis and its extensions (Fodouop, 2005, p.13).

According to Fodouop(2005), prior to the 1986 economic crisis, second-hand clothing was the thing of the poor and people who could not afford to purchase new ready-to-wear. People with decent income and of higher social status wore new clothes of local or imported origin. But nowadays, people from all parts of society resort to second-hand clothing. In fact, findings portray that these clothes are very popular amongst both rich and poor, peasants and township inhabitants (Fodouop, 2005.p.68-70).

Fodouop (2005), carried out a survey of second-hand clothing consumers where he sought out to identify the social status and standard of living of those concerned. The reasons why they opt for second-hand clothing and the frequency at which they buy them. He interviewed 4.250 people in 47 towns and 165 villages in the 10 regions of Cameroon. The contextual account of this practice is mainly based on his book titled "Le Marché de la Friperie Vestimentaire au Cameroun" (the second-hand clothes Market in Cameroon). This part is mainly based on his study carried out to decipher the second-hand clothing market in Cameroon. From its beginnings to its future, including its scale, its spatial transcription, socio-economic role, the reasons for its success and its disapproval in the country.

Fodouop, (2005) holds that, in developing nations, ordinary retailers and customers are generally ecstatic because the used clothing industry creates much-needed employment, raises living standards, and fulfils the clothing needs and wishes of people from all parts of

society. Richer countries' debate, though different, is no less optimistic because it is linked to topics like environmental conservation, alternative or counter-cultural lifestyles, and sustainability.

All the same, several factors underpin the current boom in the second-hand clothing market in Cameroon. Indeed, the local ready-to-wear production was insufficient in quantity and variety, and new products imported were highly expensive, especially after the devaluation of the CFA francs in January 1994. Thrift goods are varied and inexpensive and are naturally in high demand.

The second-hand clothes industry does not only have advantages. It has been accused of partly being the cause of the local textile industry's downfall. Also, it has contributed to environmental degradation in most towns and villages. Wearing not disinfected clothes or shoes, exposes users to skin/respiratory infections. Moreover, towns and villages face a huge problem of pollution and hygiene due to the high rate of consumption of used clothes that are not properly recycled (Fodouop, 2005).

In fact, until the end of the colonial period, the populations of the northern part of Cameroon, at least most of them, remained attached to the boubou(it is a kind of traditional wear) and the loincloth. In addition, in the southern part of Cameroon, possessing a sleeveless embroidered boubou or a large cotton loincloth tinted with indigo is for the owner, at that time, a sign of wealth and /or nobility.

He highlights that, in terms of quality, the offer of the thrift store studied does not only include previously worn clothes. Indeed, there are also new items. Some of them are high-end products or "obsolete" items that Western World trade establishments have withdrawn from their sales shelves and "liquidated" to collectors who supply importers from developing countries, to replace them with clothes that are fashionable or adapted to the changing seasons. Others are items with manufacturing defects that Western dressmakers have removed from retail circuit distribution and sold to collectors responsible for supplying importers in southern countries including Cameroon. Still, others are items that individuals have stolen from factories and stores in Western Europe and North America and sold off to collectors supplying importers in Southern countries (Fodouop, 2005).

This means that the offer of the thrift store considered here is also varied in quality. Indeed, it contains articles of excellent quality without any imperfection and very clean to which the dealers give the names of "diamond", "cream", "high-end" and "red crescent". This is

followed by items that are in good condition, free of defects and clean which local dealers refer to as "premium items; then items of suitable quality which resellers refers to as "second-best" items. After them, we find items with obvious signs of wear and dirt that resellers refer to as "third-choice items"; and low-quality, heavily worn and heavily soiled items that resellers negatively refer to as "trash", "fangs" or "kumagna". (Fodouop, 2005).

It is worth noting here that Cameroon serves as a provision market for neighbouring countries. In 2003/2004, close to half of its thrift store offer was sold abroad, particularly in Chad, the Central African Republic, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (SVA, Leiden, 2004). This interests a large and diversified clientele, part of which is located outside the frontiers of Cameroon, in Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Democratic Republic of Congo (Fodouop, 2005).

Nevertheless, this study will add another layer of comprehension into this sector. As Fodouop (2005) fails to address the contribution of the internet in the growth of this sector. This is because, in 2005 when his study was carried out, internet was still at a budding stage in Cameroon. Online shopping, which is still relatively new in the Cameroonian market, has gained importance in recent years as internet penetration has increased, providing customers with additional shopping options, but to a limited extent. With the support of the internet, goods are promoted by online advertisements. The fierce rivalry between brick-and-mortar and online retailers has ushered in a new era in which customers can choose their preferred shopping platform to meet their wants and needs. In addition, by getting closer to just over 600 internet users, it now appears that social networks are also key spaces for electronic commerce in Cameroon (Dina survey, 2021).

Finally, after a critical review of various academic studies, there are varied barriers that hinder the practice of second-hand clothes shopping by young adults in Cameroon and image and meanings, skills and competence, and uniqueness, all come into play in the practice. Moreover, studies related to the African context have often tackled the topic from an economic perspective and very few have dwelled on the consumers' perspective. Those consumers who do not necessarily go for second-hand clothes because they cannot afford the new ones but rather those who have reappropriated their rights as consumers to choose their style. Scholars have investigated this practice at length from several perspectives, but none have dwelled on the viewpoint of young adults in Cameroon's second-hand clothes shopping

practices which is the gap in this study. The next section will take on the social practice theory of Elizabeth Shove that will help to clearly understand the phenomenon in question.

Section II. Theoretical considerations

At this point**,** the researcher is going to reflect on the focus of the study (second-hand clothes consumption of young adults in Cameroon) and throw more light on the relationship that exist between these subjects . That is, to try to explain how or why these youths relate with their clothing consumption and for what reasons. For this study, the researcher will begin by defining practice theory followed by the component of the theory which is based on the sociologist Elizabeth Shove's social practice theory. Subsequently, the researcher will dwell on the dynamics, the development applicability and limitation of social practice theory. Shove's social practice theory dwells on three interdependent elements, which are skills or competencies, materiality and meaning or image. The elements that make up practice theory will guide the development of the conceptual framework and questionnaire used in this research.

Conceptualization of Practice

Shove et al., (2012), draws inspiration from Giddens' structural theory, in which human activity and social structures are closely linked (p.14-15). Shove et al., (2012) rely on Reckwitz's definition that practice consists of interdependence between: "forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities "things" and their use, background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge" (p. 34). With the above as a starting point, Shove defines practice by an interdependence relationship between three elements: Materials, competence and meaning (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 36).

A practice is what all practitioners regard as such. All practices exist as patterns or visible entities (for that reason, it is easily recognizable for instance when you talk about driving), at

the same time, practices exist only if they are routinized (Schatzki, 2002). This clear distinction between practice as "entity" and practice as "performance" is fundamental to understand the dynamics of change. Practice as "entity" gives a perfect pattern or model that individuals reproduce consciously or not at every act. Any imperfect reproduction gives way to the introduction a novelty. Practice as "performance" on the other hand implies a space for conditional and external possibilities; either to conform to the structure or to modify and follow alternative ways. It focusses on social action and how the action is performed (Shove et al., 2012, pp.19-20). Practice must therefore be grasped as an entity that organizes actions in a particular way (Buch, 2017, p.42).

As such, viewing consumption within theories of practice may allow for a better understanding of "the orderliness and predictability of people's actions when faced with apparent free choices, both within a particular practice and across different practices" (Warde 2005: 140). Moreover, practice theories are a form of cultural theory which consider humans as agents who act within the confinements of practice. Shove and Pantzar (2005), suggest that agents are "carriers" of practices which they "perform". Consequently, studying a phenomenon through practice theory entails not focussing on the experience of the individual actor as the subject but rather on the practice itself, how it is carried out.

Social practice theory represents a "Cultural shift" (Welch, 2017), this is recently deployed with vigour, aroused by its promises of theoretical novelty and methodological interest in the field of academic consumer studies. This constitutes a school of thought propounded by Schatzki (1996) and Reckwitz (2002). They offer a new way of analysing and understanding the consumer experience. Social Practice Theory constitutes a break from the usual contrasts between idealism and materialism, agency and structure, another alternative to classical opposition between holistic and individualistic perspectives.

Even though many authors position individuals outside the scope of social practice theory, their function as carriers (Reckwitz, 2002) of the practice suggests they should be at the core because they negotiate and communicate with each aspect (Piscicelli, Moreno, Cooper, & Fisher, 2016). To be viable, practices must be able to attract and maintain practitioners who are willing and able to carry out these incorporating processes and therefore keep the practices alive. This approach is important as it gives way to examine in depth the uneven landscape of opportunities and differences between the participants. For instance, Individuals' propensity to engage, for example, can be increased when their own interactions are

consistent with the practice's mutual elements. Furthermore, different levels of commitment exist among carriers, resulting in varying contributions when it comes to reproducing, improving, and/or abandoning practices (Warde, 2005).

Elements of Practice

The first element is materials (materiality), where reference is made to Reckwitz 'objects, which deal with objects, infrastructures, tools, hardware and the body itself. In addition, Shove is preoccupied with materiality as a constitutive element in practice. Social and societal conditions are built into the design of material objects, which thus affect social contexts and thus also our ways of acting (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 132). As Shove and her colleague affirm, items play a direct role in the conduct and reproduction of everyday life. To put it another way, practice has a material dimension that merits and is now starting to attract recognition (Shove and Pantzar, 2005, p.44). Moreover, 'Carrying out a procedure most often involves using particular objects in a particular way,' says Reckwitz. It will seem trivial to emphasize that for a football game to be played, we need a ball and goals as essential "tools." (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 253), but this precision is rather important. As things are centrally and unavoidably implicit in the development and replication of instruction, as Reckwitz goes on to clarify. In addition, we concur that material (Shove and Pantzar, 2005) are integral part of social practice theory. Nevertheless, materials can only be useful when practitioners find meaning, become skilled and become knowledgeable about them. Practices can be repeated (that is, existing standards and procedures are assumed), transformed, or abandoned through this method of use or doing. As a result, practice can be considered as something to be carried out by experienced individuals who use materials in their daily lives, and their actions with these materials are governed by the interaction of meaning-skills-rules elements

The second factor is competence, which is concerned with comprehension and practical experience (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 34). Routines and patterns are referred to for comprehension and practical experience, just as formalized rules and laws are referred to.

This element connects to Reckwitz's "understanding of knowledge," which encapsulates various ways of feeling, knowing, interpreting, and relating to the universe (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 23). Competence in everyday life takes place through learning that takes place constantly and sometimes unconsciously. Competence must also be understood as an embodied knowledge of how practice is performed (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 59). Competence also covers being able to evaluate whether a performance is appropriate. However, it does not mean possessing the competencies it requires to perform this performance (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 35). In this context, competence and skills is about the knowledge that is necessary to operate the materials, carry out the practice and judge the outcome. For this reason, dressing competence mean to master one's size and fitting, the quality of the garment and the suitable dress code in a given social environment.

The third and last element is meaning. Meaning is a combination of mental processes, feelings, beliefs, and motivating knowledge as defined by Reckwitz, as well as Schatzki's definition of teleoaffective structures (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 35). The social order inherent in practice influences how the environment is perceived and how such actions are carried out.

Practice theory seeks to define sets, blocks of activities with strong coordination and interdependencies in the constant flow of activities that punctuate social action (Røpke, 2009). Certain empirical cases become canonical examples of practices that can be investigated as a result of these specificities: this is the case with driving, eating, sports, other leisure activities.

Meaning: cultural conventions, expectations and socially shared meanings

Material: objects, tools, infrastructures

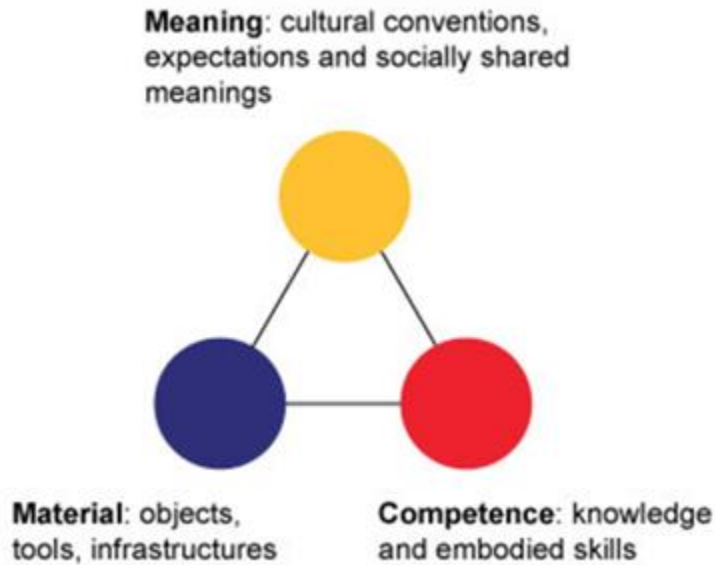**Competence**: knowledge and embodied skills

Figure 1: Elements of a practice (Shove, Watson and Pantzar, 2012. p. 40)

These are the "practice building blocks" that allow us to explain transformation, diffusion, and circulation processes (Shove, Pantzar and Watson, 2012).

Dynamics of Practice

The question of change is addressed from the capacities of the actors to adapt, to improvise and to experiment. These changes therefore seem to result from both
 causes, a kind of evolution of practice, and exogenous causes, linked to specific contexts. But the question remains little explored, probably because it poses real methodological problems, as Røpke (2009) points out.

Culture, social norms, and behaviours only play a role as contextual factors that can help or hinder development. Shove et al., (2012) proposes the theory of transition and the theory of practices as alternatives capable of considering the role of these collective dimensions in change. The transition theories, which put together a diverse body of work, show that change is driven by numerous steps taken by social actors to question the rules of the game, create

new conventions and social norms, as well as new markets, infrastructure, and expectations, rather than by public action's capacity to enlighten or provoke people.

Elizabeth Shove examines the role of infrastructures and objects in the growth, stabilization, and dissemination of Nordic walking in her collaboration with Pantzar (Shove & Pantzar, 2005), using the concepts suggested by Schatzki and Rekwitz. This research firmly embeds the theory of practices in the current English actor-network theory, which revolves around John Law (1991) and focuses on considering the social world through the diverse human arrangements and materials that make it up.

Shove is fascinated by evolution and transformation in practice. When new elements are added or existing elements are merged in novel ways, practices shift (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 131). As a result, the components are complex and ever-changing. The elements must be continuously linked if practice is to be continued (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, pp. 86-87). Internal rewards are one way to keep a practice going. Internal rewards may be derived from good practice. When the practice's performers become involved, their status shifts, and they become what they do. If performing a practice does not feel good or satisfying, it can shift or disappear over time (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, pp. 82, 86).

To begin with, despite a common definitional reference, social practices do not have a unified classification. The theory of practices describes them as a collection of organized actions, phrases, and objects, or, as Shove points out, infrastructures (Shove, 2003). The different works, all inspired by Reckwitz's definition, which we quote above, differ in how they apply it: practices must sometimes be restored through the material, cognitive, or language elements that make them up (called "entities"), and on the other hand through the elements that allow integration of these different "entities," which appear to make up the hive mind.

Alan Warde (2005) suggests that this integration be examined from three perspectives: definitions, processes, and commitments. That is, when studying a practice emphasis should be put on the meaning attached to practice, the rules that guide the practice and the importance given to the practice. In the integration of practice, Elisabeth Shove and Mika Pantzar (2005) recommend considering the role of material devices, meanings, and skills. These researchers identified that elements of integration are important because they are what

will allow the social practice to be perpetuated, reproduced over time, but also to change and evolve.

The great originality of the theory of practices, which renders it difficult to implement, is shifting the focus away from observation of the actor to be concerned solely by practices.

This theoretical ambiguity not only blurs what constitutes a practice theoretically, but it also has empirical ramifications, as these are the components of integration that empirically allow us to define a social practice. Alan Ward (2005) arguments for the relevance of the inclusion of Practice theory in empirical research on consumption.

The Development of practice

Studies are most often concerned with the evolution of practices in society and with behavioural change considering the individual but also culture, social norms, and habit (Dubuisson-Quellier and Plessz, 2013).

A study of practice can form the basis for an understanding of social phenomena at the micro, meso, and macro levels. The individual actions are here considered as the micro level, whereas the structuring of rules represents the meso level, and the macro level is a deep structural level of tendencies (Shove, 2002, p. 3). Shove affirms that there are integrations between the micro-level practices and the macro-level material conditions and discourses, in that the micro-level is shaped by the structures of the macro-level (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, pp. 103, 122).

"First, climate change arguably represents` the greatest long-term challenge facing humans´… Second, it is challenging precisely because the prospect of any effective response depends on changing social practice" (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p 151). Shove recognizes the importance of societal reforms in combating climate problems in the quote. Since the evolution of social practice is uncertain, setting targets for a shift in practice is pointless. It is possible, however, to increase the likelihood of a shift in the elements in operation by political interference (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 158). It is important to remember, however, that policy proposals aimed at modifying individual patterns of behaviour are a type of consumer manipulation that can be considered unethical (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 153). Most of the coercion we are subjected to in our everyday lives occurs on an automatic and unconscious level. Much as we take environmentally

harmful acts unwittingly on a regular basis, it is not always ethically wrong to manipulate consumers in a sustainable direction. Individual behavior, on the other hand, can affect and alter the system, and therefore the way power is exerted at both the meso and macro levels (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 148).

The source of changed behaviour lies in the development of practice. "Policy makers would do well to consider parallel tracks that matter to the carriers of the practices they seek to change" (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 170). Shove argues that the state should consider the fact that rivalry between different practices will affect consumer behaviour, which is why it's crucial to understand what's essential to the practice's bearer. Furthermore, various actors (companies and manufacturers) can be brought together as part of a deliberate plan for a shift in practice in a more sustainable direction (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 172).

It is all about shifting people's mindsets, behaviors, and routines, as well as the structures that surround them (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 174). By manipulating and changing the circulation of the three components, political interventions may shape and influence the bearer of a practice and bring various actors together. Schatzki's definition of when practice takes on a new personality or dissolves inspired Shove: "… when changes in organization are vast or wholesale, or a practice's projects and tasks are simply no longer carried out, former practices expire…" (Schatzki, 2002, p 244). A dramatic change in practice can be the cause of practice disappearing or dissolving. According to Schatzki, innovation causes changes in routines and practices, as well as customer behaviour patterns, and thus changes or eliminates an old norm in favour of a new one (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 85). A practice often vanishes or expires as programs or activities are no longer carried out in the same way (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 133). Some customs become deeply ingrained in society, while others fade away. Some elements become part of other activities when the connection between them is broken, while others simply vanish (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012, p. 45).

The applicability of the practice theory in the study

In this study, Shove's social practice theory will help to shed light on how the everyday practice of second-hand clothes shopping exists based on an interdependence between three elements (competence, meaning and material). By identifying the elements and the dynamics

between them, knowledge can be created about how the elements affect the execution of practice. Shove believes that change can be accounted for by studying the development of practice. That is, for people to change their ways of carrying out a practice, all the different elements must find a certain balance. Thus, Shove's social practice theory can be used to illuminate how practice can be changed and developed to ameliorate clothes consumption practice.

Moreover, Shove and Pantzar (2005) account of the evolution of Nordic Walking highlights that "what Nordic walking "is" and "becomes" is determined in part by who does it and when, where, and how they do it. Practices are intrinsically complex in this context". In the context of this study, this could be related to the evolution of second-hand clothes consumption amongst young adults in Cameroon. That is, years back the SHC was linked to poverty and the environment in which it was sold was not always proper. But today, it is now sold in high-end shops, and it has gone online. As Biana (2020) observed that the store environment was generally considered an important element of the shopping experience.

Finally, social practice theory being very structured and concrete, it allows the researcher to neatly organise the data collection and present the findings which are guided by the elements of practice. As Bryman (2015) refers to Merton who affirm that relatable theories are 'intermediate to general theories of social systems which are too remote from particular classes of social behaviour, organization and change to account for what is observed and to those detailed orderly descriptions of particulars that are not generalized at all" (Merton 1967: 39 as quoted in Bryman (2015,p. 21)).

Limitations of Practice Theory

According to Dubuisson-Quellier and Plessz (2013), the Social Practice Theory's works primarily employ qualitative techniques, such as interviews and ethnographic approaches. However, these methodologies are well-known for adhering to a phenomenological vision that prioritizes the sovereignty of the person, his voice, and his experience (Paillé and Mucchielli 2016). They are thought to understand the actor's constructive, reflective, and vital capacity, which some refer to as "consumer agency" (that is the consumer's capability of making choices for themselves and not under the influence of social structures); a vision with

which the Social Practice Theory acts in opposition. Furthermore, if, as the Social Practice Theory defends, scientific entry must be done by practices, then they are the ones who should be challenged. This study is qualitative in nature, and it focusses in on the people carrying out the practice. So, this constitutes a limitation in the sense that, Shove and Pantzar (2012) in their study are more concerned about the practice itself, thereby living out the carriers.

In addition, despite their real empirical strength, social practice theory research to date has generated unique theoretical and methodological explanations, restricting the proposition of "analysis practices in all generality" (Dubuisson- Quellier and Plessz, 2013, p. 20). Interlocking observation scales makes it more difficult to propose solid theory of experience explanations. Which interpretations oscillate between a normative approach to practice formation, stabilized by regulatory policies, and an interindividual and recursive approach to practice generation, with stabilization derived from negotiated agreements between the various entities involved (Warde, 2005, 2014). Furthermore, the conceptualization is made more difficult by the fact that it seeks to link different entities (e.g., the mind, body, devices, social meaning, and functional performance) beyond the scale observation much of the time.

Altogether, social practice theory through its material, image and competence aspects will guide the process of this study by making meaning out of the current SHC consumption practices by young adults in Cameroon. Subsequently, the researcher will go on to explain the philosophy of science and methodology of this study.

Chapter 3: Philosophy of science and methodology

This chapter is divided in two sections. In the first section, the researcher will present the philosophy of science that guides this study. That is the author's view about the social world she is out to investigate and how things are known. While the second section will explicitly convey the steps undertaken to arrive at that desired knowledge.

Section I: Philosophy of Science

In this section, the researcher will reflect on the ontological and epistemological positions. That is to clarify the reason for the choice of paradigm for each position. In social science this is very important as the choice of paradigms within the positions are linked to the fundamental assumptions about the world, society, knowledge and relationships between theory and empirical data (Pedersen, 2008).

Ontology

Ontology is considered as an approach in philosophy of science which outlines the beliefs of what exists and/or what we think the truth is. As per Alan Bryman, ontology is concerned with "(…) the nature of social entities", and it contends two positions called objectivism and constructionism (Bryman, 2015: 28). Objectivism addresses independent truths or existing outside from the social actor. While Constructionism dwells on meanings and understandings that are socially constructed (Bryman, 2015, p. 29). In other words, objectivism considers social phenomena as external facts that we cannot influence and there is only one reality we have as task to uncover; Constructivism on its part considers that, "(...) social phenomena and their meaning are continually being accomplished by social actors" (Bryman, 2015, p. 29). In addition, while an objective research is carried out to study a social phenomenon in order to uncover the reality of it, a constructionist-oriented research acknowledges that specific views and biases tend to impact the research and a phenomenon can be viewed from various perspectives. Thus, there exists no one reality, as everything comes from our version of reality and on social construction.

Focussing on constructivism, the researcher will depend solely on the respondents' view of the world which is assumed not similar by the researcher. That is, how they perceive and present their reality about their second-hand clothes shopping practice. So different respondents would produce different conclusions regarding the question about second-hand clothes shopping practices viewed from the perspective of young adults in Cameroon. This implies that the researcher must be extensively explicit and argumentative in the choices made in this study in order for the readers to understand how such results were gotten. This will in turn strengthen the validity of this study.

Epistemology

Epistemology is the study of how we receive knowledge or how we learn things in the social world (Bryman, 2016). It can thus be argued that ontology dwells on what things are while epistemology concerns how we know things. The epistemological stance of positivism has long dominated social sciences for years (Bryman, 2015). Positivism asserts that "science must (and presumably can) be conducted in a way that is value free" (Bryman, 2015, p.24). This means that for positivism, knowledge can only be accepted if it can be objectively measured and justified. This can be achieved if the researcher distances him/herself from the research and puts aside all biases that could affect the outcome of the research. As mentioned above, in this study, the researcher holds that there are varied realities based on our subjective lenses and experiences as social actors. Thus, this study will not take a positivist view. Moreover, since positivism demands knowledge to be value free and objective, and this study is about conveying peoples view and experience, the researcher does not think natural science methods can be applied in this case.

Rather, the epistemological view of interpretivism will be adopted in this study. Interpretivists believe that the study behind our social world demands a very different understanding or a contrasting logic that considers human beings as important and effective actors who interpret the world as they construct knowledge (Bryman, 2015).

Apart from that, there is a certainty that the main components of this research would come from the responses of the interviewees, who are individuals rather than objects, and therefore interpretivism is arguably the best fit for this study. Furthermore, this study aims to comprehend the meaning and inspiration behind individual acts in small-scale studies, with the main goal being to understand the individual's motivations for their actions (second-hand clothes consumption practices). As Bryman holds that interpretivism's viewpoint considers the universe to be too nuanced to be reduced to a collection of measurable "rules". Therefore, understanding the actual workings behind 'reality' is more important than generalizability (Bryman, 2015, p.28).

Interpretivism according to Bryman (2015, p.28) is a different epistemology to positivism. Interpretivism stands against the view that the social world should be studied based on a scientific model. In other words, they are of the opinion that the area of interest of natural sciences cannot be related to that of social science (individuals and organisations). For this

reason, any inquiry into the social world demands a distinct reasoning of research steps which acknowledges humans over the natural order (Bryman,2015, p.28).

Section II: Methodology

Methodology is a research technique that incorporates ontological and epistemological ideas into the research process (Tuli, 2010). It clarifies the steps and the choice of methods made by the researcher (Kuada, 2012, p. 59). In this section, the researcher is going demonstrate how the choice of method perfectly suits the specified objectives and how the research approach will help answer the research questions. Therefore, efforts will be made to always connect the various methodological choices to the main purpose of the study.

2.1 Research Strategy

This study relied on qualitative research and in-depth interviews. The choice of in-depth interview over the focus group interview, stems from the fact that it would have been difficult to gather the respondents on a specific day and time given their busy schedules. In depth interviews are more advantageous because it gives respondents room to talk more about their experiences on shopping for second-hand clothes without having to be influenced by other respondents which would be the case in focus group interviews. Nevertheless, this aspect also constitutes a disadvantage as the interviewee is the only one answering the questions unlike the focus groups where many people are involved and interviewees can challenge each other about the views they hold and bring them to reflect on their answers (Bryman, 2015, p. 502). But also, respondents could say something because they are being influenced by others in that direction. The study is exploratory in character due to the scarcity of previous research in this field concerning Cameroon

Only a small amount of study exists on the consumption of second-hand clothing in Cameroon. This research investigates both processes and sees if there is a link between them.

Open-ended questions were developed so that the participants could divulge as much information about their experiences as possible (Patton, 2002).

During this study, the researcher relied on both primary and secondary source of data. The primary data was obtained through a qualitative interview conducted with six respondents from the three biggest towns in Cameroon. While the secondary data is a synthesized version of the works of other authors on the issue of SHC. It shows how this study relates to the current research area. The researcher prefers to use both because they supplement each other to build up a solid argument.

Research Design

When carrying out a study, a researcher must be consistent with the chosen research design throughout the study. The purpose of the study usually determines the choice of research design. According to Bryman (2015), the research design is a foundation for generating evidence that is appropriate for a certain set of criteria as well as the research issue that the investigator is interested in (Bryman, 2015, p.45). In other words, the research design guides the researcher on how to apply the chosen research method which subsequently dictates how the data analysis will be carried out.

In this study, an exploratory approach is employed, since the purpose of this study is to explore young adults' perceptions, experience, and their purchase intentions towards second-hand clothing, aiming to explore opinions and feelings of the consumers about it. Also, the research field of the present subject is not well developed and there seems to be not much research on this topic regarding the Cameroonian context.

The researcher has chosen a multiple-case study design for this study, as the researcher is doing a comparison of young adults living in the three biggest towns in Cameroon (Yaoundé, Douala and Garoua). Bryman (2015) affirms that a multiple case study occurs when the number of cases studies is more than one (Bryman, 2015, p. 67). The choice of this method allows the author to be better aware of the factors that sustain the observation of the particular pattern that exist in the three contexts under study (Ackroyd 2009 as cited in Bryman 2015, p.68). It is important to highlight here that the dissimilarities uncovered within the cases are probably because of the factors the researcher reveal as essential and not because of any

differences between the cases from the start. (Bryman (2015) considers this as a great advantage of this strategy).

Interviews are certainly the most used data collection method in qualitative research, although they are highly time-consuming (Bryman,2015, p. 466). Nevertheless, as the author's focus is on exploring the experiences of young adults regarding their second-hand shopping practices, it was more appropriate to use interviews.

As an avid second-hand clothes consumer while in Cameroon, the researcher hardly thought much about this practice as it was considered as a routine. At her arrival in Denmark, she discovered that this practice was also carried out here but in a somewhat different way. Even though this interest influenced the choice of this topic, as it motivated her to find out how young adults in Cameroon make sense of second-hand clothes consumption practice. As a researcher, it is important to be aware that our experiences somehow guide the study. That is, from the conception of the question to the choice of respondents. But we should strive for the most part to let the perspective of the respondents provide the "point of orientation" for the study (Bryman 2016, p. 401).

Research Approach

Making a choice between inductive, deductive, and abductive approach for social sciences pays attention to the relationship between theory and social research. According to Bryman (2015), the deductive approach is usually embraced in quantitative studies. Here the researcher begins with theory from which hypothesis are derived, then are tested and either confirmed or rejected.

While in the inductive approach, the theory becomes the conclusion or the result of the research that has been carried out. Nevertheless Bryman (2015) holds that the inductive approach comprises some deductive elements as well as most researchers in inductive studies go back and forth between the data being collected and the theory. This strategy is what Bryman names iterative (Bryman, 2015, p.28).

In this study, the abductive approach was applied. Abduction is defined by Pierce as " the process of forming an explanatory hypothesis" (Pierce 1965V p.106 as cited in Lipscomb 2012). He postulates that abduction occurs in scientific debate before induction and deduction processes. As Lipscomb (2012) affirms that scholars endeavour to source meaning out of

data, this process involves abduction. In the same vein, the researcher took the point of departure in the empirical data, then applied theory to the analysis to give some meaning to the data. A deductive approach would not have been suitable for this study as the researcher is not interested in numbers. Neither would an inductive approach, as the aim is not to uncover a new theory.

Qualitative Research

In any case, the qualitative data analyst is always on the lookout for concepts and themes that, when combined, will best explain "what's going on" in an investigation (Tuli, 2010). A qualitative researcher seeks to gain a profound understanding regarding the lived experiences of the interviewee. That is, it allows the respondents to discuss the topic of interest in their own words (Kuada, 2012, p. 98). The strategy relies on a methodical and rigorous approach, as well as skilled data interpretation and processing. Therefore, a quantitative approach is not suitable for this study, as the researcher is not interested in exploring causal correlations between chosen variables (Kuada, 2012, p.103).

This study is tackled qualitatively with data gathered from six semi-structured interviews conducted with young adults living in Douala, Yaoundé and Garoua. As Guba and Lincoln (1982) explain that the qualitative approach is the preferred method if researchers want to tackle a research that is in line with the view of knowledge and reality as "qualitative methods are richer and can deal with phenomena not easily translatable into numbers" (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 244). Moreover, this research strategy focuses on the thickness and richness of data which permits the researcher to have insightful data, and its objective is not any form of generalisation (Bryman, 2015).

It is important to mention here that qualitative research method has been widely used by social practice theory scholar, while being criticized at the same time. Especially the interview as a data collection method. This is because practices are not always conscious, and observation may be a better way to investigate what people do physically rather than what they say about what they are doing.

Recruitment of interviewees

While quantitative research debates revolve around probability sampling, qualitative study conversely dwells on the notion of purposive sampling (Bryman, 2015, p. 416). Teddlie &Yu (2007) explain that purposive sampling is utilized in qualitative research as a method to pick out the units (like individuals, group of individuals or institutions) and it aids the researcher to answer his/her research questions.   Right from the onset of this research, the author had in mind the specific set of respondents needed for this study. So purposive sampling technique was quite fit for inquiry as the researcher could decide on the important characteristics the respondents had to have in other to be part of the sample. By young adults, it implies graduates between 25 and 35 years, who are financially independent and living in the three biggest towns in Cameroon. This age range was chosen because according to research from ThredUp, millennials (25-37 years old) are the top group among second-hand consumers (Vibert, 2021). Also, they will have the same level of comprehension and can be treated equally as the economic gap will be minimal.

In the context of this study, gender was not considered as an important factor, nor specific group of people or cases. Because I am not interested in looking at the gendered aspects of second-hand clothes shopping amongst young adults in Cameroon.

As I prior mentioned I was interested in finding how this group make sense of their second-hand clothes shopping practice. As it is understood that being financially independent, they would have other motivations for taking part in this practice other than economic constraints alone as the literature suggests.

Collection of relevant Data

This stage represents what Bryman (2015) refers to as "the key point of any research". The data collection for this study was done through semi-structured interviews that leave way for a more open-ended view of the research procedure so that "truths" might be uncovered without restraints and concepts could be derived from the data (Bryman, 2015,p.11). Through this study, we are interested in finding out how young adults in Cameroon carry out their practice of second-hand clothes shopping.

The study focuses on three largest cities in Cameroon (this is in terms of population numbers). That is Yaoundé, Douala and Garoua (World Population Review, 2021). These are the largest cities in terms of population. Yaoundé is the administrative capital, and it is in the

Centre region. It is a diverse and cosmopolitan city. Douala on the other hand is in the Littoral Region. It hosts the biggest airport and seaport that serves as a transit Port in the Sub-region. For this reason, it can be called the main entry point of most goods in Cameroon. Lastly, Garoua is situated in the Nord Region of Cameroon and is mostly occupied by Muslims. The distance between Garoua and Douala is 712 Kilometres (443 miles) by air and 1209 Kilometres(751 miles) by road (Distance Calculator.net). Also, the choice of these three towns stems from the fact that they offer a variety in terms of conventional shops and SHC outlets. Unlike smaller towns that do not offer such varied channel to buy SHC.

An internet-based medium of communication was used as a method for qualitative data collection. Lo Lacono et al., (2016) used skype for her study but since most of the respondents of this study did not have this application and are not much familiar with it, the researcher had to switch to WhatsApp. Interviews were performed using WhatsApp audio calls which is a Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) technology. WhatsApp was chosen as a data collection tool because it "allows us to interview study participants using voice and video over the internet via a synchronous (real-time) link, with the option to also use written text" (Lo Lacono et al., 2016). According to Debenham (2001), this form of data collection, also known as "Epistolary interviews," is a synchronous, one-to-one interview mediated by technology.

Most significantly, interviews enable the researcher to engage with the data and relive those moments of discussion, as well as review the respondents' personalities and emotions (Lo Lacono et al., 2016). Among the benefits of WhatsApp as a method for qualitative data collection, a drawback may be that it creates weaknesses in areas such as rapport, nonverbal signals, and ethics.

The interviews varied from 17 to 27 minutes with an average of 22 minutes per interview session. All six interviews were done in English in semi-formal and relaxed atmosphere that allowed the respondents to feel comfortable to express themselves freely. Also, the author had to cross check the interview transcription and the audios to ascertain that no hearing mistake had been made that could distort people's answers (Bryman 2015, p.11).

The researcher had to rearrange her schedules several times to fit that of respondents. For instance, some interviews had to be conducted very late at night because that was the only quiet moment the respondent could afford and for a noise-free recording. Examples of

interview guide/questions is available on the Appendix, while the interviews can be listened online. (see Appendix).

Individuals create, perceive, and experience truth in their relationships with each other and with social institutions, according to the constructivist viewpoint (Tuli, 2010). The nature of the study is interpretive, and the aim of the study is to comprehend a specific phenomenon rather than generalize it to a population, according to this orientation (Tuli, 2010). In this approach, researchers use qualitative methods and rely on personal experiences with people over a period while investigating a community. It is possible to gain a better understanding of what is being studied and add depth to the data by providing social experiences with the participants (Tuli 2010). The qualitative approach is concerned with gaining a thorough understanding of a research issue and its meaning rather than generalization (Tuli, 2010).

Data interpretation

After data collection, the next crucial step for the researcher is to derive insightful meaning from it. For this purpose, a qualitative thematic analysis was found most suitable for this study. As Tuli (2010) rightly puts it, during data gathering and non-numerical data analysis, interpretivist researchers are encouraged to use observation, in-depth interviews, and group discussions.

Thematic analysis gives the researcher the possibility to come up with a more structures analysis, since it uses the themes as categories, wherein the answers are easily deciphered and comparable (Bryman 2016). Moreover, this analytical approach is quite flexible for the researcher as it helps in data collection and analysis. The themes selected are based on the elements of practice theory of Elizabeth Shove (Theory section). Because the researcher is employing practice theory elements that have already been identified, it is the subsequent explanation of the acquired data that determines what is and is not relevant (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012).

The interviewing process took a while as many of the interviewees contacted beforehand where no longer available as agreed. But it was done on time and the audio -recordings were transcribed after each interview to avoid missing any part of it. The transcription produced many pages of quality data.

At this stage, the researcher is organizing, analysing, and interpreting the data gathered. The interpretation of data is inextricably tied to the method of data collection, and as previously said, this study employs the qualitative method, which frequently results in massive volumes of data that must be analysed (Bryman, 2015).

It is worth mentioning here that the interview guide was build up following the elements of social practice theory and other elements that were highlighted by the respondents. For this reason, it made it easier to structure the analysis following the said themes.

Informants for this study

A total of six interviews were carried out, each lasting close to 30 minutes. An interview guide was drafted but the respondents could derail from it to capture nuances not accounted for in the interview guide (Bryman, 2012). Four women and two men aged between 25 and 35 were interviewed.

Respondents number	Age	City of residence	Gender
Respondent 1	32	Douala	female
Respondent 2	34	Douala	male
Respondent 3	28	Garoua	female
Respondent 4	34	Yaoundé	female
Respondent 5	30	Garoua	male
Respondent 6	30	Yaoundé	female

Limitation and challenges

Despite the choices made to render this study successful, there were a variety of obstacles that prohibited the researcher from accomplishing what she truly wanted to do and imposed certain constraints, but this will not have a significant impact on the results. According to Bryman (2015), there are some opponents who believe that using a qualitative study limits a study by making it too subjective, limited generalizability, transparent, and difficult to repeat (Bryman, 2015). It is crucial to note that the following constraints had no substantial impact on the project's validity or credibility and were discovered after the entire study procedure had been completed

The greatest challenge faced during this study is access to the respondents. The different geographical locations between the researcher and the respondents made difficult for the researcher to carry out the interviews on the said dates and times. Given that all the respondents had very busy schedules and could not meet up on time. Moreover, some of the respondents contacted at the beginning of the study, failed to respond when it was time to carry out the interview. Therefore, I had to search for their replacement.

An ethnographic study would have produced enriching answers. That is to accompany some of the respondents during their actual shopping outings and visit the shops and market for observation purposes. To relate their answers and see if they really fit their physical actions

Validity and reliability

The small sample size for this study, will obviously have an impact on the interpretation of the data and findings. In qualitative research, the size is important towards the contribution to attitudes and perception of a given number of persons, although it does not aim to give a representative data. According to Bryman (2015), this is a point of criticism that qualitative research faces.

The sample population of this study is not representative of the whole population, as gender balance is not a preoccupation for the researcher. Also, the choice of the age group of 25-35 is not generalizable to the whole population involved in second-hand clothes consumption in Cameroon and this aspect affects the scope of validity of this study. This is because giving the limited time frame given for this study, the researcher was interested in providing an in-depth account of SHC shopping practices of this specific group. As per a study by ThredUp, this age group represents the highest consumers of SHCs (Vibert, 2021).

 The ontological and epistemological stances as well as the methodology of this research was detailed in this part. In-depth interview process was discussed as the primary data collection tool. The study's research design and sample of participants were described. The information gathered will be presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Analysis

The choice of this topic stems from the researcher's curiosity about second-hand clothes consumption in her country of origin. In this section, the data obtained from the six interviews carried out, will be presented. All respondents gave varied answers to the enquiry as they answered the same questions that were structured following elements of practice theory. This analysis will start with main themes that make up practice theory which are, image, skills, and material. Given the unique Corona Virus pandemic that is ongoing in the world, the researcher found it interesting to reflect on the dynamic aspect of this practice. Also, there are other elements that emerged from the response of the interviewees, and they have been included in the analysis. For the sake of anonymity, the respondents will be known as: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Image aspect

 Reflecting on the image aspect, some issues must be addressed. That is, the subject of how to think about practice, how practice develops, and how various participants perceive the same practice. As a result, anyone can go shopping, but they have various perspectives based on their personal expectations and/or cultural norms. Also, they have different understanding about this practice.

Thus, the respondents were asked to share their thoughts about what comes to their mind when second-hand clothe is mentioned. One striking aspect that emerges from the answers of the respondents, is their outright agreement on quality. They call them "hand-me-downs", "fairly used", "clothes coming from abroad", "unique clothes". So, they see this practice in a very positive light. Because even though they are aware that these articles are second choices, they still find them appealing as they fulfil their needs for clothing.

Thereafter, respondents were questioned about the availability of second-hand clothes shops. Most of the respondents were unanimous in their answers. The respondents living in Douala and Yaoundé stated that there is a vast variety of second-hand shops in their area that catered for every income level. Respondent 4 added that *"there are quite many especially in*

Yaoundé, we have them everywhere". Nevertheless, our respondents from Garoua decried the scarcity of second-hand shops and website in their city, reason being that ;*"The population in Garoua is predominantly Muslim… they believe so much in African wear and the traditional way of dressing… the woman must dress decent…"(*respondent 3*)* while respondent 5 added *" so, few sellers trade with these second-hand products because they move down to Douala to acquire these product to come up North for us to buy".* Respondent 5 gave as reason that *"there are few shops because we are far from the seaport"* while respondent 3 gave another reason for this scarcity *"…They believe that fashion clothes and casual clothes are not decent.".* So, from the data we could say that distance from the main Seaport town which is Douala, and the local way of life negatively affects the availability of second-hand products in Garoua.

In addition, all six respondents agreed on the availability of conventional shops. Even though respondent 1 considers them to be more expensive than their second-hand counterparts and respondent 4 said they offer more of what she calls "Chinese clothes". This implies that both conventional and second-hand shops evolve in the same setting with each having its regular clients. Therefore, the respondents navigate between second-hand shops and conventional shops depending on the specific occasion and the context.

Moreover, all six respondents said they engage in second-hand clothes shopping for economic reasons. This is in line with the findings of Fodouop (2005) who affirms that before the economic crisis in 1986, second-hand clothes were consumed by the poor people in the society, as they could not afford brand new dresses from classy shops in town. While people with high income and people from the high society acquired new or imported original clothes. But nowadays, SHC consumers are registered in all social strata and all socio-professional categories in the country. They all have no complex in acquiring SHC for themselves and their families. (Fodouop, 2005, p. 70).

Considering their worst experience when shopping for second-hand clothes, our respondents had varied views in reference to their area of living. For instance, respondent 1 who lives in Douala visited an open market on a particularly rainy day and she had to exercise some patience in order to buy the dress she came for. Respondent 2 also a resident of Douala on his part mentioned the disillusion he had after washing the clothes he bought, *"they were already degraded".* Respondent 5 was also disappointed by his purchase made on social media as it was not what he had paid for and unfortunately there was no return policy for it. This goes in

line with respondent 3's experience who got duped by the seller while buying a t-shirt which turned out to be a rag *"at times you even buy, they package it. When you get home, you find something else inside. It's crazy."* while respondent 4 bought some clothes that had awful stains on them, and this led to her sister having rashes on her body. This aspect was unveiled by Roux and Korchia (2006) and Hiller (2009), whose respondents expressed concerns wearing second-hand clothes because of contamination, perspiration stains and odour (Roux and Korchia 2006). Nevertheless, these concerns were later swept off by respondent 4 who states that "*the solution is to always thoroughly wash the dresses before wearing them"*. Respondent 6 on her part condemned the rudeness she got from second-hand clothes seller who *"forcefully retrieved a dress from her hands"*.

Nevertheless, our respondents pointed out that they also had some good experiences shopping for second-hand clothes. For instance respondents 2, 3, 4 and 5 lauded the "uniqueness" and "quality" they get from SHC:

" I get a lot of unique things from second-hand shops… "(respondent 3) *"I am sure there will be few people in the city wearing the same thing. So, I am sure I will be unique"* (respondent 4). This assertion supports the findings of many scholars mentioned in the literature review which affirms that "uniqueness" , this desire for individuality (Guiot & Roux, 2010) is also a means of standing out, of wearing items that no one else has. This has the potential to convey unique qualities such as confidence, increased longevity, and higher fabric quality (Edbring et al., 2016). In the meantime, respondent 6 recalled how polite and nice a specific seller was to her, *"they give me time to try on things to see if it suits just right. So, in both domain it is all about customer service, how the person is treated as a paying customer"*.

In summary the data reveals that quality in the SHC can be double- edged. Some respondents have had quality issues when purchasing SHC. While one respondent has decided to buy less SHC because of its bad quality, others have instead developed skills at assessing the apparels before any purchase to avoid any bad surprise. Moreover, these bad experiences have not in any way stopped our respondents from buying SHC. On the contrary, they have become better in the practice. For instance, respondent 1 declares that *"it has made me buy more, helped to know the time to leave home for the market. That is early in order to get the best choices.*". Respondent 3 has decided to do more of her shopping in Douala or Yaoundé. While respondent 5 has opted to shop where he will be able to feel and touch the item, he is

buying to be sure of its quality. Respondent 6 on her part still sticks to SHC because it is where she finds satisfaction.

As image also entails the respondents' social and figurative sense of taking part in practice. The question was structured to have the respondents share their feelings about buying new or SHC. Respondent 6 made us know that she needs clothes to make her look beautiful, so from experience she has always gotten that feeling from SHC *"so my feeling is to say that there, I get a bigger variety and a better fit. Most usually I go there first, if I don't find anything then I go to the normal shop"*. Respondent 5 added that *"I admire buying. I can say 60% new and 40% second-hand. Because most of the stuff nowadays do not reflect their value, they are not durable. But second-hand stuffs are durable"*. Respondent 3 mentioned that she thinks that many people go for Chinese clothes because of economic constraints since she refers to these dresses as *"flashy", "not durable"* whereas she buys SHC because *"second-hand clothes for me are original, because from the texture, the material and everything. I really get satisfied and convinced and free when shopping in SHC shops"*. Equally respondent 4 had the same thought as respondent 3, she thinks what is usually sold in most fashion shops in her town are what she termed "*Chinese dresses"*, for this reason, she preferred to buy the more affordable and quality dresses sold in second-hand shops. This finding is in accordance with what Kindzeka (2016) postulated in his article that, not only do buyers cherish the clothes from Germany, but also electronic appliances. This has led to the stock piling of Chinese products considered to be of inferior quality (Kindzeka, 2016).

Finally, still within the image aspect, respondents were interrogated about their take on the cost when buying SHC as compared to new ones of low-end cost. So for this question respondents 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 had the same thoughts as they would prefer to pay a higher price for an item they feel is of good quality. In this case, SHC instead of anything new that would not last. So, respondent 2 was adamant as he insisted that, he is more concerned about the quality than the price. Respondent 3 made it clear "*While some second-hand clothes are so costly because you feel the dresses and sense the quality of the article. For me second—hand clothes even though they are costly, they are of better quality. It also depends on the shops. Because there are shops for everyone(category). Like low quality, high quality, normal, so it just depends"*. While respondent 4 had this to say *"I prefer the second-hand clothes because I will wear it for long. While wearing the new clothes it will fade or even spoil after a month or week. But if you wear a second-hand dress maybe it will stay longer"*.

Respondent 6 was not of the same opinion. As she is more preoccupied with finding something that will be of her size *"But like I mentioned I am on the bigger side so the tendency for low-end cost new clothes to be of my size is a bit rare. So, I always find myself back to second-hand. But of course, if it were possible for me get size and everything right in the new section at low cost, I will definitely go new.".*

The data suggests that some of the respondents are ready to pay any price if they are assured of having the quality and durability they are looking for, and some new clothes have been known to be of lesser quality than the SHC. While other respondents face sizing issues that makes them to stick to SHC. Brooks and Simon (2012) came to the same conclusion as they postulate that, since the cost of buying used goods is not always cheaper than the cost of purchasing new goods. In Mozambique and Zambia, it has been observed that African merchants hide new, Chinese-made shoes among displays of used shoes imported from the global North, buffing, and tarnishing the brand-new products to disguise their origin, since used shoes from Europe or North America command a higher price due to their perceived, or real, superior quality. (Brooks and Simon, 2012). Moreover*, Fodouop (2005)* also mentions that some resellers acquire articles in good condition or "first choice", wash, iron and perfume them. Then resell them in their shops where customers assume they are new clothes.

Skills and competence aspect

As earlier mentioned in the theory section skill and competence are part of the elements important for a specific practice to be performed. It entails the know-how and techniques used to enact practices. For instance, in other to engage and excel in SHC shopping, the consumer must have knowledge about the specific markets to find specific goods, the patience to sort the pile of clothes, the ability to detect the quality of a piece of clothing just from seeing and touching and have the information about new arrivals. So, in a bit to explore the respondents' skills in this domain, 5 questions were constructed in this sense. The respondents were asked about their bad and good experiences while shopping for second-hand clothes and how this had influenced their shopping decisions.

Overall, it has made the respondents to derive methods to avoid these inconveniences in their future purchases. For instance, respondent 2 after having a bad experience now shops less for

second-hand clothes but more of second-hand shoes as he finds them of better quality than the clothes. Respondent 3 being a Christian living in a Muslim area avoid shopping in Garoua and does most of her SHC shopping either in Douala or Yaoundé where it is cheaper and offers more variety. As it was earlier mentioned, Douala is the largest supply point for SHC in Cameroon and the Sub-region as it hosts the biggest seaport and an International Airport. So, it takes almost the whole day to travel from Douala to Garoua by road and internal flights are very expensive. This has a huge impact on the availability and price of goods in Garoua. While respondent 1 has learned she has to leave home early in other to get the best choice, respondent 4 on her part now takes her time to thoroughly wash and iron the clothes she buys before wearing them because of the rashes her sister experienced. For respondent 5, buying online is no longer an option given the bad experience he had.

The data suggests that experienced customers seem to be more likely to conquer certain conventional obstacles, such as peer pressure, store hostility, and hygiene (Silva, et al., 2021). So, it can be said that the respondents have developed skills in second-hand clothes shopping that can permit them to overcome certain barriers they may face while shopping for SHC. That is, they are more cautious about the sanitary and quality state of the apparels they buy. Respondent 3 reveals that SHCs are classified in different categories (the high-quality, the normal and the low quality). So, they always go for the best quality within their price range.

Then, respondents were questioned on how they decide on buying a specific piece of clothing. Respondent 3 portrayed her skills in knowing the specific market or shop where she can find either a nice gown, t-shirts or Jeans *"Like I said I stay in Garoua, and I am very familiar with the place. So, I know where to get nice gowns when I am in need of one. I know where to get jeans, t-shirts, inner-wears, boxers for men, I know exactly where to get them. I have clients I regularly go to them and get it. So, I know that very well because Garoua is the place"*.

As for respondent 6, she has developed the ability to judge if an apparel is malleable, too stiff or has traces of wear just with one touch. Whilst respondents 1 and 5 are driven by their needs. *"First of all, I have to be in need of it. For example, the pair of Jeans, I bought here is a long sleeve t-shirt. so, I will be going to the market to look for a trouser that matches it"* (respondent 1).

Furthermore, I wanted to know about the respondents' thoughts regarding other people's negative perceptions about SHC. Looking at their answers they mention some of the barriers

that have been touched upon in the literature review. According to a study by Laitala and Klepp, (2018), their respondents hinted at the fact that the most important safety barrier is linked to hygiene. Also, Roux and Korchia, (2006) found out that people are afraid of acquiring clothing that could transmit contagious diseases. So, respondent 2 said *"I think the reason is that these people have in mind that these clothes have been worn by other people, whom they do not know their health conditions.".* while respondent 3 added that *"For instance, maybe it is because they feel like, it has been used, maybe the former owner had rashes or skin diseases or things like that."* In the same vein respondent 6 had this to say *" a lot of people may not be comfortable buying something they know someone may have worn before. Because they do not know if they were properly treated or if the person had something going on like sickness.".*

As our literature review suggested, online second-hand clothes shopping is becoming widely adopted by young consumers in the Western world, for its convenience and ease of access. I found it interesting to look at the various channels through which my respondents acquire their second-hand clothes. As many studies have highlighted the merits of online shopping as easy to use and requiring less effort, businesspeople who are interested in going into second-hand clothes selling will have more visibility and access to high-income consumers by creating platforms to ease purchase of second-hand clothes.

The respondents were asked if they find it simple to shop for SHC online. Interestingly, all respondents had varied approaches to this question. Respondent 3 said she could only do it if she was acquainted to the seller *"For example, I can buy something from a friend maybe she knows my body shape, and she can convince me by sending me a picture on WhatsApp, then I can buy it because am very sure of the person am buying from. But to say that I can shop for second-hand clothes online from an unknown person, I do not think I can do that"* *(respondent 3).* Respondent 5 on his part acknowledged the existence of this shopping method but same as respondent 3, he confessed that he would rather buy from his friends. Furthermore, he insisted that he mostly buys from the markets. While respondents 2 and 6 would prefer to buy in physical shops as they could try on the clothes to see if it suits (respondent 6) he would want to touch and see the stuff he is purchasing (respondent 2).

In summary, shopping for SHC online is very much appealing to all the respondents as it does allow them to appreciate the dress before making the purchase. But there is still this

issue of trust in the seller. Nevertheless respondents 3 and 5 are open to purchasing their SHC from trusted sources like friends and acquaintances.

Subsequently the respondents were required to reflect on the benefits of SHC shopping. Respondents praised SHC with words like uniqueness, ease of purchase, variety of choices, quality, low cost, and durability. Fodouop (2005) gave a thorough account of the variety in price that exists in the SHC market in Cameroon. Indeed, he affirms that dealers categorize articles which are of excellent quality without any imperfection and very clean with names like, "diamond", "cream", and "high-end". This is followed by items that are in good condition, free of defects and clean which local dealers refer to as "premium items"; then items of suitable quality which resellers refers to as "second-best" items. After them, we find items having obvious signs of wear and dirt that resellers refer to as "third-choice items" (Fodouop,2005, p.11).

In the same vein our respondents recognized there many risks attached to SHC, regarding chemicals, diseases, and overcrowded markets. These findings are against the affirmation made by Mitchell (1999), who affirm that consumers are more likely to be negatively affected by the *Perceived Risk* and give up second-hand shopping, rather than shop second-hand. Remarkably, the respondents were not much affected by these risks. Each respondent had devised a way to avoid these risks. Example, respondent 6 explains that *"Like when I buy, I make sure when I get home I wash before putting on my body. Of course, you also try some in the shop. So, when you get home you take a shower, you make sure you don't have anything left on your body"*. While respondent 1 said *"we are used to buying second-hand dresses and we are aware that they must be washed properly in order to avoid diseases, especially underwear. It is not like it is a problem for us again."*. same as respondent 4.

In a nutshell, the respondents displayed many skills and competence that allows to be comfortable while shopping for SHC. Moreover, likewise in Zambia, the SHC sector in Cameroon does not only serve poorer customers and people with higher income have more options. They can shop in high scale boutiques as well as second-hand clothing market and tailor-made clothing (Hansen, 2006a, 2006b).

Material aspect

This is also a very important aspect of a practice, for there are certain elements like thrift shops, accessible markets, Facebook markets, flea markets, clothes exposition stands, shops, online second-hand shops that have to be available for a practice to go on smoothly. Schatzki contends that 'understanding specific practices always involves apprehending material configurations' (Schatzki et al., 2001, p. 3). Also, scholars have emphasized that consumers' perceptions of store quality, image, and overall representativeness direct their buying decisions, according to Darley and Lim (1999) and Pantano and Gandini (2019).

Two questions were formulated to explore the respondent's opinion about the availability of the material to facilitate SHC shopping in their area. All respondents agreed on the accessibility of shops and markets for SHC. Respondent 3 added that prices were a bit different in shops and markets depending on the kind of dress, the quality, and the money the buyer is ready to spend. While respondent 6 highlighted the variety of venues to shop for SHC *"Because just in my area you have people who sell SHC within their homes. Same as those who sell in the market and those who sell by the road. I feel like it's accessible to everyone just by virtue of the fact that they have different grades"*.

Next, the respondents were asked to talk about their preferred channel to purchase SHC and give the reason for their choice. Respondent 4 declares that she usually buys either from the markets or from people who import mixed goods containers. This is because she thinks they are of better quality than those sold in the markets even though they are more expensive. While respondent 6 prefers buying from physical shops and not online because she must check they dress to know how it suits. Similarly, respondent 3 had this to say regarding her decision *"I prefer to go to the shop and take my time, look very carefully and check for any mistake before I buy it. Because once you buy it, you cannot go for any return or money refund. So, I prefer buying at the physical shop rather than buying online"*. Respondent 1 on her part says she buys from the market to avoid the extra charges attached to shopping online.

In conclusion, there are varied ways to purchase SHC in the respondents' area of living. With markets and physical shops being the most preferable due to different reasons. Some of the respondents have had bad experiences shopping online for SHC and others are just concerned about the extra charges they could incurred in online purchase.

Dynamics of Practice

For instance, many researchers are broadly interested in accounting for change: hence they are interested in questions about how practices evolve and stay the same, how they circulate or disappear, or how they link and break away from each other. For Schatzki, in this blog, the primary task is (often) to provide accounts of how things come about. There is definitely more to say about what kinds of explanations such accounts work with, what makes an 'overview' – and what distinguishes an overview inspired by practice theory from one framed in some other terms. Nonetheless, the challenge is to find ways of capturing – whether by zooming in and out or some other comparative method – the dynamics of practice over certain spatial time.

Second-hand clothes consumption is not such a new practice among young adults in Cameroon. I find it interesting to look how the covid19 pandemic will alter the way this practice is carried out.

So, the respondents were prodded on their opinion about the impact of the covid19 pandemic on their shopping habits.

For respondents 1, 3, 5 and 6 have seen some changes in their shopping habits. For instance, respondent 1 no longer goes to the market so often as she must protect herself and others. Respondent 3 saw some of her clients stopping the business for a while and others doing more of online sales *"so the pandemic has really affected it a lot. Because now, shipping and everything has decreased and there is less variety right now. Even the private ones who used to send from abroad have stopped also. Even the Corona has scared off potential buyers and this has slowed down the business."* Respondent 6 has decided to buy more of new clothes since they are in individual packaging and have some layers of protection

Respondents 2 and 4 on their part see no major changes, but respondent 2 notices that imports have reduced. While respondent 3 mentions that there are more people experiencing online shopping.

Overall, it has been established that, the respondents under normal circumstances shy away from shopping for SHC online. Reason being that they are unable to thoroughly assess the product they are buying. Nevertheless, with the restrictions imposed by the government in relation to the covid19 pandemic, they seem to be more inclined to go online for their shopping. Also, experience and patience in selecting and assessing a piece of clothing can enhance the will to purchase more SHC. Because these developed skills can help the future consumers to avoid the perceived risks involved in SHC consumption. Moreover, the future

of small business is evolving but an online presence is critical to achieve maximum impact with younger clients (Xu et al., 2014; Yan et al., 2015).

Overall, the accrued access to internet in Cameroon can be a great boast to the SHC market. More young people are present on all social media platforms and sellers make use of these platforms to make their products visible and attract prospective customers.

Respondents' clothes consumption pattern

From the opening questions emerges the need to explore the respondents' clothes consumption patterns. This is because some scholars have uncovered a contradictory account for the consumption motivation amongst youths in the world (Roux and Guiot,2008; Yan et al., 2015; Cervellon et al., 2012). But following the study data, the researcher would be more inclined to align with Hansen (2000; 2006a; 2006b; 2010). With respect to the study of second-hand clothes consumption in Zambia, Hansen provides another lens through which consumption can be viewed. She disputes economists' explanations that the expansion of the second-hand clothing market is solely due to economic loss, noting that such explanations overlook the opportunity for consumers to construct themselves that this trade provides. Although the affordability of imported used clothes is a factor, its popularity cannot be explained just by the satisfying of fundamental clothing necessities, as clothing wants are also essential (Hansen, 2000). Retailers and customers refashion imported used clothing to express their individual and collective identities, demonstrate their understanding of broader clothing practices, and undermine its received meaning (Hansen, 2010).

From the data of this study, one can affirm that the respondents are not compulsive shoppers. They buy following their needs mostly and not for fun or for discovery as some authors in the literature review pointed out (Isla, 2012). Just as respondent 5 pointed out, he shops occasionally, when he has a specific function to attend, while respondent 2 declared that it is not a "hobby".

When asked if they bought more of SHC or new, it was revealed that all the respondents are avid SHC shoppers, but they try to strike a balance as there are some specific items that they would prefer to buy new and most of their clothes are bought second-hand because of the perceived quality.

Moreover, they were asked to give some suggestions to the government and the seller in other to improve the SHC shopping practice in the Country. Respondents 1, 2 and 5 hinted that a

tax reduction from the Government will improve the price and the quality of products that are imported. Also, the creation of better infrastructures, like markets and shops because many potential buyers are put off by the conditions in which some of the clothes are sold. Respondent 6 added that ". *I feel like the biggest challenge with the SHC market is the display. We should have like a place in a building where people can actually display their products since most often the things end up on the floor. This is because those sellers who cannot afford to own a store risk damaging their products to elements like rain, theft, wind and others."*

While the respondents' suggestions to the sellers revolve around better training in online sales, improve on their product display, better packaging and customer service which is sometimes lacking. This holds true as scholars have affirmed that SHC stores are generally thought to be disorganized and crowded, with a lack of attention paid to visual merchandising and store layout (Connell, 2010). The store's organization and attractive appearance are identified as contributing factors in SHC purchases, as well as a means of engaging with SHC customers (Darley and Lim, 1999; McColl et al., 2013).

Conclusively, the researcher discovered that, some of the factors that spur the respondents to shop for second-hand clothes is the perceived quality, the variety of sizes, the availability of markets and shops, "fashionability", uniqueness, and ease of use. They are not very keen on shopping online because of the inability to feel the product they are purchasing. But they sometimes buy if they are well acquainted with the sellers in this way, they are sure of the product and have the possibility to return the product if they are not pleased.

The findings corroborate some of the aspects mentioned in the literature section regarding the motivations and the brakes in second-hand clothes shopping. It also highlights some of the peculiarities that exist in the context of Cameroon that greatly affects the prospective consumer's decision to buy SHC.

Chapter 5: Discussion

In this section, the key themes' results that were previously identified, are going to be compared. That is, the findings from the respondents in Yaoundé, Douala and Garoua are going to be compared amongst each other. The aim of this comparison is to examine and identify how second-hand clothes purchase is carried out differently depending on their location within the country. Moreover, this exercise is necessary in order to generate more data with which to answer the research questions and arrive at a remarkable conclusion.

The thematic analysis of the data obtained from consumers in Yaoundé, Douala and Garoua, revealed some patterns in their answers, pertaining to image and meaning. The respondents' awareness concerning what second-hand clothes shopping entails has been proven. So, in this part, similarities, and differences in our respondents' views on image and meaning attached to SHC shopping practices are going to be touched upon.

Primarily, all respondents have a very good perception of the SHC shopping practice. As they think that even though it has been worn before it still has some quality, and it conveys a certain uniqueness to the wearer. There is a clear difference concerning the availability of SHC shops. Those living in Garoua being far away from Douala and being a Muslims dominating area, the SHC shops are a bit scarce and most of the population prefer to dress in the African style. On the other hand, in towns like Douala and Yaoundé, SHC shops and conventional shops are found everywhere. Even though the respondents pointed out that some of these conventional shops sell "Chinese" low-quality products and they are expensive (Respondents 4 and 1).

Secondly, all the respondents recounted their good and bad experiences when shopping for SHC. This has influenced their shopping decisions variedly. The two respondents living in Garoua have resorted to doing more of their shopping out of Garoua that is in Douala and Yaoundé, or shopping online from sellers they know and can trust or being more cautious when buying. One of the respondent living in Douala has decided to buy less second-hand dresses and more shoes, and the other has acquired the skill of going to the market early enough to get the best choices.

Moreover, regarding their perception of cost, all the respondents were unanimous as they highly consider quality over cost. So, it is not all about the money but more about "the best suit" (respondent 6), durability (respondent 4 and 5). One could say without any doubts that the respondents living in these three towns in Cameroon, buy both new and SHCs. But they

are more inclined to shop for second-hand clothes to diversify their closets while remaining within their budget.

Finally, a study conducted by Laitala and Klepp (2018) in Norway reveals that the stigma and the peer rejection that has been attached to SHC consumption is inexistent in the context of Cameroon. The respondents did not highlight any feeling of shame or inferiority as consumers of SHC.

Concerning the skills that are needed for second-hand clothes practice, for young adults in Douala, Yaoundé and Garoua, the data uncovers more similarities than differences. The skills highlighted by the respondents have also appeared in the literature review (Silva, et al., 2021). As some scholars have mentioned some required skills that are necessary for successful second-hand clothes purchase or to make the best out of the experience.

The respondents have developed many skills that allows them to engage in SHC shopping practice with ease. This practice requires significant cognitive effort (more complex purchasing process than new, purchase requiring a certain know-how). For example, respondent 3 living in Garoua has a good mastery of the various markets that sell specific articles, and she buys online from well-known sellers.

For instance, the respondents' answers about what they thought were the barriers of second-hand clothes consumption for some people, relate to the same barriers mentioned in the literature review (skin issues, the uneasiness people feel about wearing previously owned dresses, the overcrowded markets). This is in line with the few studies that have been conducted in Africa which dwell on some of the barriers faced by consumers shopping for SHC (Fodouop, 2005; Bazzi, 2012; Mburu et al.,2018 ; Katende-Magezi, 2017; Hansen, 2004). It can be argued that the respondents' knowledge of these barriers and the risks involved in the consumption of SHC makes them skilful enough to be able to avoid or minimize them. This is further proven by the fact that these barriers have not in any way stopped them from consuming SHC.

Also, all six respondents had almost the same thoughts concerning the perceived benefits of SHC shopping. The need for authenticity has prompted some buyers to purchase second-hand products, which have become increasingly popular since the latter became attractive (Beard, 2008; Ferraro et al., 2016). So, respondent 1 satisfies her need to be unique and fashionable and does not want not to be seen wearing dresses similar to that of other women.

On the material aspect, Schatzki argues that 'understanding specific practices always involves apprehending material configurations' (Schatzki et al., 2001: 3).

All six respondents had the same thoughts relating to the availability of the markets to all. Even though the respondents living in Garoua faced some challenges to procure second-hand clothes due to the limited options they have. Pertaining to online shops, all respondents had knowledge of its existence, but they did not quite adhere to this alternative way of shopping. Although respondents 3 and 4 living in Garoua have attempted online shopping from reliable sources, they are still not satisfied when buying through these channels. But all six of them prefer shopping the traditional way to avoid any unpleasant surprise.

Another aspect that emerges from the data is that distance from the main sourcing town, which is Douala, negatively affects the availability of a variety of SHC in Garoua. As the buyers travel a long way to get their goods, it becomes expensive when they arrive.

In conclusion, fashionability, quality, availability of sizes and price are the motivations behind young adults' consumption of SHC. Also, distance from the main sourcing town, lack of good infrastructures and lack of SHC shopping experience, negatively affects SHC shopping practice. In the following chapter the implications of the findings and the limitations are going to be addressed.

Chapter 6: conclusion and implications

This study explores the consumption practices of some young adults leaving three different towns in Cameroon, pertaining to second-hand clothes consumption, rather than just a superficial description of a large sample of a population. Its purpose is to provide a clear interpretation of the structure, order, and comprehensive patterns that can be uncovered among a group of participants. This is done through an in-depth interview with six respondents living in the three biggest towns in Cameroon and followed by a thematic analysis in the light of the social practice theory of Elizabeth Shove (2012). That is, to investigate these consumers' second-hand shopping decision making in Cameroon including both reasons and disincentives. From a practical standpoint, the outcomes of the study

revealed that various aspects involved in second-hand commerce through the perceptions of young adults in Cameroon.

In order to answer the main research question which is: How do young adults in Cameroon perceive second- clothes shopping? the following was revealed:

The first aspect that is quickly tangible is that the respondents are not compulsive shoppers. That is, they are not avid shoppers, who purchase clothes for pleasure. They shop for clothes either new or second-hand, and occasionally when it is needed. Nevertheless, their needs do not reduce their hedonistic motivations, they are thrilled about finding unique pieces and they enjoy making a "good purchase". These findings are parallel to what Guiot and Roux (2010) discovered about second-hand clothes consumers in France.

The six consumers studied could be categorized as cross shoppers, like Isla (2013) rightly points out in the case of the Philippines, unlike cross and alternative shoppers in advanced nations, they do not defy stereotypes, act out roles, or reject popular trends and brand names. They are more in line with the preferences of mainstream shoppers (Isla, 2013). They value fabric, appreciate colour, solids, and prints that are harmoniously coordinated. They simply mix and match goods to suit their personal preferences. This clothing expertise, which entails putting together finished second-hand goods, does not necessitate a substantial financial investment. Young adults in Cameroon make informed decisions regarding style, quality, importance of money and clothes appropriateness to go with specific occasions and contexts.

One of the findings from the empirical data suggests that most of the interviewees go to second-hand stores because they can find items that cannot be obtained in regular shops, and which is not common among other consumers. It is also true that the current literature pinpoints aspects like frugality which englobes (price consciousness and economic motivation) as the most major predictors of second-hand shopping (Guiot & Roux, 2010; Cervellon et al., 2012; Xu et al., 2014; Yan et al., 2015). But in this specific case, the respondents have other expectations from their SHC purchase. So, the financial aspect alone is not the end focus. They want to look good without looking cheap and common.

In addition, the biggest motivator for second-hand shopping was found to be price. The participants mentioned price consciousness and a fair price as two characteristics that motivates them to purchase SHCs. Under hedonic incentives, the need for uniqueness was identified as the primary motivator for purchasing second-hand clothing. Treasure hunting, as

well as fun and enjoyment, were mentioned as common motivations for second-hand clothes purchasing. On the other hand, the risk of contamination, whether due to personality traits or unsanitary conditions, was discovered to be the most important moderating factor when it came to SHC shopping. Even though the participants have derived means to avoid these risks. Moreover, within the practical incentives for purchasing second-hand clothing, aspects such as proper clothing size and fashionability were highlighted.

Contrasted to similar study in western society, the impact of ecological and ethical motivation on second-hand shopping is relatively inexistent in the context of Cameroon. There are still many possibilities of having more people to shop for second-hand clothes, not only the poor. This could be achieved by bringing some innovation at many levels. On the internal level, SHC retailers could stimulate consumer satisfaction, including price, quality, and service, etc.

In the context of this study, skills, material, and image aspects have proven to be very important for the development of the SHC shopping practice by young adults in Cameroon. A missing element can negatively affect the practice. Therefore, respondents made some suggestions to improve the SHC shopping practice in Cameroon. For instance, they proposed that the government should reduce the importation taxes that are applied on SHC while also being strict on the quality of goods that are being imported. In addition, the need for better infrastructure has been pointed out by the respondents wherein the sellers are encouraged to modernise the business by putting an accent on the packaging and display. Thus, adding pleasure and enthusiasm to SHC shopping is a prospective strategy to promote second-hand shopping among young Cameroonian consumers. On the other hand, sellers have been encouraged to go digital, creating an online store, where they would share pictures of goods and receive orders through social networking sites. Also, online sellers have been urged to become more trustworthy regarding the quality of their goods. As Milgram (2004) states, it is vital that strategies be employed by traders given their "lack of control over stock quality, fierce competition, changing tastes of consumers and shifting fashion trends" (Milgram, 2004)

Many youths are involved in reparations and redesigning of second-hand clothes. This appeals to more people as the local African prints are added to bomber jackets, hoodies, and every other clothing item, to make it trendy. Therefore, by giving these clothes a second life, these youths unknowingly contribute to making SHC more sustainable.

Considering certain other answers from the interviews, the study indicated a relationship between purchasing power, experience, and access to quality goods. The findings from the data unravel many implications for second-hand retailers, comprising new ways to increase their customer base by exploiting into elements of fashionability. As our respondents while being concerned about saving some money, they find pleasure in good quality apparels.

Managerial Implications

This study contributes to academia in three ways: it adds scientific material, it enhances the current body of research on second-hand clothing practices, and it fills a vacuum in the literature linked to consumers perceiving incentives and barriers to purchase second-hand clothes. Reports from Ecofin Agency reveals that in 2019, there was an increase of 6.4 % in the imports of SHC in Cameroon. This goes a long way to prove that the local industry is incapable of fulfilling consumer apparel needs in Cameroon and there is a large market available for exploitation, if well structured. The SHC market has been rising, and predictions show that it will continue to rise. As a result, businesspeople must figure out what drives and dissuades customers from buying SHCs. The study's main findings reveal that SHC purchases are influenced by quality, price, and channel familiarity. Given the relevance of familiarity, it appears that marketing campaigns should encourage consumers to try these things for the first time, ideally at places that can preserve people's privacy.

In addition, it appears important for consumers to be knowledgeable about all the available channels for SHC shopping in their area. This study's findings underline those consumers who are more informed about the various shopping channels tend to be more satisfied with their purchases and are more inclined to repeat their experience. Continuous customer education and understanding of current formal and informal networks (e.g., thrift stores, online SHC stores, fairs, and so on) are particularly important in the context of SHCs. Also, the social media is gaining more importance as it facilitates the contact between the seller and his/her prospective customers. Sellers make use of their Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp pages to display pictures of their goods.

Finally, consumers are also in search of quality when they purchase SHCs. This is highly important for them. So, importers should be more selective in the items they import. This is

because the importation of excessive low-grade SHC, impacts on the buying choice of the SHC as one will have to search thoroughly to find a good or wearable quality. Also, Fouodop (2005) affirms that these low-quality apparels constitute waste that pose problems of space and cleanliness, more serious than plastic waste and industrial waste which is not biodegradable. Therefore, creating serious environmental hazards.

Further research

This study's sampling was limited to three cities in Cameroon. Further research should employ a larger sample size to look at the differences and similarities in people's attitudes and intentions toward second-hand clothing consumption in different cities. This is crucial for people wanting to engage in this line of business and those who are already into it and as they would easily fulfil their targeted consumers' apparel needs.

Furthermore, this study was limited to the garment industry's second-hand markets because second-hand marketplaces are so diverse, and additional research may focus on different segments within the second-hand market.

In addition, the interviews were done on the phone through WhatsApp calls. This constitutes a limitation as practices are best understood through observation. That is, people might say something and act in another way. So, observing their actions in natural contexts is particularly beneficial in gaining access to a diverse collection of discursive repertoires.

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