



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

# **B2B SHARING PLATFORMS. THE NEXT LOGICAL STEP**

**A qualitative study investigating  
what drives or hinders the business  
to business sharing economy**

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# Executive Summary

The sharing economy has become a widely known phenomena, however, the main focus has always been on sharing between consumers, with firms like Airbnb and Uber at the center of the conversation. There is plenty of material written on the sharing economy in a consumer context, however, there is a glaring gap in current literature when it comes to sharing between businesses.

There is a need for an analysis of what drives sharing between businesses, in order to identify potential differences between the consumer and the business environment.

This study aims to answer the following research question: *Why and to what extent do the factors convenience, financial, sustainable and uncertainty entice or deter management participation in the B2B sharing economy?*

The factors investigated in the study is derived from current literature. From the literature a conceptual model was developed. To complement the secondary data interviews were held to get a better grasp of sharing in a business context.

The results suggests that there is an importance hierarchy in between the factors from most to least important as follows; financial, uncertainty, convenience and sustainability.

Finally, the study contributes with a revised conceptual model where data from the results are used to modify the model derived from previous literature. The revised conceptual model can guide business to business sharing platforms when developing marketing strategies for their platforms. In addition, the insights gained from the study can be used when developing a platform or business model by prioritizing the more important factors.



## Acknowledgments

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Sleeping resource	<i>Sleeping resources are assets within a firm that currently is underutilized, further, a sleeping resource is not the core of the business, sleeping resources can be everything from tangible assets such as cars and desks, to intangible assets such as know-how</i>
The Sharing Economy	<i>Utilization of a sleeping resource in exchange for compensation, where the sharing is mediated through a platform.</i>
B2B	<i>Refers to business to business which is an interaction between businesses in terms of trading, selling and purchase of goods.</i>  One example would be if firm A shares some desks to firm B.
C2C	<i>Refers to consumer to consumer which is an interaction between consumers in terms of trading, selling and purchase of goods.</i>  One example of C2C is when person A lends person B a car.
Customer	<i>The word customer refers to individuals who participates in the sharing economy</i>
Platform	<i>The term platform refers to the sharing platforms where the sharing takes place, the platforms are the mediators that brings the participants in the sharing economy together. (Quinones &amp; Augustine, 2015, p. 1)</i>

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# 1.0 Introduction

*This chapter introduces the concept “sharing economy” and dives deeper into how the sharing economy in a C2C setting could be linked to a B2B setting. First, the section explains why the subject is of interest and how we defined it. Second, a prototype of a B2B platform will be presented and described in detail. Followed by the theoretical background with an explanation of the problem at hand, the purpose and research question of the study. Lastly, the scientific and practical contributions of the research is discussed as well as the scope of the research.*

## 1.1 Choice of Subject

Botsman & Rogers (2010, p. 71) write that more and more people are connecting to the idea of paying for the right of exploiting a product rather than paying to own it. This is forcing traditional businesses to adapt and change their way of operating. The exponential rise of social media has made it possible for actors to exchange sleeping resources, which has changed consumers’ mindsets from private ownership-consumerism towards collaborative consumption (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, pp. 71,72)

The rise of the sharing economy has opened up possibilities for people to exploit unused resources such as housing (AirBnb), mobility (Uber) and unused working spaces (Citizen space) to mention just a few. The development of a redistribution market which encourages reusing and reselling is becoming evident and considered as a sustainable type of commerce (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, pp. 72,73) and it is due to these factors we have seized the interest in this subject.

“I don't need a drill. I need a hole in my wall” (PWC, 2015, p. 17).

This was a quote that stuck to our mind which made us reflect upon sharing and more specifically, why C2C platforms such as AirBnb and Uber have rapidly increased in popularity whereas B2B platforms seemed not. The notion of that a power drill only gets used 6 to 13 minutes in its lifetime sparked reflections around other sleeping resources that may be useable and how to exploit them (EarthShare, 2012). Questions around why B2B sharing is not growing at the pace of C2C sharing emerged. Hence, an interest towards analyzing these questions in order to find answers till how and why companies could join and share on these platforms started to take place. After all, even a company may sometimes just need a hole but not a drill, so what factors do play a main part in enticing management in firms towards increased collaboration between one another?

The authors of this study have both studied Business Administration and have had an increased focus towards marketing. The common interest in the subjects led the authors to choose the field of marketing in a business to business context. Whereas we could find quite an extensive research on the C2C sharing economy as well as research regarding C2C business models, we could not find literature highlighting the integrational marketing aspect in a B2B relationships in the context of the sharing economy. Hence, the opportunity to analyze these effects deeper came at hand.

The realization that there were B2B platforms on the market brought up new perspectives in how to structure the thesis and the start of the formulation till the research question started to take place. Additionally, the limited number of practitioners participating in a B2B sharing economy setting further limited our options resulting in increased support of a qualitative study. More regarding the choice of study in the method chapter.

## 1.2 Defining the sharing economy

Defining the sharing economy is not as straightforward as one might think, there are several definitions out there which naturally results in some different views on the term sharing economy. To make it as clear as possible three definitions are discussed below that are used to derive the definition used in this study.

There are, as mentioned, several definitions out there, some more similar than others. One of them is as follows “*The peer-to-peer-based activity of obtaining, giving, or sharing the access to goods and services, coordinated through community-based online services*” (Hamari et al., 2016, p. 2047).

A similar definition that is cited by many articles in the field is: “*traditional sharing, as bartering, lending, trading, renting, gifting and swapping.*” (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, p. xv)

Another more precise definition is stated as follows, “*Collaborative consumption is people coordinating the acquisition and distribution of a resource for a fee or other compensation. By including compensation, the definition also encompasses bartering, trading, and swapping, which involve giving and receiving non-monetary compensation.*” In addition, gift giving and other services where no compensation is given is excluded from the definition (Belk, 2013, p. 1597).

This research has been inspired by above definitions while defining the concept. Thus, the sharing economy is defined as follows: *Utilization of a sleeping resource in exchange for compensation, where the sharing is mediated through a platform.*

## 1.3 The B2B sharing economy

Even though the sharing economy accounts as a relatively new phenomenon within the literature, sharing of resources between companies such as machinery in agriculture and industry, is not a new reality (Puschmann & Alt, 2016). As of previously in history the B2B sharing economy now includes, the need for corporations to lend and borrow resources in order to achieve higher performance and this can be done either through suppliers or subcontractors (Paajanen, 2017, p. 5). What is interesting regarding the topic today is though that the exponential development of technology has eased the process in how people, and thereby businesses, acquire information. Firms today, compared to previously in history, have better access to each other due to the new technology, this is also leveraged by the increased urbanization which do create optimal conditions for a prosperous sharing economy (Paajanen, 2017, p. 5; Andreotti et al., 2017, p. 29). Hence, sharing is not new but the use of the internet and the social interactions in the society to develop this new type of economy is (Gesing, 2017, p. 5), making the research of this study extremely interesting and important to write about due to the limited literature surrounding the subject in a business to business context. Vaughan and Daverio (2016)

further point this out in their report where they state that the sharing economy have today become a deep socio-economic trend which is radically change the way in how we live our lives. Businesses have come to realize that the interactional exchanges of products and services over the internet presents new and creative ideas in how to conduct a business. Furthermore, they have come to understand that there is internal efficiency to be gained by, for example, implementing logistics data sharing and on-demand staffing models (Gesing, 2017, p. 26). However, as previously stated, the C2C market with Uber and AirBnb at the front are still dominating the sharing economy, as of now. Though, according to Slagen (2014), the B2B sector is steadily growing and is expected to continue to do so. Making the essence of this study attractive for future researchers and practitioners.

A further reason behind the interest in the B2B sector is the potential this topic can contribute to society as a whole in the future. The B2B sector is of today lagging behind the C2C sector in utilizing the sharing platforms and by that, firms miss out on the opportunity to boost the circular economy (Paajanen, 2017, p. 3). Though, what is interesting according to Belk (2007, p. 137) is that businesses are the actors on the market driving the trend towards decreased materialism which is more economical and efficient in order for the firms to stay competitive.

As Slagen (2014) writes, with the development of B2B platforms firms will be enabled towards a higher focus of their strengths and weaknesses, which allows a firm to gain from their underutilized resources that then can be reinvested in their core business. Katz further points towards this in her article “Regulating the Sharing Economy” where she writes that the integration of sharing platforms lower transaction costs and provides safety guarantees (Katz, 2015, p. 1075). The relevance of this points towards the possible profits to be made by companies where the revenue increase in this platform business between the year 2014-15 was 97% (Vaughan & Daverio, 2016, p. 14). As stated, the opportunity to integrate into this type of business is vast due to the evolvement of the internet and technology following it, which limits the need for firms to own physical assets and instead provides them the ability to exchange intangible and tangible resources (Paajanen, 2017, p. 12).

In a survey discussed by Gesing (2017, p. 13), it was found that construction companies do not use 70% of their equipment. This indicates, additionally, why the topic is of importance for future research and potential use for companies.

As explained above and further supported by Gesing’s report (2017, p. 4), the sharing economy is a rapidly evolving phenomenon and is expected to generate significant growth in a near future. The expeditious development of technology in terms of the internet and digital sharing platforms, have paved the way for the B2B sector to develop in order to become a central player in the lucrative sharing economy (Paajanen, 2017, p. 3). However, the sharing economy is not only sunshine and roses but poses some challenges as well. Risk liability, insurance, transparency and workforce protection are just some topics which need to be investigated and analyzed in order for the sharing economy to functioning smoothly (Gesing, 2017, p. 26). Katz adds to this list by pointing out factors such as tax and civil rights statuses as factors also becoming confusing in the sharing economy market (Katz, 2015, p. 1068).

Another subject of interest which stirs questions about the future of the sharing economy is whether how fast people can change their mindset in accordance with the social change this type of economy bears with it (Gesing, 2017, p. 26). Another likely obstacle affecting

the speed of which the sharing economy may grow is the series of significant challenges it poses for policy makers and regulators (Vaughan & Daverio, 2014, p. 7). This new type of economical shift raises an array of legal questions since service marketplaces do not only establish beneficial gains for consumers and platforms but it also creates risks for the participants as well as the third parties because they are hard to anticipate to the already pre-established traditional legal categories (Katz, 2015, p. 1068).

However, even though Vaughan & Daverio (2014, p. 7) writes about the significant challenges for policy makers and regulators with the rise of the sharing economy, it should not be neglected that the rise of these platforms is considered an economic, cultivated growth opportunity for the European economy.

Botsman & Rogers (2010) also establish their view on the future of the sharing economy. They do argue that in the future, C2C marketplaces will be viewed upon as the people's secondary source of income by selling their excess capacity (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, p. 224). Further they argue for the shift in thinking among firms, where for example car companies will come to view themselves as a business of providing mobility and not as sellers of vehicles or in transportation (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, p. 224). In Gesing's report (2017) there is such an example where they point towards Daimler's and BMW's revolution in the car industry by acknowledging this change of industry setting and hence they have refined the B2C platforms "car2go" and "DriveNow", which gives the consumer direct access to these types of cars for point-to-point trips in which the customer then pays for by the minute (Gesing, 2017, p. 14).

Companies have acknowledged the marketing aspect of creating long-term relationships with customers by becoming more personalized, creating workshops and providing community support which is supposed to act as a marketing tool towards consumers in order to earn their trust (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, p. 220). By becoming the bridge between the community and individuals' firms will be able to gain a competitive advantage and the rise of sharing platforms have opened up thousands of opportunities by doing just that, which is beneficial across all types of businesses (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, p. 220).

### 1.3.1 The four principles of the sharing economy

Botsman & Rogers (2010, p. 75) writes in their book "What's Mine Is Yours" that at the core of the sharing economy, also named collaborative consumption, consists of four underlying principles covering it all. These are critical mass, idling capacity, belief in the commons and trust between strangers. The importance here is to realize that no one is more important than the other and that they all must coexist in order for the sharing economy to work.

First, with critical mass, Botsman and Rogers are trying to define an existence of momentum working within a system to make it become self-sustaining, which relates to choices, or more precisely satisfaction and convenience (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, p. 75). To simplify, in order for the sharing economy to work, there must exist convenient choices, so the customer becomes satisfied.

For the second principle, Botsman & Rogers (2010, p. 83) points towards idling capacity, and exemplifies this by stating that 80% of the items owned by American citizens are used less than once a month, highlighting the unused amount of resources humans

(Americans) possesses and how to redistribute these somewhere else where they can be used. After the financial collapse in 2008, it emerged a need to cut down on customer costs and this in contrast with the technological advancements resulted in a symbiotic relationship between firms and consumers to develop innovative ideas on how to pool and share resources, which would otherwise be left idle (Habibi et al, 2017, p. 114). This is, according to Habibi et al (2017), the foundation till why the sharing economy has boomed the way it has in the recent years.

The third principle describes the idea of the commons. Botsman & Rogers (2010, pp. 88,89,90) here points towards the human evolution as sharing individuals and that we started to embrace the concept of private property in Europe and America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but by the rise of digitalization we have recognized that provided value to the common, enables our own expanded value in return. Hence, we are starting to get more and more familiar with the term “we need to give to get” (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, p.90).

The fourth and last principle of a well-functioning sharing economy is trust between strangers. All types of sharing require trust towards someone we might not know. Just think about getting in a car with someone driving for Uber or offering your house for rent to a total stranger over Airbnb. To illustrate the dynamic of a C2C sharing platform like Uber the following model was produced;

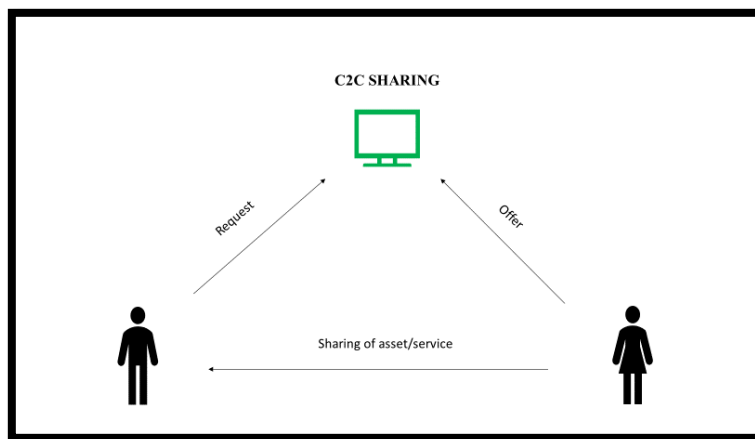


Figure 1 – Created by authors

Where there is a customer in need of something and therefore sends a request, which is sent to the C2C platform which in turn redistributes the named request towards the third party who will receive the request as a potential offer. He or she in turn can accept or decline the specific request resulting in potential sharing of an asset or service. This is a typical example covering all four listed principles from Botsman & Rogers which have contributed to the sharing economy’s success story. However, this is a C2C scenario though the fundamental idea here is that it should not be any different in a B2B scenario. By looking at the constructed model below;



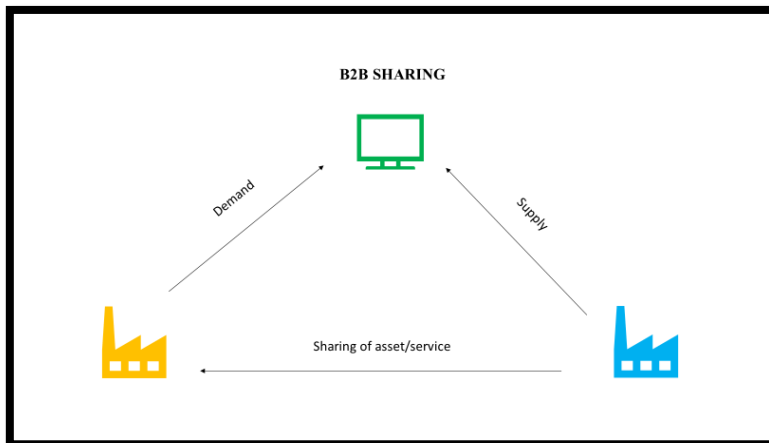


Figure 2 - Created by the authors

one can tell that the process of sharing is fundamentally the same. Company (yellow) has a demand which is distributed through the platform towards several companies where company (blue) is acquiring the specific demand and supplies company (yellow) by sharing the asset or service. The similarities in transactions makes the two cases suitable to compare with one another and hence there exists an opportunity to compare existing literature from a C2C point of view, with qualitative B2B data.

### 1.3.2 Prototype of a B2B Platform

It is important to acknowledge that B2B sharing as a phenomenon is relatively new and therefore it exists only a few established platforms on the market. Umigo has kindly shared some pictures of their prototype platform, the Umigo platform might be changed in many ways before their official release, but it is a great way of showing how a B2B platform could look.

At a surface level Umigo in some instances look similar to rental services like CRAMO, where one can rent tools and machinery. However, the supply looks completely different between the two. CRAMO acquire a stock of tools and other equipment for the sole purpose of renting it out. In contrast, the supply on Umigo consist of assets already owned by the members, the supply on Umigo is all about increasing the usage rate of an already owned asset.

Vindkraftcentrum provides their version of Umigo in order to match the different parties involved in the construction of wind parks as shown in the *Figure 3* and *Figure 4* below.

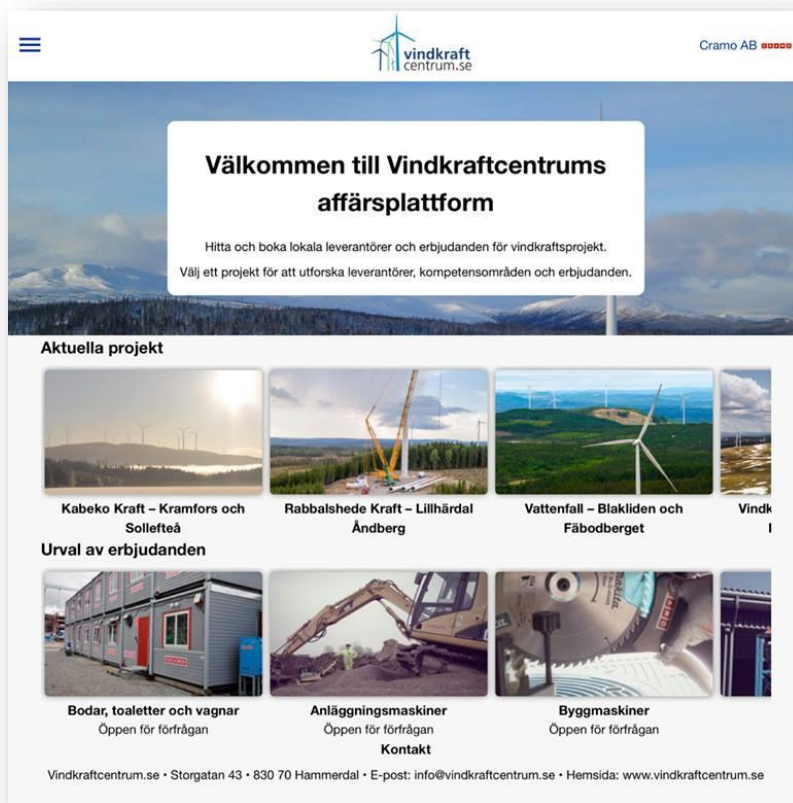


Figure 3 - Created by the authors

The platform displayed in *Figure 3* and *Figure 4* shows a version of Umigo that is tailored to meet Vindkraftcentrums needs. *Figure 3* displays how the platform looks from the overview page, where the user can get a quick glance of the *current projects* and *offers*.

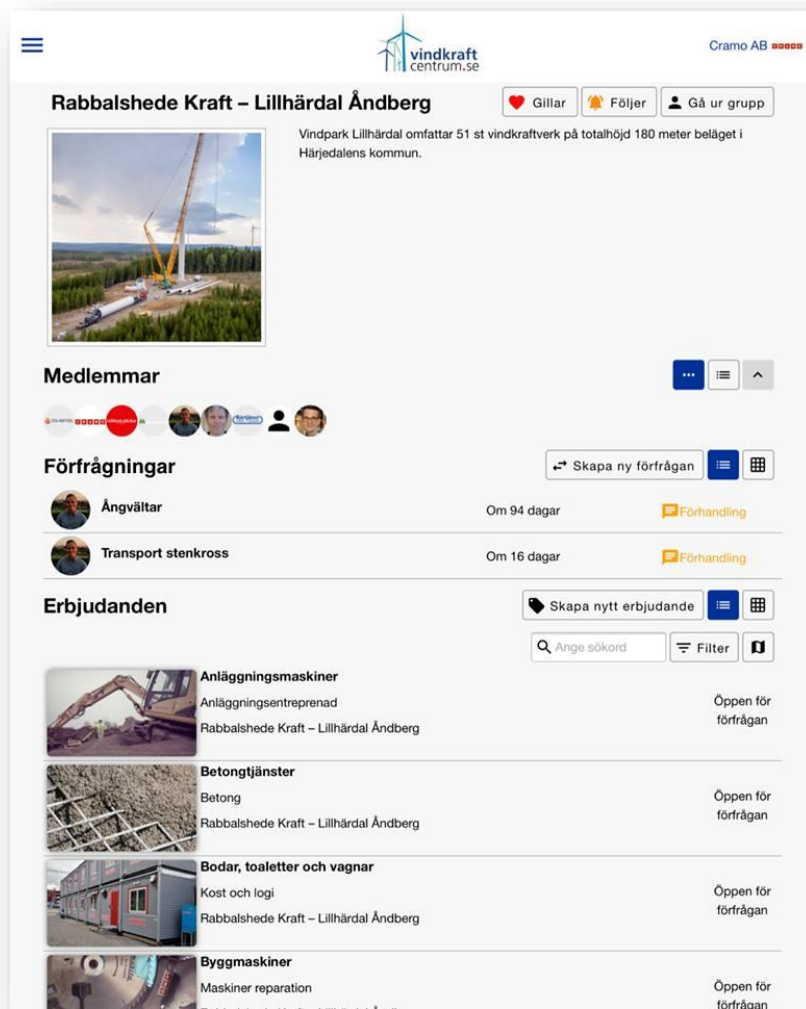


Figure 4 - Created by the authors

Figure 4 showcases the group view for the project “Rabbalshede Kraft – Lillhärda Åndberg”, where the different members of the group can be part of both the resource supply as well as the resource demand. Therefore, the platform will create an interesting dynamic where a firm can quickly swap from the demand side to the supply side. The logic is that a firm provides a supply by creating *offers* in the form of services or goods on the platform, but they can also be on the demand side by utilizing others *offers* or by creating a service or good *request* on the platform.

## 1.4 Theoretical Background

One could imagine that the next logical step for the sharing economy is to conquer the B2B market (Slagen, 2014; Paajanen, 2017, p. 3). To explore how sharing platforms can attract businesses, the focus is on factors that either drives or hinder the sharing economy. Due to a lack of academic literature on the sharing economy in a B2B context, the factors will be derived from current literature on the C2C sharing economy. Furthermore, data will be collected from interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the B2B situation. The barriers and the drivers in the C2C sharing economy have been investigated in several papers where firms such as AirBnb, Uber and Lyft are regularly used as prime examples.

Factors that drives the sharing economy are the financial benefits which stems from increased efficiency when sharing compared to traditional exchange of goods and services (Guttentag, 2015, p. 705; Pesonen, 2018, p. 706). Furthermore, collaborative consumption increases local consumption and decreases the use of raw materials which ties into sustainability. In addition, convenience is considered as a main driver for participation in the sharing economy (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, pp. 73,216; Luchs et al., 2011, p. 5). However, there are some barriers involved with the uncertainty in how sharing should be treated from a legal perspective, there have been problems in areas such as tax, insurance and employment (Munkøe, 2017, pp. 41,44). These concerns are very real, for example Relay Rides which is a C2C car sharing business had insurance up to 1 million USD, and one of their customers crashed and caused damages of 1,3 million USD in damages (Lieber, 2012) which resulted in complications and raised awareness for the insurance issues at play (Katz, 2015, p. 1069). Lack of trust also ties into this uncertainty, trust is a major obstacle that needs to be dealt with, Airbnb have made efforts to tackle this problem with the help of trust building features like a review system (Guttentag, 2015, p. 1195).

Based on the theoretical background presented above, four factors that act as potential drivers or barriers for participation in the sharing economy are identified, namely, convenience, financial, sustainability and uncertainty. The study analyzes and explores whether the factors affect management enthusiasm and which ones entice or deter management towards participation in the sharing economy. The four factors will be analyzed with the help from previous literature on the sharing economy in a C2C setting and then compared with qualitative data in form of interviews in a B2B context in order to find out what the content of the factors towards management participation is. In addition, the goal is to present a conclusion explaining how B2B platforms can use these results in order to improve their target marketing. A qualitative approach with interviews is used to answer the research question. The reasoning is that qualitative research is more suitable for investigating motivation and the context, the why and how (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 402). Furthermore, it would have been hard to quantify the desired results and the decision to work with semi-structured interviews will allow for much more unique and insightful conversations. (Rich & Ginsburg, 1999, pp. 371,373)

## 1.5 Purpose

From the topic of interest in relation to the theoretical background the following purpose is presented;

The purpose with this paper is to determine how B2B sharing platforms can improve their target marketing, by determining what components of the factors convenience, financial, sustainable and uncertainty, entice or deter management to participate in the B2B sharing economy.

## 1.6 Research question;

From the purpose the following research question is derived;

Why and to what extent do the factors convenience, financial, sustainable and uncertainty entice or deter management participation in the B2B sharing economy?

## 1.7 Knowledge contribution

The sharing economy as a whole has exploded in the last couple of years and is predicted to continue, one only has to look at firms like Uber and Airbnb to see the potential (Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017, p. 3). Despite these huge firms, a report from Pew Research Center from 2016 showed that 73% of Americans do not know the term “sharing economy” (Smith, 2016). This fact underlines the huge untapped potential still there for the taking.

### 1.7.1 Theoretical Contribution

Prior research has investigated the sharing economy from various angles, however, previous research is almost exclusively focused on the sharing economy in a C2C context. There is a clear gap when it comes to research in the B2B sharing economy which this thesis aims to help fill. Furthermore, the area investigated in the study is relatively unexplored, hence, there is further research here to be done and this thesis can act as a basis for further studies within the field.

As such, this thesis can contribute with theoretical insights in how further research can be conducted. This thesis compares C2C literature in the sharing economy with qualitative interviews where the respondents have knowledge regarding B2B sharing. As this phenomenon is very new, we believe new perceptions and insights will be gained by a larger mass of people in a near future. Hence, research opportunities will grow within the field. This thesis can then be used as a foundation for comparison with those new findings.

### 1.7.2 Practical Contribution

Research on this unexplored but relevant area can assist future research in order to further develop an understanding of how to attract businesses to enter the B2B sharing economy. Furthermore, the research can be utilized for practical use by firms, in terms of developing marketing strategies and use cases for themselves. We are confident that the research is of great interests for many firms who wish to enter the B2B sharing in the capacity of a platform or as a participant. Hence, the results from this thesis can contribute with a deeper understanding regarding what motivates managers to push for participation in B2B sharing, further, B2B platforms may use the results in marketing purposes. In addition, the results can be used by communities striving for a more efficient, sustainable society by encouraging sharing.

## 2.0 Theoretical Method

*This chapter presents the theoretical view applied on the study. First, the motivation for the research strategy is presented, and followed by a description of the different perspectives considered when designing the research. Further, the reasoning behind the choice of the subject is discussed. Lastly, the source criticism and the literature search of the study is discussed.*

### 2.1 Ontology

When doing research within the societal nature, it is imperative for the researcher to be aware of the type of ontology taken whether that view of reality is subjective or viewed upon as an external reality. Foremost, there are two types of ontological perspectives acknowledged in literature which are objectivism and constructionism (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 20).

Objectivism is a philosophy which view our reality as external and thereby means that when conducting research, the researcher needs to look at the social phenomena from an external point of view and by that indicates that these phenomena are beyond our reach of influence (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 21). Positivists do exercise this perspective of an external and objective reality and means that everyone possess the same sense of a tangible reality (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 21; Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 47).

Constructionism on the other hand challenges this ontological viewpoint and means that there are occasions where phenomena's cannot be viewed upon from an external reality (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 21). Though there exist a social reality, it is not constant, and it is always open for change and drivers might not only be tangible but intangible as well (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 21). Interpretivists exercise this perspective pointing out that the social reality is subjective due to that the reality is socially constructed (Collis & Hussey, 2011, p. 47). Hence indicating that it is impossible to decide upon a common reality for all individuals but rather view each individual as an own entity capable of forming their own realities and that these are open for change (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 47; Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 22).

We have decided that due to the new context of the B2B sharing economy it would be insufficient to take an objectivistic ontological stance because of our point of view that the social reality is not constant and in the developing process of the B2B sharing economy it is open for change. Hence, we conduct the research from the point of view that social reality is subjective and that drivers may not only be tangible but intangible as well. This point of view will act as the foundation till how this thesis will be developed and looked upon.

### 2.2 Epistemology

Epistemological issues take into consideration what should be regarded as acceptable knowledge whether the classical natural sciences should be regarded as acceptable knowledge within a discipline or if a more participative inquire is to prefer (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 15; Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 47). There are two disciplines here which are identified which are positivism and interpretivism.

While positivists tend to argue for that acceptable knowledge can only come from observations which can be measured by having an independent and objective stance, interpretivists on the other hand try to gather acceptable knowledge by participative inquiry by minimizing the distance between themselves and what is researched (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 47). Interpretivism was born as an argumentation against the more traditional view of natural sciences in form of the positivistic stance and hence means that subjectivity matters (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 16).

Due to that the sharing economy in a B2B setting is not formally socially recognized yet and that the focus of this report is to determine what entices or deters management towards participation in the B2B sharing economy, an interpretivist approach will be taken. Since one of our respondents may have another opinion regarding motivational drivers than the other, one cannot say that an independent and objective stance can provide sufficient acceptable knowledge reflecting all of our respondents. Hence, the interpretivist approach is according to us the approach which best suits the purpose of this study.

## 2.3 Logic of the Research

The deductive and the inductive approach is a process of classifying the logic of a research project (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 3). The process of deduction is described in Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 11) where they try to visualize that a research starts with a theory in which the researcher needs to formulate a hypothesis. Then by gathering the data the researcher can come up with specific findings and thereby confirm or reject their given hypothesis. From these results then, a confirmation or revision of the fundamental theory can be made. The deductive approach is the most common one of the two and here the researcher develops a conceptual and theoretical structure of the study and later tests these theories by their results gathered (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 11; Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 7). Hence, in a deductive approach the researcher moves from the more general to become more specific with their research (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 7). In an inductive approach on the other hand, the process is reversed. Here a theory becomes developed by the researcher's observation of the empirical reality and hence the researcher moves from individual observations to reflect general patterns of law (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 7).

By adopting a deductive approach to our thesis, we would have to deduce a hypothesis or hypothesize which later would be tested against empirical scrutiny. Since, as previously stated, the B2B sharing economy is a new phenomenon it would have been possible to conduct a deductive logic with a qualitative strategy in order to compare empirical results with our hypothesis. However, we felt it necessary to be open minded due to the rather complex formulation to the definition of the B2B sharing economy, we felt that formulating a hypothesis would limit the progress and findings of the research. Hence, a deductive approach was neglected.

Since, on the other hand, an inductive approach tries to generalize previous results to formulate current theories, we felt that we would not have to limit potential findings of the research and instead theories could be developed as themes and patterns were presented. Therefore, an inductive approach was chosen due to the exploratory process surrounding the research in order to thoroughly find the main factors that entice or deter management towards participation in the B2B sharing economy. Hence, the hope with this study is to contribute in the growing field of the B2B sharing economy by providing

a solid theoretical model. Which could act as a source of inspiration for use of B2B platforms and future research and we believe an inductive approach can contribute with that.

## 2.4 Strategy of Research

When conducting research, it is common that the researchers takes a qualitative or a quantitative approach which will help the focus of the research (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 5). Whereas some researchers prefer to look or gather statistics to make general conclusions to a population (quantitative), other researchers prefer collecting qualitative data and analyze it using interpretative methods (qualitative) (Collis & Hussey, 2014, pp. 5, 6). There is an extensive amount of literature arguing for which type of approach results in higher quality. Though the choice of strategy is most often depending on the nature of research as well as the researchers own philosophical preferences (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 6). However, there exist benefits and limitations with both strategies.

In a quantitative study the researcher emphasize quantification over the qualification which most often results in a deductive form of orientation (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 68). Sometimes, the researcher uses previous data in order to provide an answer to his or her research question, and sometimes he or she need to establish new designs which involves a plan on how to collect new data (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 5). While a lot of students find it harder to start a quantitative study due to the uncertainty of connecting statistics and providing the design, they find it easier to conduct the analysis due to the logical structure this strategy provides (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 6). With that in mind, we do not think it is accurate to view social reality as singular and objective, but rather thinks it is more comprehensive. Hence, investigation within the new phenomena of B2B sharing economy needs to be put in a social context, therefore it was decided to use a qualitative strategy in this study. A further argument to the choice of strategy is also the lack of statistical material in relation to the investigation at focus, making the qualitative strategy choice further adequate. Since the investigation at hand is such a new phenomenon and there only are a few B2B platforms on the global market, a qualitative strategy gives us a deeper understanding from a social context in why or if, these factors of interest are imperative or not.

Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 68) writes, in contrast to a quantitative study that a qualitative study focuses on the interpretation of words instead of statistics which fundamentally is founded on secondary theories and compared with interviews. This strategy hence suggest for that making statistical conclusions about people in a social phenomenon is not accurate enough to reflect the reality and therefore loses relevance in academic purposes due to that people being studied are capable of their own reflections (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 402). Researchers using a qualitative strategy are highly concerned with explanations and needs to find answer to “why” something is, the way it is (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 403). Hence this strategy reflects our interest in finding out what factors are enticing management towards participation and why. Furthermore, according to Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 405-406) the flexibility and limited structure in a qualitative strategy opens perspectives on the case being studied during the study process. Here Bryman & Bell (2011) argue for that the limitation with a quantitative study is that certain decisions must be made about what it is to be encountered hence losing the possibility to adopt to the world being studied. In our case, we want the respondents to freely talk about their associations with this new emerging phenomenon and do not want to put any



inceptions upon whether that be that one variable is more important than another. Thus, in a qualitative study we can ask open questions in contrast to a quantitative study where the questions are more specific (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 406).

However, Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 408) also posts some limitations to use a qualitative study. These are;

*Qualitative research is to subjective*

Here the strategy gets critique because of the strategy's unstructured views about what is important. Further because that the personal relationships established are applied overall with the people studied.

*Difficulty in replicating*

Since there are no standard procedures to be followed in a qualitative strategy and the researcher himself/herself is the instrument of data gathering, it makes it severely hard to replicate the results.

*Problems of generalization*

When using a qualitative study, data is often gathered from a couple of respondents in form of different interviews.

*Lack of Transparency*

There often seem to be a continuous problem in qualitative studies that the reader cannot grasp what the researcher did and how he or she arrived at the conclusion as well as understanding how the analysis was formulated (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 409).

## 2.5 Literature search

After the authors of this study found the sharing economy in a B2B setting to be of common interest, thorough and systematic literature research started. Firstly, we wanted to find out if there had been any previous research in the area and then furthermore if there were any research on that specific topic.

The search started on Umeå University library database where keywords were identified. From the beginning, "Sharing Economy" was the search term, however, this resulted in an immense amount of literature which gave us further insights within the topic.

Though, as the search term "Sharing Economy" provided such an extensive amount of research, our keyword was developed to "Sharing Economy Motivation" in order to find out what previous research had been done in relation to motivational factors. As described in previous chapters, there was quite an extensive amount of literature focusing on motivational drivers in the sharing economy, though they had a C2C perspective.

Secondly, terms such as "B2B sharing Economy" and "Motivational factors in a B2B sharing economy" was used when trying to find previous research in the area. Though after the realization that there were no previous qualitative studies researching motivational factors in relation to the sharing economy in a B2B setting, we started to look at the previous studies done in a C2C setting. In order to determine if a link between C2C and B2B could be established.

Except for Umeå University Library, Google Scholar was the main source of literature which was used more heavily than Umeå University library database due to its higher coverage.

Scientific articles have mainly been used throughout the whole study in order to provide academical relevance to our study. Extra attention was paid towards finding the original source when looking through previous literature, in order to avoid misconceptions and wrongly interpreted translations from other authors. However, some of the theories were originated from non-accessible accounts hence in those cases it was referred to the source of inspiration where it first was found. Reports have also been used to support statistical claims and argumentations though they do not act as the fundamental resource of theory establishment.

The theories we have chosen for our research is connected to the main factors of convenience, financial, sustainability and uncertainty. In addition, we have located sub-factors within the literature which will impact the main factors. Due to a lack of available literature with a focus on B2B sharing, we have resorted to theories based on C2C sharing. However, this can be very interesting since we can compare current C2C literature with expert opinions on B2B sharing, hence, we can determine differences in what drives B2B sharing compared to C2C sharing. In addition, there is a gap in the research when it comes to B2B sharing. Therefore, we are convinced that we can contribute with something truly unique and genuinely useful.

## 2.6 Source criticism

According to Umeå University, it is important to have a critical mind and asking questions when evaluating, analyzing, reflecting and making conclusions (Umeå University, 0:25). One method of this is critical reading which states that one needs to be engaged, reflect and put in relation to other academic articles within the same area. (Umeå University, 1:00). In order to cover all aspects of critical reading, Umeå University has conducted six steps to follow when evaluating a source. By following these steps, the chosen papers and theories can be critically evaluated. This has hence acted as an underlying principle for us to follow during the whole process in order to increase the credibility of the study. Further, a more developed understanding of the six steps presented by Umeå University follows below;

### *Background*

There are four categories which the researchers need to take into account when reading a potential source. Firstly, one needs to determine who has written the text, what genre it is, what the target audience is and when the source was published and from there evaluate if this specific source is applicable to your case. (Umeå University, 2:09).

### *Purpose of the text*

Here the researcher needs to understand what the author of the source wants to formulate with his or her publication and whether the text looks legit (Umeå University, 3:00).

### *Proof*

How have the authors of the sources got their results and how are their conclusions on the case in relation with other sources? These are further imperative questions the researcher must ask himself or herself when evaluating the relevance of the source, to determine

whether the conclusions are valid and sufficient as well as acknowledging the choice of theory. (Umeå University, 4:10).

#### *Methodology*

How has the research been conducted and why has the specific method been chosen? (Umeå University, 4:49).

#### *Balance*

No text is perfectly neutrally written. However, by acknowledging that the author of the text is looking at different perspectives and are arguing against, or for different arguments, the validity of the text is strengthened as well as its trustworthiness. (Umeå University, 6:00).

#### *The relation to other sources*

When assessing the relevance of a paper one need to compare the text with other similar sources and look over how these behave to one another. Is the proof that the author has determined and presented open for other types of interpretation and how up do date is the proof? Depending on the topic, a lot can be altered in a short time period, therefore it becomes crucial to reflect upon whether there might exist more modern proof. (Umeå University, 6:52).

Except for the criticism used above when developing this thesis, it is important to highlight that the use of more than one source per theory has been used. This is due to the fact that methods and strategies are used substantially different depending on the author. Hence, in order to increase this paper's validity and reliability at least two or more sources have been used throughout this thesis.

### 3.0 Theoretical Frame of reference

Firstly, there is a short presentation of the sharing economy which will finish with a reflection on why we choose the given theories and how they contribute to our research. Further, our theories are based on established literature in a C2C setting due to the lack of research in a B2B context. In addition, figure 6 has been developed to help guide the reader through the chapter to summarize the framework in a digestible manner.

#### 3.1 Theoretical introduction

The phenomena of sharing have been around for a very long time, people have always been sharing in one way or another (Sahlins, 1972). However, the sharing economy is unique for the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the sense that it is driven with the help of sharing platforms, and these platforms are changing how people consume all over the world (Hawlitschek et al., 2016, p. 26). The sharing economy is growing, and many recognize that its role as a major player in the global economy is imminent. One can already see a large demand for the sharing economy in fields such as transport, labor, logistics, retail to name a few (Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017, pp. 2,6).

However, there are obstacles and some ethical dilemmas, if one look at rideshare companies like Uber and Lyft they do not only accumulate value by the money earned by rides, they also access heaps of data which in today's society is very valuable. Some data is reasonable to collect, like destination and origin of trips. On the other hand, data can be analyzed to track people, further, this information can be used to price discriminate by determining ones price sensitivity at a given location or time (Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017, pp. 15,16). As one can see in above paragraphs there are positive predictions and prophecies regarding the sharing economy, but there are quite a few obstacles along the way as well. Which is discussed later in the paper.

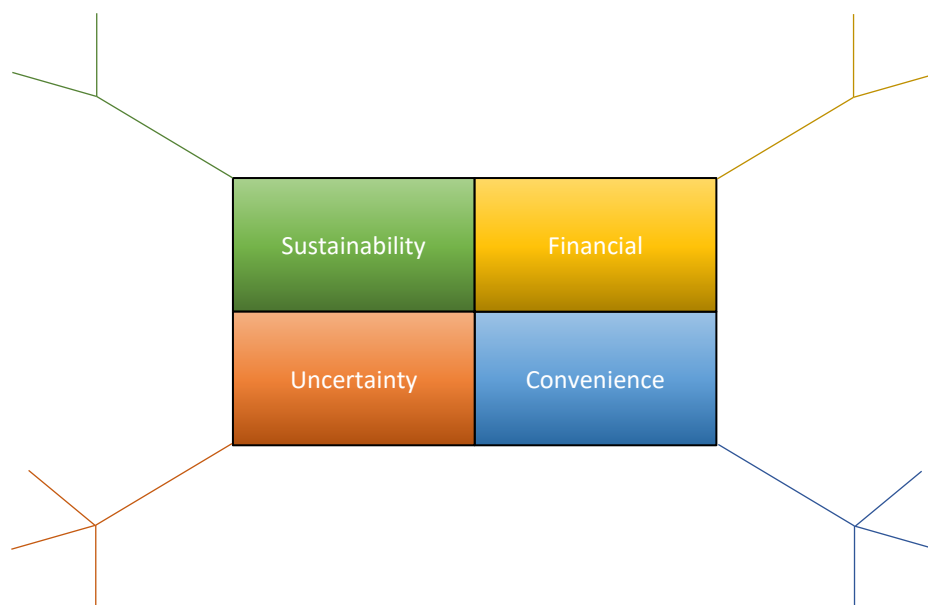


Figure 5 - Created by the authors

The above model describes the core elements of the theoretical framework, in the following sections each factor and its sub-factors are discussed in depth.

## 3.2 Convenience

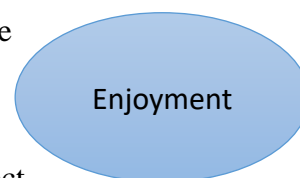
Convenience as a contributing factor for participation in the sharing economy is a wide and well-anchored topic in previous research (Belk, 2007; Botsman & Rogers, 2010; Hamari et al., 2016; Matzler et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2018, p. 9). Convenience as a term is defined as “The state of being able to proceed with something without difficulty” (OxfordLivingDictionaries, n.d), and is hence subject for several different opinions, therefore, it is investigated further. As such, due to the vast scientifically research surrounding the sharing economy and because of the literature findings which displays that convenience plays a major role in participative motivation, convenience as a factor is, in this study, one of four factors subject for further interest.

From an EU research project focusing on participation in the sharing economy, it was found that literature established that there exist several motives that drive people into participation in the sharing economy, though instrumental motives, social-hedonic motives and normative motives seem to be the most prominent ones (Andreotti et al., 2017, p. 30). Where the authors exemplify instrumental motives with monetary and convenience, social-hedonic motives with community and fun, and normative motives with altruism and sustainability.

It is imperative to realize when reading this section that convenience is subjugated in other research from different angles. While Hamari et al. (2016) talk about convenience in relation with enjoyment, Zhang et al. (2018) talk about how technology increase the level of convenience while on the other hand Botsman & Rogers (2010) talks about convenience as a fundamental, underlying principle for a well-functioning sharing economy.

### 3.2.1 Enjoyment

Hamari et al. (2016) write about enjoyment of participation as the strongest determinant for active participation in the sharing economy, where they found enjoyment and internalized ideological reasons to be two main intrinsic motivations (Hamari et al., 2016, p. 2056). Here they argue that the convenience aspect in the sharing economy is a heavy determinant of attitude, and points towards making the whole participation pleasurable, communal and ideological to hinder oppositions and that this is possible through making the process of the sharing economy enjoyable (Hamari et al., 2016, p. 2056). The curiosity of the human nature in relation with the new technological development creates a fun atmosphere in which people like to participate since it is fun, and it further enhances the relationship with other people in the community (Hamari et al., 2016, p. 2055). As Hamari et al. (2016) then further states in their summary, that services offered by sharing platforms must try to establish some kind of pleasure by using the platform since enjoyment is an important motivator for participation (Hamari et al., 2016, p. 2057).



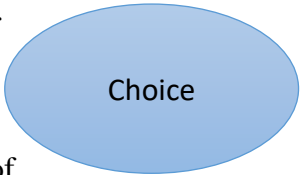
### 3.2.2 Technology

On the other hand, Zhang et al. (2018, p. 13) found in their qualitative study, where they have a focus on the technical aspects of the sharing economy, that convenience in terms of location, flexibility, and timing are important features. The authors have tried to derive different factors to decide what makes the sharing economy successful. In their study, they focused on the technological development which the sharing economy may bring with it, hence, this could ease the process for the consumer by making it more convenient. Zhang et al. (2018) further point to this when they write that other technical developments in the sharing economy which are perceived by consumers are convenience features. Where for example the consumer want convenience in terms of getting answers to questions, quick and convenient access to information and professional service quality (Zhang et al., 2018, p. 13). Except for problem-solving features and the other convenience factors mentioned, the consumer further desire responsiveness (Zhang et al., 2018, p. 13). However, what is worth stating is that the authors in their study find costs, communication and convenience to be the three major drivers creating value in the sharing economy (Zhang et al., 2018, p. 9). Matzler et al. (2015) further highlight the importance of technology which has made the internet and the sharing economy more convenient. In their paper, they write that these phenomena's might be the solution to unit cost reduction, benefit augmentation, convenience, and environmental consciousness to become one mode of consumption (Matzler et al., 2015). While Hansen further claims that without sharing platforms as we have today, the transaction costs of contracting, contacting and searching, would be too high for this kind of commercial markets to flourish (Hansen & Iwona, 2016, p. 2). Which further features the importance the technical development adds to the convenience factor.



### 3.2.3 Choice

As described by Botsman & Rogers (2010), there are four underlying principles covering the function of the sharing economy. The reason to why we have chosen to include "Convenience" as a main factor in our study is due to that Botsman & Rogers states in their text that critical mass is one of those four principles (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, p. 75). Critical mass in turn relates to choice, and hence "Convenience" as an important factor to take into consideration was identified. Due to that convenience and enjoyment in turn plays a main role for a consumers choice. Imagine walking into a clothing store and you have 50 different T-shirts to choose from. In order for you to choose one specific T-shirt out of the 50 there must be something special with that one T-shirt to grab your attention. However, if the T-shirt is behind the worker's desk in the store you may disregard it and chose another one due to the potential dilemmas which might follow by asking for that specific T-shirt. Hence, it is more convenient for you to choose another one though you had the choice to buy it.



So, in traditional shopping as well as in sharing, Botsman & Rogers (2010, p. 76) points out that there must be enough choice so the consumer feels satisfied with what is accessible but in order to choose the accessible there must also exist convenience.

We do not want a CD, we want the music it plays.  
We do not want the DVD, we want the movie it carries.

Humans do often take the easy way and sharing platforms such as CitizenSpace who offers working spaces, TaskRunner who puts people in correlation with one another to fix different kind of errands, ParkatMyHouse who provide parking space opportunities from people willing to lend theirs out to people who need it, do all offer convenience in terms of making people' everyday life a bit easier and smoother (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, p. 73). This in turn, has a kind of social domino-effect were we as humans become compelled to continue the sharing when someone has previously shared with us, though this not really have to be the same person (Belk, 2007, p. 133).

Based on the theories presented above, convenience is recognized to be a vital driving factor for motivation in the sharing economy, hence, these findings are compared with the qualitative findings.

### 3.3 Financial

As well as convenience, financial factors are widely recognized in several theories and even though the theories of interest have different approaches and angles in their research, there is an overall strong indication that the financial factor is an important contributor to participation in the sharing economy (Hamari et al., 2016, p. 2055; Frenken & Schor, 2017, p. 3; Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017, p. 4; Belk, 2007, p. 3). Different authors take different angles when it comes to researching motivational factors in the sharing economy, as such we have identified some key financial theories that are presented below.

#### 3.3.1 Economic Benefits

Hamari et al. (2016) found in their survey that financial benefits, such as saving money and time, had a significant impact on behavioral intentions. However, what they also discovered was that when it came to sharing in a C2C setting, it seemed to have only a small impact on attitude (Hamari et al., 2016, p. 2055).



Hence, they concluded that as long as there was a reasonable number of products on the market (remember Botsman & Rogers underlying principle, critical mass) with relatively low prices, people did not seem interested in adopting sharing in a C2C setting (Hamari et al., 2016, p. 2055). As stated in the introduction part of this study, the financial crisis brought people to seek economic benefits wherever they could be found and here the sharing platforms offered an alternative mode of consumption which could help save money (Hamari et al., 2016, pp. 2055, 2056).

Whereas Hamari et al. (2016) write about the financial aspect by contrasting attitudes and intentions, Belk (2007) further contributes to the relative importance of economic factors as a driver of motivation. He writes in his article "Why not Share Rather than Own" that people today have evolved from a socially conscious type of beings to a being that prioritizes financial capital, and by that he means that we have supplanted trust in humans and replaced it with trust in money (Belk, 2007, p. 135). It should be no new news by now that the sharing economy is creating an enormous amount of wealth, and corporations are not slow to recognize the economic benefits that they stand to gain from potential adoption to this new type of economy (Belk, 2007, p. 137; Frenken & Schor, 2017, p. 3; Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017, p. 4). In order for virtual firms to stay competitive, they need to adapt to these changes, which they also have started to do by outsourcing as heavily as possible, though not their brand names (Belk, 2007, p. 137). As Yaraghi &

Ravi (2017, p. 3) write, the sharing economy is expected to grow from a value of \$14 billion in 2014 to a value of \$335 billion in 2025. That immense growth will undoubtedly attract the attention of many corporations and entrepreneurs which makes the factor relevant for our study.

### 3.3.2 Transaction Costs

Another topic of interest for many scholars is transaction costs in relation to the sharing economy. One of the articles discussing this topic heavily is Habibi et al. (2017) in “What managers should know about the sharing economy”. The argument is that the integration of digital platforms, as a result of evolved technology, have decreased transaction costs of such as searching, contacting and contracting (Habibi et al., 2017, p. 2). In order to achieve sharing on a mass scale, sharing costs have to be low otherwise people chose an easier alternative. The sharing economy have sometimes lowered these costs in comparison with the more conventional businesses, therefore the authors write that the transaction cost approach must be central towards the evolvement of sharing on a mass scale (Habibi et al, 2017, p. 2). Thus, they argue that these new incarnated platforms make the exchange of goods and services available which otherwise would not due to the high costs of searching. Rifikin (cited by Habibi et al, p. 11) radically argues for the potential rise of a zero marginal cost society where he puts this idea in relation to the rise of the sharing economy. This could result in easier access to markets for smaller companies because of the smaller barriers of entry when transaction costs shrink, which on the other hand, also can benefit large businesses (Habibi et al., 2017, p. 13). This is, according to Habibi et al. (2017), a potential paradox which is open for further research of potential consequences. The financial factor creates motivation for companies for potential profits for both small and large companies. In addition, the sharing economy will either be distributed over more actors, or it may also undermine the capitalist economy making the bigger firms bigger (Habibi et al., 2017, p. 13). Yaraghi & Ravi (2017) touches upon this topic when they write about monopolies and competition. They argue that there exists a switching cost in the sharing economy although maybe not as high as in a social network (Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017, p. 19). Specifically, there exist three costs associated with switching to another platform which are:



1. *Training and learning*

2. *Time*

3. *Trust*

(Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017, p. 19).

Imagine the case of Uber and Zipcar. If a person would have been using Uber for a time but suddenly felt the need of changing to Zipcar, there will then, according to Yaraghi & Ravi, progress costs with this choice. Changing to something new requires an adoption to the new processes in how the app operates which takes training and time. Furthermore, the person would most likely have established trust towards the app and the drivers picking you up whereas that trust needs to be rebuilt when converting, in this case, to Zipcar. Hence, trust is also reflected upon as a cost (Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017, p. 19). Apart from the three costs established by Yaraghi & Ravi above, Lamberton & Rose (2012, p. 111) adds the tangible cost by including the membership fee or periodic access fees costs. In their theory, they write that by minimizing the costs associated with sharing and



maximizing the utility of ownership, the likelihood of choosing a specific sharing system increases (Lamberton & Rose, 2012, p. 111).

However, the ideal is that the sharing economy will be shining through positively on its financial effects (Frenken & Schor, 2017, p. 6). When there is a change of an unused asset between two parties, both parties' benefit. The lender of the unused asset does not acquire any high costs since he or she does not need the product at the moment, whereas the borrower gets access to an asset without paying the full price as would have been the case in a traditional store. Hence, customer welfare in this case has increased and it can thus be directly related to the low transaction costs (Frenken & Schor, 2017, p. 6).

It is imperative to acknowledge how transaction costs effects and touches on the financial spectrum. Sundararajan (2014) provides a theory which helps us do just that. The new phenomenon of the sharing economy and the fact that there is very little scientific research regarding its effects, makes most predictions of consequences only available in literature. Hence Sundararajan is discussing anticipated economic effects which stem from the theory that the economic impacts are a consequence of the low market transaction costs (Sundararajan, 2014, pp. 4, 5). These anticipated economic effects are:

1. *Expansion in Consumption*
  2. *Productivity Gains*
  3. *Entrepreneurship and Innovation*
  4. *The emergence of "invisible work"*
  5. *Shifts in asset markets*
- (Sundararajan, 2014, pp. 5, 6).

The ability for firms to post a request for a product or service on a platform, opens up the demand and availability of freelancers. Hence, for a manager in a company that needs help with a certain task but do not have the budget to hire new personnel, this option becomes rather attractive since he or she then can hire the most qualified individuals (Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017, p. 20). For firms, this means that they can save their physical resources and spend the amount for a specific service in which they are in a need of (Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017, p. 20). This is, according to Yaraghi & Ravi, one of the most unique features with the sharing economy that it is so flexible in how they serve their contractors (Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017, p. 8). Productivity gains can be seen in the way that sharing economy platforms price discriminate. While traditional business still uses targeted coupons as a way of price discrimination, sharing economy platforms can use machine learning algorithms which are way more accurate and hence expand in consumption (Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017, p. 16).

### 3.4 Sustainability

Sustainability can differ greatly based on the situation as well as if it is used in an economic, social or ecological sense. There are many ways of seeing sustainability, hence, there are many ways of defining it. Though, themes that are reoccurring are that sustainability supports human life on earth at the same time as protecting the earth's resources (Brown et al., 1987, pp. 713, 717).

We came to think of a couple of examples that showcase the differences between sustainability contexts. For a car producer, it can be to invest in environmentally friendly

technologies to improve their engines, whereas for an energy producer it can be to invest in solar power, and for the consumer, it could be something as simple as purchasing goods that are produced locally. In addition, sustainable actions do not necessarily need to be tied to a business operation. It could be helping the community by building playgrounds for the neighborhood. Firms have some creative ways of compensating for their pollution, one way is planting trees like the Swedish fast food chain Max has done, they even overcompensate which have made them to one of the few firms that are climate positive (MAX, 2018).

The idea of fulfilling human needs at the same time as ensuring the earth's wellbeing is at the core of the sustainable ideal, which came to light around 35 years ago. However, the idea of sustainability got suppressed by the political agendas in the 1980s and 1990s. That said, the stance toward sustainability has changed a lot the last decade or so. There are now much more international initiatives to promote projects and science within the field (Kates et al., 2001, p. 641). Furthermore, there has been an increased interest in sustainability within the business sector. However, some research suggests that the newfound interests are due to self-interests and not a genuine desire to be sustainable (Gray, 2010, p. 48). Sustainability in the context of the sharing economy is somewhat debated, most research views the sharing economy as sustainable by its very nature (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, pp. 73,74), but there are also arguments and examples where the sharing can misfire and damage a community (Koster et al., 2018; Ward, 2017). Furthermore, there are only a few empirical studies that show the sustainable benefits of sharing (Daunorienė et al., 2015).

Our view is that sustainability is a consequence of sharing, with some exceptions where regulation will be needed. According to Botsman & Rogers (2010, pp. 73,74) sustainability is not the main component for participation in the C2C sharing economy. Therefore, it is an interesting factor for us to look at in order to determine if sustainability is more or less important for firms than consumers. We think that the growing pressure on firms to act responsibly and to develop CSR plans (Nalband & Al-Amri, 2013, p. 284) can boost the importance of sustainability for corporations as a driver for the sharing economy. We can come to think of several ways' firms can leverage the participation in the sharing economy where they for example can use it in their CSR plans as well as in consumer and employer branding.

#### 3.4.1 Sustainability in the sharing economy

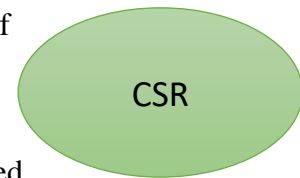
We could easily argue for sustainable aspects within the sharing economy such as decreased consumption, but the truth is that there are relatively few empirical studies on the subject (Daunorienė et al., 2015). In addition, firms like Uber and Airbnb have faced resistance in some areas due to their opening of unregulated markets which resulted in negative consequences (Martin, 2016, p. 149). One example of a negative impact that has been experienced by some areas is an increase in rental and housing price. People buy up apartments for the sole purpose of renting them out over Airbnb, hence, the increased demand inflates prices so that inhabitants of the area have a hard time getting apartments at reasonable prices, this phenomenon is mostly experienced in areas with a large tourism industry (Koster et al., 2018; Ward, 2017).



Even if the sharing economy risks having some negative impacts on society, some hail it as the path to a sustainable society. Furthermore, the sharing economy allows people to move from a culture of ownership to a culture where sharing assets are the norm. The tool used to realize this culture of sharing is the use of online platforms to connect the parties with each other (Martin, 2016, p. 149). This culture of sharing is in line with the fifth “R”, reduce, recycle, reuse, repair and *redistribute* which is sustainable consumption. However, when there is participation in the sharing economy sustainability is most of the time not the driving factor for firms nor the consumer, but nonetheless, sustainability is a consequence of participation in the sharing economy, intended or not (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, pp. 73,74).

### 3.4.2 CSR

Sustainability in the corporate world often takes the form of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). In this more aware day and age it has become the norm to take measures in order to act more responsible, at least for larger firms. The nineteenth century laid the groundwork for large firms, the twentieth century explored management techniques, and now during the twenty-first century, the focus is on legitimacy. This change in what attracts the eye of stakeholders will put higher pressure on firms to act just (Nalband & Al-Amri, 2013, p. 284). This can be seen in markets like software, consumer goods, financial services among others, where firms spend large sums of money on CSR related activities. Furthermore, literature hints that customers consider CSR policies of producers during their purchase process (Bhardwaj et al., 2018, p. 205).



## 3.5 Uncertainty

We consider uncertainty an important factor to investigate due to that it envelops barriers such as trust which is a known barrier in the C2C sharing economy (Gefen et al., 2003, p. 307). It is therefore interesting to investigate if the same is true in a B2B context. Furthermore, there are many question marks when it comes to the regulation of the sharing economy (Berg et al., 2013, p. 76; Penn & Wihbey, 2016). It would be interesting to determine how this indecisiveness and inconsistent regulation affects the actors in their view of B2B sharing. In addition, we have observed that privacy is something that is discussed largely today and this might be a concern for firms.

### 3.5.1 Regulation

As in all industries, the sharing economy is associated with some potential regulatory issues. Regulators can face the legal issues that platforms have, not only by posing stricter regulations for the platforms but in some cases by loosening the rules for the conventional businesses. Which will consequently level the playing field. Hence, regulators can tackle issues without outlawing certain platforms (Katz, 2015, pp. 1068, 2015).

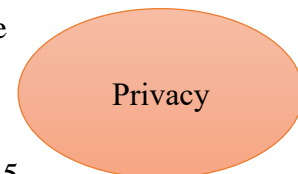


There are a couple of obstacles to be expected when the sharing economy grows. Most of the risks are similar comparing conventional businesses with sharing platforms. However, the platforms bring some additional issues in terms of privacy and review systems (Katz, 2015, p. 1113). Regulating the sharing economy can be tricky but it is something that is important to look at. It must be recognized by legislators that the sharing economy will

require some attention and special laws due to its complexity. It must also be realized that different sectors in the sharing economy need different types of attention in terms of legislation (Miller, 2016, pp. 151, 152). Airbnb and Uber both share via online platforms, but they are still different in what they provide and what legal restrictions they require. Areas of concern that differ between the previously mentioned are public health and safety which clearly are different between apartment sharing and ride-sharing. Uber has concerns about the personal safety of the people in the car and that the car fulfills all safety regulations. Whereas Airbnb has concerns in areas such as property theft and insurance issues (Miller, 2016, pp. 151, 152). Furthermore, as of today sharing platforms often break local laws (Penn & Wihbey, 2016). If these platforms will be considered illegal, it will force them underground, and this can bring unwanted consequences in many ways. One example could be if a driver for Uber drives a troublesome customer, the driver might not contact the police since he himself or herself is involved in illegal activity by participating on the Uber platform (Berg et al., 2013, p. 76). Furthermore, there are issues with the sharing platforms review system which typically is used at the end of an engagement. One example, after a ride the driver will rate the customer and the customer will rate the driver on a scale, this rating will later be displayed on the driver and customers profile, which will either increase or decrease your chances for future customers or riders (Dellarocas, 2010, p. 5; Katz, 2015, p. 1116). Since providers and users both have concerns regarding their scores there inevitable will be a risk for protection issues. These rating systems can basically lock users out if a user gets too many bad reviews and this is something that can be abused. Regulators should in order to make these rating systems fairer, introduce rules about transparency and prohibition of discriminatory reviews (Katz, 2015, p. 1118). However, the majority is massively positive to these review systems in general, and we tend to agree. The systems make it is easy to sort out who free rides and abuses the system at the same time as good and fair behavior is rewarded (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, pp. 91,92,93).

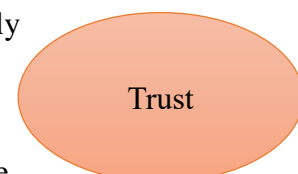
### 3.5.2 Privacy concerns

Sharing platforms in various industries collect data, one example are platforms active within the transportation sector (Uber, Lyft, DiDi). Platforms sometimes gather enormous amounts of data, including credit card information and trip history of the customers which is discussed by Lance (2013, cited in Katz 2015, p. 113). However, one could argue that many of these issues are present at conventional counterparts as well, hotels collect guest records and GPS logs are collected from personal vehicles (Trop, 2014).



### 3.5.3 Trust

Trust is a factor known for creating uncertainty, and it is especially important in an online context (Gefen et al., 2003, p. 307). Literature infers that trust is a crucial determinant of collaboration among strangers in society (Porta et al., 1996). However, it has been shown that users on AirBnb most of the time manage to solve their differences. Platforms like Airbnb eliminates parts of these trust issues by offering transparency which in turn creates trust between the users. Participation in the sharing economy requires trust between parties unfamiliar with one another, a concrete example where this can be a big issue is ride sharing where it is of great importance that you trust the person you ride with. In recent history the consumer world has evolved around middlemen, which act as a connection between the producer and



customer. Historically, there was no need to establish trust for the producer since the various middlemen in forms of sales assistants, mediators and brokers were the ones the customer established a trust-relationship with. This system with middlemen at the center gets eliminated in the sharing economy with the platform as a replacement. The role of the platforms is to develop the conditions required for people to trust each other. The way platforms build trust is often through a review system, a good review becomes almost synonymous with a recommendation from a person one have met (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, pp. 91,92,93).

### 3.6 Summary of Theoretical Framework

The study of this thesis aims at investigating which factors entice or deter management towards participation in he B2B sharing economy in order to help these platforms target their marketing. *Figure 6* illustrates the four factors of investigation which had a higher focus in previous C2C literature. These are convenience, financial, sustainability and uncertainty which are at the core of our model below. Furthermore, the factors have been presented more deeply in the theoretical framework where several more subfactors were recognized. Each of these subfactors have been selected due to the higher significance in relation to the factor they had in respective theoretical paper. Together, these factors and subfactors form the fundamental theoretical work which we hope will give a profound ground that can be related to our qualitative data from our interviews.

We believe that the factors below will be answered upon differently, depending on which category of respondents we interview. However, by observing that there are multiple related subfactors, we can do a more comprehensive, analytical investigation thus getting deeper into the urges of potential motivation for participation in the B2B sharing economy. The model below gives the reader a more complete understanding of the theoretical factors and subfactors touched upon which will act as a guide throughout the rest of this study.

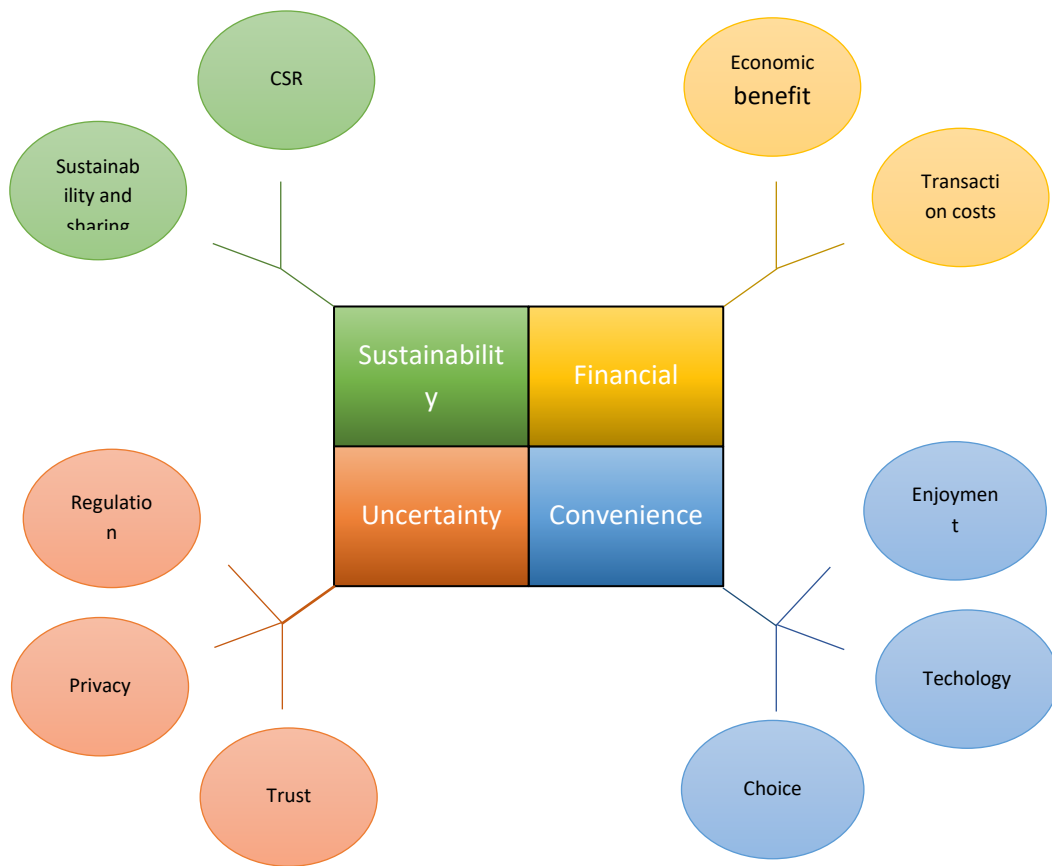


Figure 6 – Conceptual model - Created by the authors

However, it is worth mentioning that these factors and subfactors of interest in this study are chosen from our own reflections on what we thought seemed to be the most crucial elements of importance based on the theories analyzed. If more time would have been available, a more systematic analysis of relevant factors and subfactors could have been conducted and it might, therefore have been other factors of importance in focus instead. Furthermore, as stated, this is a new phenomenon with a relatively low amount of research in the field resulting in that the flexibility of accuracy is relatively low due to the low amount of data available. Thus, the aim with this paper then becomes to determine the factors of importance in a B2B setting, in a sharing economy as of today and provide the notion of that there is more research in this area to be done.

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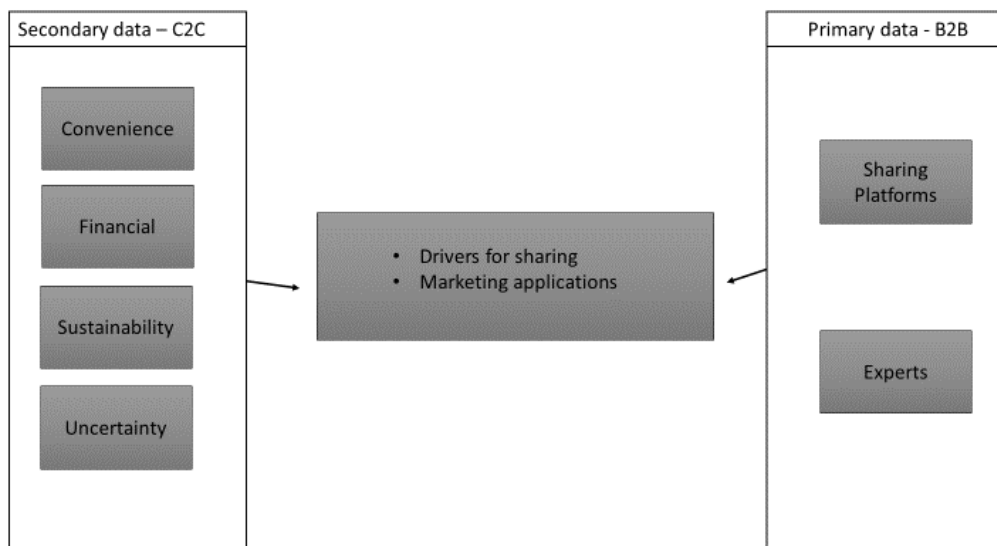
## 4.0 Practical Method

*The following chapter starts with an introduction of the research approach, which leads to a description of the sampling method, as well as an explanation of the preparations and execution of the interviews. Further, the treatment and analysis of data are outlined, followed by ethical considerations. Lastly, the truth criteria are presented.*

### 4.1 Research approach

We have derived *figure 7*, which aims to clarify the research approach taken while conducting this research.

The four factors will be analyzed with previous literature on the sharing economy in a C2C setting and then compared with qualitative data in the form of interviews in a B2B context. This is done by interviewing experts and sharing platforms. Then a conclusion to how B2B platforms can use the results in order to improve their target marketing is presented.



*Figure 7 - Created by the authors*

### 4.2 Research Design

Qualitative research focuses on words over numbers and has no need to quantify the results (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 386). In contrast to research in natural sciences, research in social sciences have people involved, which are capable to add meaning and nuance. Hence, many researchers infer that a methodology designed to capture these differences between social and natural sciences is to prefer. Furthermore, the social world should be seen through the eyes of the subjects, instead of assuming that the interviewed are unable to have reflections as you would in quantitative research (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 402). This study aims to determine the view of four factors and we encourage follow-up questions to gain additional insights, therefore a qualitative approach has been chosen.



The research design that would be suitable for this research is a case study, which is a good tool for answering the deeper questions in order to determine the “why” and how of a phenomenon. Furthermore, case studies often are used to obtain information regarding a group, individual or organization in order to generalize (Yin, 2009, p. 4). According to Yin (2009, p. 8), there are three conditions for a case study, the first one being the type of research question, is it a question trying to answer the deeper “why” and “how”? Second, the researcher should not have control over behavioral happenings, and third, there should be a focus on contemporary events. Our research fulfills all of these conditions making us confident in our belief that a case study will be the most fitting design for our research.

Furthermore, multiple case studies are often to prefer, since they provide data from several sources, making it easier to generalize (Saunders, 2009, p. 146). Our research is a multiple case study since we look at two cases as can be seen in (*figure 8*). First, the case of sharing platforms, secondly the case of independent experts. The two cases compliment each other since the platforms possess the real-life experience whereas the experts provide an unbiased view of the platforms.

The exploratory research is utilized when there is a lack of previous research regarding a problem since then there is limited information to access through earlier work. Therefore, the aim of exploratory research is to determine ideas, patterns, and motivations instead of testing a hypothesis (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 4). The subject of this study lack research in a B2B context and there are few real-life examples of sharing between businesses in a formal way over a platform. In addition, our goal is to find the motivations behind participation in B2B sharing, hence, an exploratory element of the study is suitable.

In conclusion, this study aims to find the deeper motivations behind participation and due to the lack of previous research, we have concluded that an *exploratory case study* is the most suitable research design.

### 4.3 Data gathering

There are different ways of collecting qualitative data. The three main ones discussed in literature is participant observation, focus groups and interviews. Participant observation refers to the method when the researcher places themselves within a social setting to understand the situation and culture of the group better (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 389). The most used method of conducting observation is “non-participant observation”. The participants often do not know that they are observed, it could be done by audio or video recording. The other way of observing is participant observation. The researcher participates in the research and tries to gain an understanding of values and motives of the subjects this way (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 148). Focus groups are a version of interviewing that includes more than one interviewee, normally a focus group which consists of at least four participants. To simplify, it is a group interview, however, there are some authors that consider focus groups and group interviews as different, though they are often used as synonyms and we will see them as equal in this paper (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 502). Furthermore, focus groups are able to blend the methods of interviewing and observation (Collis & Hussey, 2014).

The method used to collect data are interviews. There are different interview strategies used when collecting data for research. To start off there are both quantitative and qualitative interviews, the difference is that qualitative interviews are generally looser and more open, whereas quantitative interviews are stricter and leave very little room outside of the questions. Further, qualitative interviewing consists of more open questions. In addition, a stark difference is that qualitative interviews often go off subject and gets side-tracked, which, for the most part, is encouraged since it shows what the respondent thinks is important, which could be entirely missed in a structured interview. As such, the interviewers also get more leeway and can move away from the interview guide if necessary, meaning the interviewer can ask follow-up questions, change the order of questions and even the wording. In contrast, all of the previously mentioned points are discouraged in quantitative interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 466, 467).

However, the interview methods are not binary qualitative or quantitative there are different levels of structure. To clarify this the concepts of unstructured and semi-structured interviews is described. An unstructured interview can be as plain as one question which in turn is continued with follow-up questions on interesting topics by the interviewer, which leads to more of a conversation or discussion of a subject. (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 467).

Furthermore, the interviewer asks questions that are open questions that require more than a “yes” or “no” to be answered (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 133). The semi-structured interview is more structured than the unstructured method where the interviewer prepares questions with fairly specific areas to be discussed, and the wording should be similar for each interview. That said, the questions are still relatively open and offers much freedom in terms of how to reply (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 467; Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 133).

The goal with this paper is to gain an increased understanding of how certain factors are considered by the different actors in B2B sharing. Therefore, our opinion is that semi-structured interviews are fitting for this study. The semi-structured interviews serves us well since we can provide the subjects with the opportunity to express their thoughts relatively unrestricted, due to our open questions and willingness to ask follow-up questions. Furthermore, we have the ability to steer the interview in the right direction with predetermined themes, main questions and probing questions.

#### 4.4 Potential problems

There are some criticism when it comes to qualitative research, potential biases of the interviewers and the tendency of being too subjective.(Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 408). Furthermore, a common potential issue is with finding the right participants, meaning participants with the relevant knowledge and time (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 146). We are aware of these issues and will try our best to negate them. However, due to the nature of our research and the early stages in which the subject are some compromises will have to be made. For example, it might be hard for use to find people in the same position at the various firms and if there more time available it would be beneficial to interview more than one individual at each firm to ensure the reliability of the responses.

There is a lack of platforms developed toward a B2B audience, furthermore, many firms have a hard time envisioning themselves as potential customers since the concept it quite

new and the potential is not necessarily seen. All of which makes it harder to find respondents with adequate knowledge base.

Some of the interviews will be held over phone, there are some risks with this approach. However, for the overall research to be feasible this is a must in our case, we have restrictions in terms of time and resources. This approach will also enable us to book meetings and being more flexible to fit the respondents schedule better.

## 4.5 Sample

Sampling methods for qualitative research have much been neglected in research compared to quantitative sampling methods. Researchers often only reflect around sampling when it comes to quantitative studies, and they often claim that qualitative sampling is inherently unsystematic (Koerber & Mcmichael, 2008, p. 455).

However, there have emerged some more suitable sampling methods for qualitative research in the last decade or so. The most prominent of these discussed:

*Convenience, accidental or opportunistic* sampling refers more or less to the same method. All these sampling methods are based on that the participants are easy to find and access. Convenience sampling can be a sufficient method in many situations, but it will be inadequate in our research since we need a population with very specific knowledge (Koerber & Mcmichael, 2008, p. 463).

*Purposeful sampling* refers to when the researcher wants a population that possesses specific qualities or traits. Therefore, the researcher takes the purpose of the study into consideration when selecting the sample (Coyne, 1997, p. 624). Further, when it comes to purposeful sampling the diversity of the sample is of great importance, a sample with too alike participants is one of the biggest pitfalls. Further, the results can get manipulated if the researcher intentionally recruits participants with a certain view in order to get a certain result of the research (Koerber & Mcmichael, 2008, pp. 464, 465)

For this study, purposeful sampling is used while conducting the research. When creating our sample, we will look for platform creators and experts within the B2B sharing economy both in the private and public sector. It is worth mentioning that B2B sharing in a commercial sense is a new phenomenon and hence there is a lack of available respondents in this area. This limits the number of potential candidates that feel confident in discussing the topic. Purposeful sampling is the obvious choice for this research since we must make sure that the respondents have sufficient knowledge within the area in order to answer our questions. Further, we will try to ensure a diverse sample by selecting respondents from different projects both in the private as well as the public sector.

The complexity of finding these niched respondents procures different locating methods. The first step is to find suitable respondents on the web. However, most potential respondents encountered, are to a higher degree involved with C2C sharing and hence they are not seen as fit for this research. There are several platforms on the market, though not many which are to a larger degree involved with B2B sharing.

On the other hand, a search for people who are promoting sharing platforms will be conducted due to the belief that they possess a reasonable amount of knowledge regarding why managers are motivated to participate in sharing. However, we tried targeting

“potential customers” in the beginning which were companies not yet participating in the B2B sharing economy though with the potential of becoming a member. Since, the companies were not there yet themselves, they had a hard time imagining getting there in the future hence we neglected this group of “potential customers”.

Secondly, a sharing convention was attended where the purpose was to get a deeper knowledge within the field and find potentially suitable respondents. Although some potential respondents were located there, the problem of the high focus on C2C sharing remained hence limiting the choices of respondents. Thirdly, some respondents were found because of recommendations from earlier respondents whom then was reached out to. These steps resulted in the following respondents:

*Table 1 - Interview summary*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Company name</b>	<b>Length of interviews</b>	<b>Location</b>
Ahlman, Oskar	Umigo	32min	Umeå, Physical
Groves, Jim	Rubberdesk	37min	Sydney, Zoom
Lagander, Jonas	Svensk barter	39min	Östergötland, Phone
Minoz, Åsa	Viable cities	56min	Stockholm, Phone
Näslund, Philip	Sharing Cities	40min	Umeå, Physical
Reham, Amin	Coompanion	43min	Umeå, Physical
Zide, Carl	Loop Rocks	13min	Stockholm, Phone

The individuals listed in the table above are the respondents gathered based on the time frame given. It is believed that the majority of experts active within the field in Sweden have been attracted. Tracy (2012, p. 138) argues that a sample consisting of five to eight respondents is a fair number in qualitative research. Further, the quality of the respondents is more important than the quantity, hence, a focus on getting high-quality respondents and focusing less on reaching a certain number of respondents is prioritized. It is important to recognize that very knowledgeable respondents are required in order to gather useable data, which limits the options drastically.

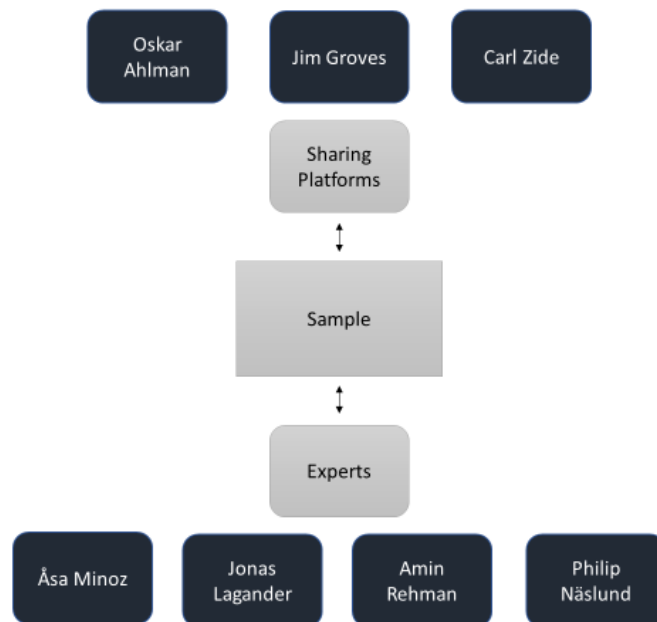


Figure 8 - Created by the authors

The respondents are divided into two cases, sharing platforms and experts as can be seen in *figure 8*. These two cases were chosen to get a multi-perspective on B2B sharing both from the mediator (platform), and the forces that promote the sharing economy (experts). These perspectives can then be compared in-between each other, and in turn potential differences between our primary sources based on the interviews and the secondary sources based on C2C literature can be identified.

#### 4.5.1 Respondents

##### *Ahlman, Oscar*

Works for Umigo as a project coordinator at the Umeå University institution. Umigo is a research project which aims to create a sharing platform. Due to that this project is relevant for B2B sharing we sought it fit to include Ahlman as one of the respondents because of his insights in B2B sharing.

##### *Groves, Jim*

Groves is the founder and CEO of Rubberdesk which is a marketplace where businesses can both rent and offer office space. Rubberdesk and Groves are currently based in Sydney which gives us access to a different perspective compared to the Swedish perspective that most of the other respondents have. In addition, the fact that Groves started and runs a B2B sharing business is of great value to us, due to that he has knowledge of the challenges of starting as well as running a B2B sharing firm.

##### *Lagander, Jonas*

Is a project developer for Companion in Östergötland where he works with social entrepreneurship where one of the parts is to conceptualize and perform pilot studies for bartering for companies and commercial organizations. The insights Lagander possess regarding B2B sharing activities and the work he performs with developing platforms make him a suitable respondent for our study.

##### *Minoz, Åsa*

Minoz is an expert on innovation and the sharing economy and is one of the founders of ShareSE with a previous history in the government office and innovation agency Vinnova. Together with Sara Modig she runs the company ModigMinoz who acts as experts on innovation for sustainable societal development where digitalization and the sharing economy is central. Hence, Minoz ought to be a perfect respondent in this study due to the relation between the field of investigation and Minoz's expertise within the field.

#### *Näslund, Philip*

Näslund is the project manager for Sharing Cities which is a pilot project that is conducted in different cities in Sweden where the goal is to develop ideas for smart and sustainable cities which was implemented by the government in 2017. Due to that Sharing Cities work actively and critically with the sharing economy and that Näslund is the project manager in Umeå, he has well-established knowledge regarding sharing as well as insights in what managers look for when potentially integrating their business into sharing platforms.

#### *Rehman, Amin*

Rehman works as a company advisor for Coompanion in Umeå. One of the two projects which he works with is Sharing Cities, and he explains his role in this project as a provider of information for companies, associations or just the average individual on how the sharing economy works. Furthermore, he can help with providing a specific business model which could suit that specific organization and help them with developing this model. Rehman has been working in different countries and as a business developer for about 13 years. Which is why it was concluded that Reham inhabits the type of knowledge necessary to answer our questions.

#### *Zide, Carl*

Zide is currently the head of Looprocks and has previously been working as a marketing strategist for 15 years nationally as well as internationally. Looprocks is a sharing platform which matches shortage or surplus of rocks, soil, gravel and other heavy material between companies, hence, Zide possess knowledge regarding what drives company managers to participate in a platform like this one. Which makes him relevant as a respondent in our study.

## 4.6 Preparing for the Interviews

### 4.6.1 Level of knowledge

In order for the interviews to be as efficient as possible, it is imperative that the researcher can provide credibility and provide the confidence needed towards the interviewees to gain as much detailed information as possible (Saunders, 2009, p. 328). Hence, Saunders argues for that the researcher needs to have knowledge regarding the topic of the research and about the organization or situation in which the interview is to take place (Saunders, 2009, p. 328). Therefore, thorough research in regard to the sharing economy as well as in the context of the B2B sharing economy has been conducted. Furthermore, knowledge regarding each respondent's organization and practice within that organization has been identified and evaluated in order to provide a sense of credibility towards the interviewee which is also believed to ease the process of data collection due to that potential definitions would not need to be clarified from the respondent. Information about each respondent has been gathered from public information on the internet. Saunders (2009, p.

328) argues that acquiring this type of knowledge will be beneficial while interviewing, due to that the author then can show credibility and become more accurate in their questions leading to more detailed answers from the respondents.

#### 4.6.2 Information supplied to the interviewee

Saunders (2009, p. 328) further argues for that an additional way of getting credibility towards the respondents is by supplying them with the relevant information of the themes that will be covered during the interview. This, in turn, gives the respondents time to prepare themselves as well as gather potential relevant material for the discussion which lead to higher accuracy of the answers given (Saunders, 2009, p. 328).

Different methods have been used when contacting different respondents. Some respondents were found on the web while others were found by physical contact. However, the larger part of the respondents was firstly contacted by e-mail where a general request of a potential interview was asked for along with an estimated time limit for the interview, which is supported by Adams (2015, p. 495). This was later in the conversation followed up by setting an interview date. However, if a response was not given within a week, this was followed up by a phone call which proved to be highly efficient because of that in many of the cases our email had become directed to the respondents' trash bin. Second, a more detailed description about the interview themes (Appendix 2) was sent out to the respondents one week prior to the interview, in order for the respondents to be able to prepare as thoroughly as possible. To send out this information earlier was not considered accurate since the respondents then would potentially lose the focus, due to the larger time frame between information acquiring and the actual interview. The information was repeated at the beginning of each interview to make sure nothing was forgotten.

#### 4.6.3 Interview Guide

An interview guide is a list of carefully structured questions with the aim of finding out what respondents think, feel or do to be able to answer the research question as thoroughly as possible (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 205). Adams (2015, p. 495) argues for that in a semi-structured interview it is important to find perspectives of more than one respondent even if there is a narrow time limit. When drafting the interview guide it is imperative to spend enough time in order to polish, edit and pretest the questions (Adams, 2015, p. 496). It should be clear and concise and thereby not include too many issues to be able to stick to the time frame as well as putting the questions in priority with the most prioritized questions first (Adams, 2015, p. 496). Though they should be presented in a logical order and a simple language should be used as to not create confusion for the respondents (Saunders, 2009, p. 328). However, the interviewer must be prepared for that if a conversation unexpectedly turns the order of the interview guide, he or she will have to reorder the topics on the fly and then return to the topics left out (Adams, 2015, p. 498; Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 475).

The major disadvantage of a semi-structured interview is that it is time-consuming, labor intensive and require interviewer sophistication as well as that they are unlikely to encompass an enough large sample to yield precision of the population variety (Adams, 2015, p. 493). Another potential issue is that a semi-structured interview should always be looked upon as a "work in progress" due to that unanticipated issues might be encountered which may lead the researcher to redistribute the questions for all subsequent interviews (Adams, 2015, p. 499).

However, In this study, semi-structured interviews is preferred due to that it allows the interviewer to ask probing, open-ended questions which gives the interviewer the possibility to get to know the respondent’s individual thoughts (Adams, 2015, p. 494). Furthermore, semi-structured interviews are imperative when the researcher is examining an unexplored territory which could give birth to potential momentous of issues and hence direct the respondents back on the right track (Adams, 2015, p. 494).

The interview guide for this study was established on the premise that all factors of focus (convenience, financial, sustainable, uncertainty) should be covered and explored more deeply by using open-ended questions. The interview guide in its entirety is presented below in table 2:

*Table 2 - Interview guide*

Themes	Questions	Purpose	Sources
B2B Sharing	What do you think are the primary drivers for B2B sharing?	To provide the respondent with a question open for own reflection and interpretation, which will spark discussion to ease the mood between the interviewer and respondent.	Botsman & Rogers, 2010)
Convenience	Is convenience important for B2B sharing according to you? Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To find out the top of mind convenience factors</li> <li>- Determine if convenience is an important driver for participation in B2B sharing and why it is important.</li> </ul>	Hamari et al, 2016. Belk, 2007
Financial	How does financial factors affect participation in B2B sharing according to you?	-Determine if financial factors are important drivers for participation in B2B sharing and why they are important.	Frenken & Schor, 2017. Sundararajan, 2014. Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017.



Sustainability	How important is sustainability as a driver for participation in B2B sharing according to you?	- To find out if there are any thought processes regarding sustainability and how they can leverage it in their marketing/branding -Determine if sustainability is a driver for participation in B2B sharing	Frenken & schor, 2017.  Caceres & Paparoidamis, 2005.  Hawlitschek et al, 2016
Uncertainty	How do you view uncertainty as a potential barrier when it comes to participation in B2B sharing?	-Determine what types of uncertainty the respondent sees in B2B sharing.  -Determine to what extent Uncertainty is a barrier in B2B sharing.	Santana & Parigi, 2015.  Lee et al, 2018  Katz, 2015  Koopman et al, 2015  Munkoe, 2017
Ranking	Rank the following themes,” convenience, financial, sustainability and uncertainty”. Where 1 is the most important and 4 the least important	10. To determine the relative importance of respective factor as a driver for participation in B2B sharing	
Future	How do you think B2B sharing will evolve the coming 10 years?	11. To find the general attitude for future prospects of B2B sharing	

#### 4.6.4 Location of Interview

A well-formulated interview guide is one step in collecting as well-informed data as possible, though the location of the interview is also according to Saunders (2009, p. 329) an imperative step in this collection process. Firstly Saunders argues that, the researcher should choose a location which is safe for him or her and on top of that chose a location in which the respondents feel safe and where the interview is unlikely to be disturbed (Saunders, 2009, p. 329). As audio recording for us will take place, it is further imperative that the location will lack outside noise so to improve the quality of the data gathered.

In this study, a choice is given to the respondents to decide where the interview is going to take place. However, all the physical interviews are conducted in a noise-free setting and hence high-quality recordings were collected. The method of physical interviews offers the advantage that comprehensive data can be collected, and it is to prefer if complex and sensitive questions need to be addressed (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 134). However, since several of our respondents live in the Southern part of Sweden as well as in Australia, telephone and online-interviews were further conducted.

Telephone and online interviews are widely used methods and offer the advantage of reducing travel costs while at the same time allowing for integrational contact (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 134). However, the disadvantage is that respondents need to have access to internet and be willing to use different kinds of software in order to conduct the interview as well as the potential dilemma of recording those interviews (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 134). Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 489) further argues that a limitation with phone interviews is that it is way easier for the respondent to close the interview than in comparison with a physical interview and that it is not possible to observe body language over the phone. Which may be important for the interviewer to acknowledge in order to spot discomfort. On the other hand, contrary to Collis & Hussey (2014) Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 489) argues for that asking sensitive questions over the phone might be more effective due to that the respondents then feel less distressed since the interviewer is not physically present.

In this research, physical interviews were prioritized, because of the distance to several of the respondents as well as time and budget constraints, several of the interviews were conducted over the phone (see table 1).

## 4.7 Conducting the Interviews

Before performing the interviews, the interview questions were polished and edited and as a final step pilot tested with a respondent (Adams, 2015, p. 496).

In all the interviews, except with Zide, the interviews were scheduled meetings where the respondent was pre-informed that the interview would take around half an hour to perform. When calling Zide, who we earlier had called to ask for permission to interview, we first asked the respondent if he had half an hour to spare and if not, we would call another time to make sure the respondent was not stressed (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 210). Furthermore, we dressed properly for the physical interviews to project a professional image, as well as making sure that we were a bit early to the meeting. Lastly, we made sure to thank the interviewee for his or her time (Adams, 2015, p. 500; Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 210). When starting the interview, the respondent was asked for permission to be recorded and if the interviewee wanted to be anonymous or not (Adams, 2015, p. 500). After permission was granted, which was the case with all the respondents, the recorder was switched on and the respondents was informed that that was the case. In all the interviews, except Groves's and Minoz's, both authors were present, where one was directing the interview while the other one took notes and contributed with probing questions if such questions felt necessary. This was to make sure that the interviewer did not miss any critical questions as well as making sure the analysis of the interview between the authors would be similar.

It was noticed when conducting the pilot interview that question two in the interview

guide “*Is convenience important for B2B sharing according to you? Why?*” was a bit confusing. Therefore, in line with Bryman & Bell (2011, pp, 215,216) the interviewers acknowledged the dilemma and tried to help the respondents by tweaking the wording of the question, and when needed provided some concrete examples. However, detailed examples were never given to avoid being too leading.

Further, the respondent was given a short reminder what the research was about and asked whether he or she had read the material sent from the authors before the interview as to make sure the respondent would not be surprised by the questions asked and understand the purpose of the interview (Adams, 2015, p. 502). Additionally, worth mentioning is that all interviews were conducted in Swedish due to the convenience for the interviewee to answer the questions in her or his mother language as to avoid potential vocabulary misunderstandings except for Groves where the interview was conducted in English (Adams, 2015, p, 497). Even though there was an interview guide to follow, the interviewers had to be flexible in asking the questions due to the different developed answers the respondents provided. Some respondents answered the second question on the first one and hence we adjusted the interview guide on the fly as to avoid being repetitive, though we always tried not to vary the questions to avoid affecting the impact of replies (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p, 213).

When ending the interview, the respondent was asked whether he or she wanted a draft of the study before submitting it in order to avoid potential miss interpretations and then stopped the recorder. Followed by thanking the respondent again for giving up her or his time and if potential questions would arise that she or he should not hesitate to contact us (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p, 217).

## 4.8 Treatment of Data

Qualitative data is often collected and stored in the form of media files and transcripts which results in a big and cumbersome data pool (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 571). Therefore, the pile of data quickly becomes an obstacle since the more data the harder it will be to digest.

### 4.8.1 Transcribing interviews

Recording and then transcribing the interviews have several advantages such as helping with limitations of the researcher’s memory, allows for repeated listening to responses and it is transparent in the sense that others can listen to the exact words used by respondents. Furthermore, it is of great analytical value to have the recordings of the respondents, since it is not only “what” people say that is of importance, but also “how” they say it, listening to the recordings several times can be necessary in order to analyse the material sufficiently (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 481, 482, 571). It is recognized that recording and transcribing is crucial in order to achieve a result that truly reflects the respondent’s answers, hence, it felt obvious for us to transcribe the interviews.

When the decision was taken to transcribe the interviews we were aware of its benefits but also that it would be very time consuming (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 481, 571; Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 166), to mitigate this fact we tried to book interviews as early as possible. This gave us some extra wiggle room if the analysis of data takes longer than expected. Bryman & Bell (2011, p 481) also underline the importance of good equipment when it comes to recording devices. Most of the interviews were held over the phone or

similar voice services such as Skype, Zoom or Hangouts in order to make it as convenient for the respondent as possible. In order to ensure the quality of the recordings, the software as well as the physical recording devices were tested beforehand. The interviews were held in a quiet environment to ensure that the respondents could hear us clearly and without interruptions.

## 4.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues and concerns always surface when designing research. Furthermore, the researcher must make sure that the research design is morally defensible to all parties involved (Saunders, 2009, pp. 183, 184). Some ethical issues that often pop up are concerns regarding privacy, consent and deception. Other effects on participants, such as stress, embarrassment, pain and harm should also be considered (Saunders, 2009, p. 185). According to Adams (2015, p. 497) drafted questions may sometimes evoke pressure on the respondent which have a negative effect on the answers given. Hence, the interviewer should try to find ways to remove potential stigmas which might be attached to certain answers.

Additionally, Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 128) brings up four main areas of ethical considerations:

*Harm to participant:* All research that has the potential to harm participants is by most deemed both unethical and unacceptable. Harm can be everything from damage to the participant's self-esteem, stress or even physical harm. Furthermore, both AoM and MRS's code of conducts infers that it is the researcher's duty to ensure that the risk of harm is minimized. In addition, the researchers must be careful with confidential issues, an agreement regarding anonymity should be agreed upon with the participants beforehand (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 128, 129).

*Lack of informed consent:* Refers to when researchers fail to properly ask the participants for consent. Some research does not ask participants if they want to take part in the research, this is the case for "covert observation", but it can also be smaller things like not telling the respondent that you will record the interview.

The MRS code of conduct suggests that informed consent should be used, further, at the beginning of interviews the researchers should inform participants that recording equipment will be used. However, it is often hard to give the participants all the information that they would want before making a decision if they should participate. Some deliberate breaches of ethics that most researchers do are for example to underestimate the time that the interview should take in order to not "scare" away participants, and purposefully holding back information regarding the research in order to not affect the answers of the respondent (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 133).

*Invasion of privacy:* Privacy is a right that must be respected by the researcher. This issue ties into *informed consent* since the researcher must inform the respondent of potential privacy issues, and when this is done the respondent can decide if he or she is comfortable with surrendering some privacy. Furthermore, even if respondents agree to be interviewed, they sometimes refuse to answer questions they are not comfortable with. It can be hard to know if a question is sensitive beforehand, therefore, situations like these should be treated delicately and individually for each case in order to make it less stressful for the respondent (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 136).

*Deception:* Refers to when researchers suggest that their research is something that it is not. Again, breaches in this regard are relatively common since researchers often want the respondents to have limited knowledge regarding the research, this is done in order to achieve more genuine answers (Bryman & Bell, 2011, pp. 136, 137).

#### 4.9.1 Our way of acting ethically

When conducting the research, we will act according to the ethical principles presented above. We value the privacy of our respondents and therefore we will ask if they want to remain anonymous in the report, further, we will ask for permission before recording the interviews and make sure that the respondents are comfortable to avoid any stress put on them. In addition, we will present a fair view of what our research is about which will enable respondents to do an informed decision when deciding to participate or not.

We have acknowledged the importance of objectivity which will be vital during the analysis stage in order to not misrepresent the data collected (Saunders, 2009, p. 199). Saunders (2009, p. 199) further writes that there is a lot of trust placed in the researcher's interpretation of the data collected, and how it is to be presented and interpreted.

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that certain respondents do not speak English. Hence, the interview guide is available in Swedish to remove potential misunderstanding and misconception that may arise when conducting an interview in a secondary language (Adams, 2015, p. 497). The interviews themselves have also been held in each interviewees mother tongue.

In addition, the fact that B2B sharing is such a new subject and that only a few of the respondents have worked with it might put pressure on the respondents. To negate this potential feeling we were clear with stating that we want only their knowledge, personal thoughts and opinions to explore the new area of B2B sharing. The hope was that this statement would relieve any potential pressure.

## 4.10 Method of analyzing data

### 4.10.1 Analyzing qualitative data

It is paramount to have a strategy for how to analyze the data before the data is collected. When analyzing quantitative data there are often predetermined steps that most researchers use to analyze the data. Whereas analyzing qualitative data is more dependent on the authors thinking and evaluation of different interpretations (Saunders, 2009, p. 482; Yin, 2009, p. 127). Yin (2009, p.129) also suggests that the researchers should present the data in different ways, in order to help the researcher with analyzing the data. Examples of the presentation can be different matrixes, bundling the data in new ways and making charts.

Qualitative research varies a lot and can take many approaches (Holloway & Todres, 2003, p. 345). Therefore, there are many elements to consider when analyzing qualitative data. Collis & Hussey (2014, p. 155) argue that the four elements listed below always are at the core of qualitative analysis regardless of method. However, the extent to which the elements show depends on the methodology.

First, “*comprehending*” which refers to the researchers attempt to understand the situation, culture and topic of study before conducting the study. However, there is an ongoing debate if it is a good thing for the researcher to get involved or not. On the one hand, it will create a better understanding of the subjects and the research topic, on the other hand it can potentially create biases (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 155).

Second, “*Synthesizing*” refers to the merging of various themes of research in order to create a new view. This approach analyses the data to give a general explanation of the phenomena (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 155).

Third, “*Theorizing*” which refers to when the researcher challenges the data by presenting alternative answers to the phenomena. Researchers often chose one of the following ways of building a theory: The first way is to identify values in the collected data in order to link it with theory. Second, compare the research with results and settings from previous research. The last method of creating a theory is by data induction (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 155).

Fourth, “*Recontextualizing*” is when the researcher generalizes data, in order to make the data usable on various populations and contexts. The researcher uses existing theories to put the findings in a context to establish new models and theories (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 155).

Braun & Clarke (2006, p. 78) argue that thematic analysis of qualitative data is the preferable way of analyzing qualitative data. Thematic analysis is a research approach used to discover and analyze themes. The benefits with thematic analysis are the flexibility and adaptability it offers (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 78). Furthermore, a strategy built around the theoretical proposition of the study is a preferable approach for a case study (Yin, 2009, p. 130).

#### 4.10.2 Analysis approach taken

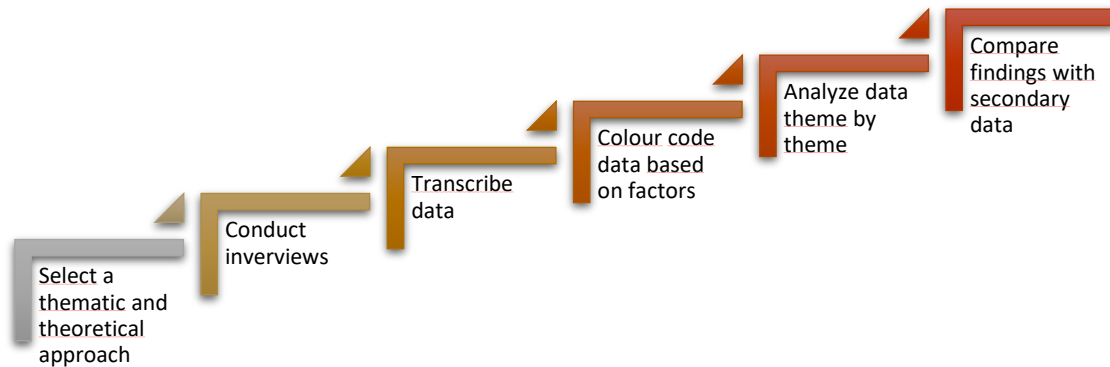


Figure 9 - Created by the authors

In the above figure, one can see the process of data analysis visualized.

After looking at the previous discussed approaches we ended up with an interview guide that was built with two strategic approaches in mind. We considered the merits of the theoretical approach discussed by (Yin, 2009, p. 130), as well as the strengths of the thematic analysis when it comes to analyzing themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 78). Therefore, the interview guide was built around the four theoretical factors of convenience, financial, sustainability and uncertainty. By analyzing each factor, we hope to uncover potential differences between the drivers behind B2B and C2C sharing. The analysis will follow a similar structure to that of the theoretical framework, this in order to clearly go through the findings for each factor in a logical order.

After transcribing the data, it was decided to categorize the data by the four factors. The transcripts are stored in digital documents which allowed us to color-code the transcripts by highlighting sections relevant for each factor with different colors. When a certain section was used we colored it grey to indicate that the information had been used, which helped us avoid any repetitions.

#### 4.11 Truth Criteria's

Saunders (2014, pp. 10, 156) argues that when conducting research, the researcher needs to design the research as to take reliability and validity into consideration in order to reduce the possibility of getting misleading answers. Reliability and Validity could be recognized as different kinds of measures indicating the quality of the research which can be achieved by providing specific methodological and disciplinary principles (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 395).

#### 4.11.1 Reliability

The criteria reliability refers to the extent of which the study could be replicated several times and yield the same result (Saunders, 2009, p. 156). Reliability is often associated with what kind of paradigm the researcher adopts to his or her research. For example, a positivistic paradigm tends to provide results with high reliability but low validity while on the other hand, an interpretivist paradigm tends to provide results with low reliability but high validity (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 50). Hence, it becomes very important in a positivistic study to be able to provide replication of results while observations and interpretations made during the research can be explained and understood is more important in an interpretivist study (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 53). Since we used a positivistic methodology with a qualitative method in form of interviews, the challenge became to design the method which would retain the integrity of the data gathered, however, according to Collis & Hussey (2014, p. 148), some unreliability in what is recorded can never be avoided. Since for example, respondents want to provide more favorable answers than is the case and because they may feel the need to provide an answer, which they think suits the interviewer better (Saunders, 2009, p. 148). According to Saunders (2009, p. 156) there are four threats to reliability. These are:

##### *Subject or participant error*

Which reflects the relative uncertainty of getting similar results depending in which time period you conduct your research in.

##### *Subject or participant bias*

Which has to do with that the interviewee provides a response in accordance with what he or she thinks the interviewer, or their boss wants them to answer.

##### *Observer error*

Which has to do with diversity among the interviewers interviewing techniques. If there is more than one author and that they are all conducting interviewer's, provides uncertainty in terms of asking the question different and consequently it might yield different results.

##### *Observer bias*

Has to do with how the interviews are interpreted among the researchers. If there are several researchers, they might interpret the results differently and hence the reliability of the research lowers.

By acknowledging these threats provided by Saunders (2009) above, researchers can minimize the unreliability and control the accuracy of the results. For example, providing a thorough interview guide, which is carefully planned and executed, the researcher can maximize the reliability of the study (Saunders, 2009, p. 362).

In Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 395) the authors have divided reliability into external reliability and internal reliability. External reliability refers more explicitly to the degree to which the results could be replicated, which according to Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 395) is a difficult criterion in qualitative research due to that it is impossible to freeze circumstances surrounding the social setting. A suggestion here by Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 395) would be for the qualitative researcher to replicate the researcher by inheriting a



similar role to how the original researcher conducted the research. On the other hand, internal reliability refers to the case where there are two or more researchers and to the degree in which they can agree on the results (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 395). If the researchers are unanimous in their findings, this increases the reliability of the study.

#### 4.11.2 Validity

According to Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 42), validity is one of the most important criteria to consider when conducting research since it has to do with the accuracy of interpretation of the results. Bryman & Bell (2011, p. 280) further explains that measurement validity refers to the issue if a metric really is measuring what it is intended to measure, and the validity issues that might appear when implementing the result into the research.

##### 4.11.2.1 Internal Validity

To put questionnaires in relation with internal validity means to design the questionnaire so it provides you with the answers which you intend to measure (Saunders, 2009, p. 372). Meaning you want to put your responses in equalization with how the reality look even though this presents the problem of that one must know the reality one is measuring (Saunders, 2009, p. 372). Internal validity questions whether a certain phenomenon is solely responsible for another phenomenon or if it is only partly responsible (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 43). Fundamentally, is internal validity synonymous with credibility which questions how believable certain claims are (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 43). If there are similarities between the researcher's findings and the theoretical ideas they develop then the internal validity is higher (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 395). Hence, in a qualitative research internal validity tends to be high due to that it allows the researcher to ensure detailed concepts and observations (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 395). Because we used a qualitative strategy in our study, we have had the opportunity to strengthen the internal validity. This has been done by asking probing questions during the interviews to clarify certain phenomena's and relating the interview questions to our literature review.

##### 4.11.2.2 External Validity

While internal validity focuses on if one phenomenon is similar to another phenomenon, external validity focuses on the issue if the results could be replicated and generalized over the larger research context (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 42). As stated above, internal validity is synonymous with credibility and external validity is synonymous with transferability, meaning if the findings could be applicable to other contexts (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 43). Even though validity tends to be higher in qualitative research, the question of responsiveness of subjects of investigation may have a more efficient application in quantitative research (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 43). Due to that in quantitative research the researcher can utilize a larger sample of subjects which maximizes the opportunity for generating a representative sample and hence external validity increases (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 43). Thus, Bryman & Bell (2011, p 395) argues that this is a major problem in qualitative research due to its tendency to employ case studies and small samples. The problem of this was solved in this study by the fact that the sample of interest is small and hence we could cover a larger sample by only interviewing seven people, in accordance with our preferences.

## 5.0 Results

*This chapter presents the empirical data gathered from the interviews. First, there is a presentation on how the data is presented followed by the primary results in relation to each factor. Lastly, there is an illustration of the ranking of the factors concluded with a summary of the chapter.*

### 5.1 Structure of Results

The presentation of data follows the logic of “*The conceptual model of B2B sharing*” (figure 6). This is done by sorting the information from the respective interview into the different factors in figure 6. Further, the section continues with the respondent’s views on the factors convenience, financial, uncertainty and sustainability. In addition, a section with additional findings is presented, since the interviews brought some unexpected findings that does not fit any of the factors.

It was decided to focus on deriving the data relevant for the factors since the ambition is to compare the data collected with the contents of the theoretical frame of reference. We wanted to focus on the factors in order to determine if drivers of B2B sharing are different with respect to drivers for participating in C2C sharing. Furthermore, any data not presented in this section could not be connected to theory or was not brought up by the participants to a sufficient extent, hence, those parts were deemed irrelevant for this study.

### 5.2 Convenience

When it came to convenience as an imperative factor towards management motivation in B2B sharing our respondents answered a bit differently. Oscar Ahlman pointed out their B2B platform (Umigo) as a potential mean for different actors on the market to find suitable, easy ways to find and close business deals. He pointed towards the efficiency in local distribution these platforms might bring with them where he gave an example on, instead of seeking aid from multinational companies, a local company may instead seek aid through this matchmaking platform and hence draw benefits from the time it saves and enjoyment for the local community it provides. Philip Näslund further added to this by stating that he believes there is a lot of unused capacity in companies today, but that in Umeå local sharing has taken a positive turn where he sees opportunities, for example that companies can share working space with one another as well as empty facilities which can come to use. Näslund is partly working with making these potential benefits of sharing visible to the community and he explained that they are working with the question “How do we access these facilities in an easier way?” and as he explained, one way of making this more accessible is by improving the technology, hence, trying to become more digitally developed.

However, even though Näslund thinks there are a lot of unused resources in society, he does not think people have come to realize the business possibilities yet. For example, Jim Groves did explain that when they tried to set up their B2B platform they noticed that there existed a demand and a general interest in the market for these kinds of platforms. However, Groves encountered some problems in the start-up stage where there existed a demand for office space sharing though he had no supply. Hence, he had to go and find suppliers to put “stock on the shelves”, which Groves explained was a hard challenge to

start off with. What Näslund further noted is that there are too many things causing friction today when it comes to convenience and hence it becomes an inefficient use of time. He meant that, as of today, if for example you need to borrow a drilling machine then you need to meet the person who owns it which take time and then return it which also takes time. Rather, Näslund meant, that in order for sharing to work, it has to be time-efficient, distribution of the resource must be clear. Hence as of today, buying the specific asset at a store is probably more convenient for the company but also due to that the company then knows where it is and how to access it. In order for a service to become efficient, it has to possess convenience otherwise people stays pessimistic. Jonas Lagander added to this and explained that to establish barter trade between companies can be rather complicated and time consuming. Hence, if you want to be present and contribute then you can not make it hard for companies to locate receivers and providers, due to that companies do not have the time to perform these activities since they have meetings and their customers to take care of. Thus making the process of exchange as convenient as possible is imperative for managers to participate. Carl Zide reckoned this by stating that it has to be convenient to access a platform and if it is not, then companies will not do it and that this is something fundamental in all kinds of businesses whether it be sharing or not. Zide explained it as people want it served and they want to know that the service works well and if it does not, then people become unpleased. It has to be easy to participate and companies have to see the opportunities with potential participation. Groves stated that “if it’s easy to do, why wouldn’t we?” he pointed out that if you see a business opportunity and it is easy to do and it will not impact the business negatively as well as recognizing that potential costs can be covered, then why should you not take a chance on it.

Näslund further argued that one way of improving the time-efficiency in business platforms is to create a symbiotic relationship on the web, where the designers match specific industries with each other depending on the need for the moment. However, this was just speculative beliefs from Näslund and as of today nothing concrete. Amin Rehman also brings up time-efficiency as a potential driver for participation in a B2B platform by explaining that platforms can be used as a mean of sharing for example that different companies can share transportation and that deliveries can be made quicker.

Groves added to this by stating that technology can be used as a tool to reduce friction, introduce efficiencies in the transaction process and also just make it an easier process. Ease of use is not to be undervalued and according to Groves people do often pay a premium for ease of use. He exemplified this by relating to Amazon where customers pay a premium to get things delivered quickly which he stated is almost like going back from the new model which used to be the .com model which said okay the item will arrive in a couple of days because it is cheaper. Though as of now people start paying for getting their item faster and more convenient.

Näslund also spoke about the relevance of digital support in business platforms. So to say, digital infrastructure is incredibly important when you want to share resources due to the idling capacity of what we do not see, we do not buy. Hence it could become rather convenient to only share with the ones close to yourself and with companies in which you know staff. However, in order to reach outside your inner circle Näslund thought it is imperative with the digital support. Groves further argued for the importance of the use of technology where he explained that inefficiencies in a market which can be improved through technology is a driver in itself towards this kind of marketplace. Rehman added

to this by also indicating that in general no one wants to develop something that already works perfect, and if there is no inefficiency and no friction then it will be very hard to challenge the norm. ‘

Lagander thought convenience to be a crucial factor for B2B participation in sharing. He exemplified this by pointing towards that a barter trade between companies today is almost exclusively like sending an invoice for the service offered or selling merchandise directly between one another, but the problem arises when one of the parties has something they want but the other party does not want anything the first party has. Hence, Lagander explained that they in SvenkBarter have tried to make it more convenient by establishing an accounting system, where each party can exchange goods and services in barter debit and barter credit. Hence companies can exchange unused resources with each other where they are debited and credited depending on what they want to access. Furthermore, Lagander explained that in order for their customers to be able to find what they are looking for or want to trade away, SvenskBarter has different advisors or more specifically barteradvisors which locates different providers or receivers in order to make it more convenient for the members<sup>1</sup>.

### 5.3 Financial

When asked the question “How does financial factors affect participation in B2B sharing according to you?” the majority of our respondents answered that that was the most important factor of them all. Groves had a bit of a different view where he ranked the financial factor number three which he also commented directly after could change. Though, Groves argued for that the actual ranking of the factors are not important but rather it depends on the contextual surroundings, “financial alone doesn’t alone tend to swing it”. Zide on the other hand is more direct when answering the question where he directly answered that money is the sole most important factor in society and in the world. Zide further argued that for a company to be sustainable it will produce less waste which means less costs, which fundamentally means that it is economic factors that drives sustainability efforts. What he has noticed when different companies want to utilize Looprocks is that they are looking for a way of saving money and make a good business deal, hence, Zide argued that providing these factors with a business platform is what entice companies to participate and to stay. Ahlman added to this where he responded that he believed that the financial factor is the biggest motivator to participate in a B2B platform. He argued for that if companies see that there might exist opportunities to expand the business, reduce their costs and a way of using their resources more effectively, then this acts as the biggest motivational driver. He exemplified this by pointing towards if there is a company that wants to acquire some specific equipment but can not afford to buy it, then a sharing platform can give the firm a mean of acquiring that product by clustering together with other companies and execute some kind of deal there. Groves, on the other hand, meant that if you are in an industry where for example B2B sharing is not the core revenue to a business, the financial factor is not the first hurdle or motivator. It is a big factor according to Groves, but it is not the primary one.

Näslund answered this question by pointing towards that in his experience companies do often ask themselves “what’s in it for me” financially. Rehman on the other hand took a

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<sup>1</sup>Svenskbarter is an economical association with the goal to create a company cooperative for growth and sustainable development. The project enables companies to exchange underutilized resources with each other in exchange for barter credits and debits

slightly different approach on the question. Even though he clearly stated that it is financial factors which act as the main drivers when it comes to B2B, he added to this and meant that these drivers have a somewhat different effects on multinational versus small companies. When mentioning multinational companies, Rehman meant that bigger companies are concerned with the financial drivers, however they are self-sufficient and hence they can concentrate more on their brand value by for example marketing towards their sustainable production. On the other hand, Rehman meant that smaller companies have a higher focus on the financial aspect. B2B platforms could act as a part of a sustainable business model on which smaller companies can flourish.

Lagander is also clear when answering the question where he stated that profitability is A and O and without financial profitability you will have nothing. What he has noticed when working on SvenskBarter with business to business exchanges is that companies foremost want to increase their revenue which enables them to increase their customer base and secondly, lower their costs. Which Rehman also confirmed when he argued that participation in business platforms could either be because of saving time or a way for companies to increase their revenue. Lagander explained this by arguing that people are not idealists but rather when a company does something it is solely to make money out of it. From the perspective of SvenskBarter, Lagander explained this as the more professional the broker they have, in making the customer satisfied, the bigger the revenue and the income they can get directly in cash. Which means that they can profit but also further ahead create sustainable incentives.

Näslund provided examples of how companies are exchanging unused resources as of today but also stated that this is a highly unusual activity which can be further developed to provide companies with financial value with more. He argued for that companies today buy new products without checking their stores first which means that companies inhabit a lot of unnecessary resources. For example, Näslund continued, real estate owners today are looking for ways to exploit their unused facilities and the sharing economy platforms provides a mean of lower these transaction costs. Further, Näslund believed there are several workshops and alike, which probably have not yet noticed that they could inhabit a business model, which could enable them to lend their products when they are not using them themselves. The introduction of advanced technology are according to the majority of our respondents an imperative step towards the development of B2B platforms. Technology can help allocate unused resources and hence reduce the transaction costs. Groves talked about the introduction of technology and that it can reduce frictions, introduce efficiencies in the transaction process and hence potentially reduce the costs for the company.

## 5.4 Sustainability

Among our respondents, all recognized that the sustainability factor is related to sharing. The theme was discussed by all respondents and produced some very interesting arguments. Ahlman's view was that sustainability is relevant for most firms, further, Ahlman reflected upon how much of a driver it really is for B2B sharing. He stated that it will depend on the context and industry and that it often depends on how the industry looks when it comes to sustainable practices in general. Moreover, Lagander added to this point by explaining that firms consist of people, therefore, the urge of acting sustainable differ widely from firm to firm. However, the difference in attitude towards sustainability between firms will go away if there are financial benefits connected with acting sustainable. Lagander brought up an example where sustainability and financial benefits both are at play. He discussed restaurants and how they instead of throwing away food can sell it for a cheaper sum or trade it on Svenskbarter, and by doing this, gain some value in terms of money or other credits, at the same time as less food will be thrown away.

Näslund's view is that society is moving toward a more sustainable mindset. Sustainability is now relatively high up on the agenda for younger people, further, firms often tries to align with the goals for agenda 2030. Moreover, Näslund argued that many of the firms that have a business model based on sharing are driven from a sustainability aspect. According to Näslund, the challenge will be to reach the firms that do not have sharing as their core business model. However, Näslund brought up an example where change in long term strategies has occurred with H&M and how they are implementing circular thinking in their long-term strategies, since firms in the future will be expected to have sustainable values.

Further, Ahlman talked about how sustainability is and might become a larger part of a brand. He used the example of IKEA, who now offer their customers a free service where they can re-sell their furniture and the listing is for free. IKEA might even lose some sales on this, though this can help build the brand and improve their image which in turn might lead to long-term benefits in terms of brand value. Näslund's view on sustainability as a marketing tool was a bit mixed. On the one hand, his view was that firms should of course not use sustainability to greenwash themselves, but on the other hand younger people are putting higher and higher demands on firms to be sustainable and they are the future consumers. Accordingly, firms must adapt their business models and policies to project the correct values in their brands for reaching this new generation. Lagander also discussed the marketing value of participation in the platform Svenskbarter. Lagander argued that the CSR characteristics of Svenskbarter is a strong argument for firms to join the platform.

In addition, Ahlman talked about co-working spaces and that firms can offer their unused office space for rent and how this can have financial and sustainable benefits. Furthermore, Näslund talked about how Umeå municipality has been considering what to do with their facilities after working hours when they usually stand empty. Näslund continued with the statement that utilizing assets one already has instead of investing is also a way of being sustainable. Moreover, Reham brought up that today's customer has a better understanding of the world. The customers today look at more things than just brand and quality, they want to make sure that the product is manufactured in a certain way. Furthermore, Reham talked about the mindset of entrepreneurs and how it has

changed. Larger companies today allocate a certain sum of money to CSR activities, whereas these new entrepreneurs try to implement sustainability into the DNA of the firms, and they do this by building business models that are inherently sustainable. This in turn, would according to Reham, force larger corporations to up their CSR spending in order to compete.

Further, Groves explained that sharing to him means inherently reusable, that you reuse an underutilized asset and perform some kind of recycling, repurposing or reusing. According to Groves this ties very well into sustainability. However, Groves thought firms should be careful with using and presenting themselves as sustainable. It is important not to claim that you are green if you can not quantify it and prove it. If a firm does this, it can be seen as greenwashing and it could raise suspicion and will erode the trust with the customer base. Groves summarized it as “we shouldn’t be banging the green drum unless we are tangible and quantifiable green”.

Moreover, Zide argued that sustainability is completely secondary to other factors when it comes to driving the B2B sharing economy. Further, Zide claimed that sustainability is a word that often is misused and ends up being misleading which results in firms tricking their customers. Further, Zide discussed the importance of getting the ball rolling for commercial sharing. Zide said that in order to improve the environment and the society it is not enough with consumer sharing, and that the real difference maker will be when sharing between larger commercial players gets up to speed. Because they are the ones with the largest impact on society.

Furthermore, Minoz brought up another perspective on sustainability in the context of sharing. The argument was that even if sharing is sustainable, the end result of a platform might not be. The logic behind the argument is that by sharing one can avoid buying a car, boat, clothes or similar which in itself is good, whereas avoiding the costs associated with previously mentioned assets the consumer will save up extra consumption power. If this extra consumption power is used to fly across the world on vacations it is reasonable to argue that the sharing did not contribute to a more sustainable world.

## 5.5 Uncertainty

Uncertainty was brought up and discussed by all respondents. In the broad sense, the respondents had similar thoughts, but many different perspectives were discussed. Ahlman brought up that in general people are skeptical toward changes of any kind. Moreover, almost all respondents reflected upon the issue of regulation. Ahlman mentioned an interesting example of a trash collecting platform that was fundamentally sound in many ways. The platform helps with recycling and offer jobs, but it did not fit with the Swedish regulations and the platform ended up being terminated. In addition, Näslund told us about the situation for many municipalities in Sweden, they are often not allowed to share certain assets since they are not allowed to put some assets up for competition, which also limits the municipality. Näslund summarized the claim nicely by saying that it is important to put the finger on how the regulation works, this point was further discussed by Ahlman, who underlined the uncertainties when it comes to accounting for the resources one shares and what tax rules should be applied. This is something that can seem a daunting task for the average firm.

Further, Näslund developed on the issues and uncertainty regarding tax rules and how undefined they are. Moreover, Näslund talked about the uncertainty of what one's business is, are my business sharing or a second-hand store? How much am I allowed to earn? Näslund also talked about the concept of sharing, that people are not sure what it really means and where the line is. Reham brought up some similar points regarding tax issues, people do not know when or if they should declare for sharing and how they should go about it. Hence, people might avoid sharing due to the unclear procedures around it.

Reham identified economy and security as two factors that are central for firms when making any investment decision. Another interesting concept related to regulation is that the further south you go on the map, the more sharing is conducted. Reham made the argument that the probable reason for this is the difference in regulation. He used the example of Dubai, where ridesharing has no obstacles and there are no real tax issues when it comes to sharing, therefore, sharing enterprises have been very successful in Dubai. Rules from non-state entities were also discussed, like worker unions or other policies that might hamper sharing. Lagander mentioned that in certain situations there could be a potential problems with unions, were you for example pay employees with credits that only are usable on certain platforms. Further, Groves discussed unions and his view is that they probably won't be a problem, as long as fair wages and working conditions are upheld for the partakers in B2B sharing.

Zide also talked about uncertainty as something that larger firms generally dislike and how smaller firms can deal with some types of uncertainty and risk. Hence, the firms that first adopts the use of sharing platforms will likely be smaller firms. Further, Zide argued that smaller firms will drive the evolution toward sharing, the idea is that smaller firms can make use of sharing and as a result save or earn money, which will directly increase the profits.

According to Groves, there is a reward premium at play with uncertainty. If you want to rent or hire an asset for a shorter period like an hour, day or month there will be a price premium. Since, the renter avoids any potential maintenance expenses and capital outlay. However, Groves also stated that when the an asset is rented out longer, the uncertainty levels also decreases, so then, naturally, the premium decreases. Furthermore, Groves



developed on how uncertainty can be reduced by utilizing the B2B sharing economy. For example, if a firm plan to expand their offices, they might not be sure if they will need the extra space in a year or if it will be useful enough. In a situation like this, the firm can by utilizing sharing avoid committing a large amount of capital for an asse, hence, reducing the uncertainty. In contrast, Näslund brought up the point that buying and owning an asset permanently will eliminate much uncertainty, then you know where the asset is, that it works and that you can access it at any time.

Trust is something that is tied to and uncertainty and was discussed in several interviews. Groves considered trust crucial for any marketplace and underscores that users must be convinced that it is safe to share sensitive information with the platform, such as credit card information and other personal data. Further, Groves mentioned that this trust is becoming more important than ever looking at the issues which Facebook and other social media platforms are going through with privacy. Furthermore, Reham brought up the example of loaning money and talked about the use of banks were there really is no other alternative, in theory, one could loan money from anyone. Many have quite a negative view of banks but there is often no other option available, the reason for using banks is often that they provide securities that most other players can not provide.

## 5.6 Speculations About the Future

The future of B2B sharing the coming ten years was discussed in most interviews and we got some interesting insights. Ahlman was of the opinion that firms to some extent will have to adapt to sharing in order to survive. Furthermore, Näslund talked about how firms today often miss or are unable to see the potential tweaks to their business models that wold allow them to share. Näslund brought up the example of rental firms, and how they could act as both a rental firm and a mediating platform where their current customer base could list their underutilized assets for sharing. The rental firm could make this financially viable by taking a percentage of each transaction. Moreover, Näslund had the belief that co-owned facilities in terms of stores or firms will become more of a norm than an exception, premises will not be owned or used by a single entity as is the norm today. In addition, Näslund's belived that transportation will change a lot the coming ten years, all trips will be used much more efficient. For example, if one drives out to the countryside to drop something of, there will be systems in place to see if there is anything from that area that needs to be brought back to the city, so that as few cars, busses or trucks as possible ever travels empty. Lagander seconded this point and argued that there are many initiatives when it comes to sharing space in trucks and ride-sharing. In addition, Groves talked in similar terms where he stated that B2B sharing will become mainstream and understood by businesses. Furthermore, Groves thought that B2B sharing will mainly stay within verticals dominated by a few key players, so that there are different sharing firms within different industries, like AirBnb for housing, Uber for transport and so on.

Reham's view of the future of sharing was that entrepreneurs and new firms are the key, whereas Reham thought that most of the larger firms will not be able to adapt to sharing. Furthermore, Reham talked about how the hottest interest by entrepreneurs now is to start sharing firms around the concept of lending, and after that comes the transport sector and real-estate.

Minoz's view of the future was that sharing through platforms will be integrated into the society to the degree that we will not look upon it as something extraordinary. Minoz argued, there are experts within the field that mean that it is hard to differentiate between B2B and C2C. Therefore, it has been suggested to start calling it for human to human (H2H) since it does not matter if you are in a business or if you are a private consumer. In either case, you can be active on several platforms at the same time. Furthermore, Minoz argued that platforms will shift focus towards user needs, user utility and where several different actors can cooperate to utilize this.

## 5.7 Other

During the interviews, there were other motivational factors and perspectives which was not the focus of the research. However, it is important to shed a light on these for the purpose of acknowledgment due to the potential of future research. One motivational factor identified outside of the other ones was competitiveness. Ahlman argued that the competitive environment for businesses becomes tougher and tougher and it is not perfectly clear whether companies themselves recognize this threat. By that Ahlman meant that traditional businesses have to adapt to this new type of sharing economy, and that they can not only cut their costs in order to show good numbers and look upon that as a sustainable strategy.

Minoz had a bit of a different perspective when it came to which factors entice or deter management motivation to participation in a B2B platform. She argued that due to the complex surroundings around platforms it is hard to point out specific drivers for participation. Rather she argued, it depends on the area of investigation, how the prerequisite look, what kind of company one is looking at, the size of the company or what kind of resources that will be shared. Profitability and competitiveness are fundamental, however, which of the factors entices or deters management motivation to participation is dependent on the surroundings. Furthermore, Minoz meant, it depends on the country the company is operating in and where, due to that the prerequisite may look different depending on where you are. However, if there is an opportunity for the company to make a business more convenient, profitable or make it more useful for customers then it is something that is interesting for most companies. Minoz argued that it is quite conservative to believe that sustainability for example is separate from profitability and financial success. Due to, as Zide also argued for, sustainability and resource allocation is fundamentally a way for companies to make their operations cheaper and find more convenient ways of sharing resources. Hence, in this example, it is not only sustainability a company wants to achieve. Rather they want to create a sequence of making the day to day operations more convenient, profitable and cost effective.

## 5.8 Ranking of factors

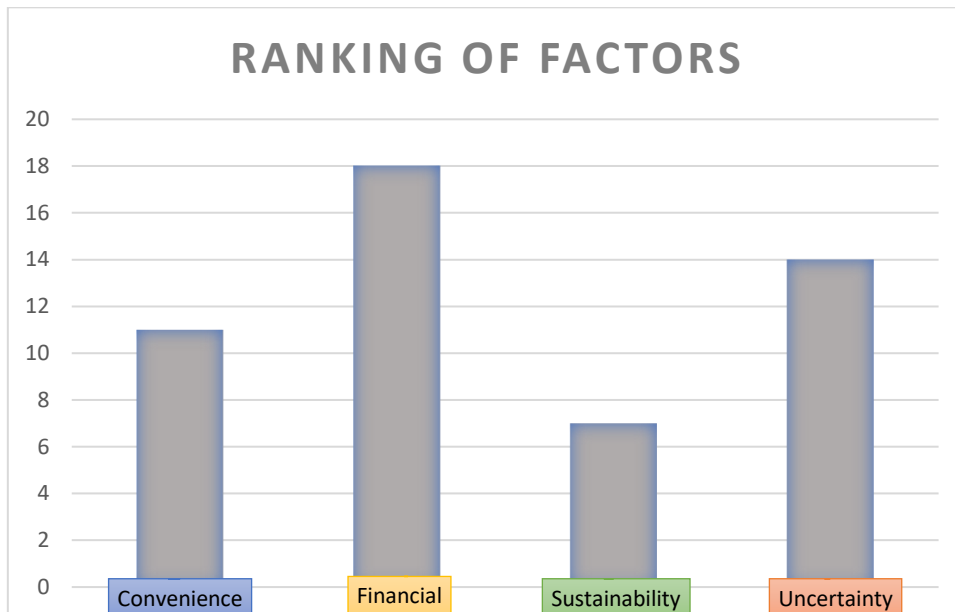


Figure 10 - Created by the authors

During the interviews all respondents were requested to rank the four factors from the most important driver for B2B sharing to the least important. In order to make the rankings more digestible *figure 10* was constructed. Being ranked as the most important factor would give the factor four points, second would give you three points, third would give two points and the least important factor would gain one point. The figure displays the total amount of points gathered by each factor during all interviews. This gives a good overview of the respondents' view of the factors. However, one of the respondents did not see it fit to rank the factors since they are often related to each other, hence, the chart is based on six of the seven interviews.

## 5.9 Summary of Results

### 5.9.1 Convenience

Out of the four factors convenience was on average ranked number three. Unanimous throughout the interviews was that convenience is a vital part of a B2B platform, and that there must exist convenience in order to attract users and make them stay at the platform. Convenience was regarded as increasing time efficiency for managers, and that this was a contribution of the evolving technology in society. What was central around the interviews was the view that people want to take the easy way around different issues. Groves added to this and said that that is why people are prepared to pay a premium for the service of “ease of use”. Therefore, if managers feel that it is too complicated to participate in a B2B platform, they will not do it.

### 5.9.2 Financial

The financial factor was without doubt the most important factor for the larger part of our respondent, where only Groves ranked it as number three. The respondents argued that financial objectives are the main reason to why companies choose to participate and stay

on a sharing platform. Potential participation for a company was viewed as a mean for businesses to make more efficient use of their unused resources, hence, reducing costs or as a way of finding a potential business deal in order to profit. As such, if managers can see that there exist potential profits to be made, then this factor acts as the number one motivator for B2B participation.

### 5.9.3 Uncertainty

Uncertainty was considered the second most important factor on average, various sorts of uncertainty were discussed in the interviews. The by far most touched upon was regarding regulation and how unclear it is. As Reham explained, in countries with less rules regarding sharing and tax, it is easier for the sharing to take place. People and firms are uncertain on what type of sharing is allowed and if there is a limit on how much one is allowed to earn. Moreover, uncertainties regarding tax were widely discussed and were identified as a major barrier. In addition, workers unions were discussed but most respondents had the view that they could be a problem but not a major one. As Groves inferred, unions will probably only object if the working conditions are lackluster or if workers are underpaid. One interesting point brought up by Zide, was that smaller firms can handle slightly more risk, hence, they are the one that will be the early adopters of these sharing platforms. Therefore, the shift towards more B2B sharing will be led by smaller firms. Furthermore, Groves had an interesting example of how uncertainty can be decreased by sharing compared to the traditional purchase of an asset. If the asset requires a large capital investment and the firm is not sure on how long they will need the asset, sharing could decrease the uncertainty by removing the need for the up-front capital investment.

### 5.9.4 Sustainability

The sustainability factor was considered the fourth most important factor on average. However, the role of it is still important and sustainability was discussed at length. When it comes to sharing the respondents agreed that sharing in most scenarios is inherently sustainable. Further, Groves developed on how one should only claim to be sustainable if it is possible to prove it and make it tangible, otherwise it might erode trust with the customer base. Furthermore, Näslund expressed that the younger people in society which will become the future consumers will have certain demands on corporations when it comes to sustainability. Thus, it will become more important to reflect these values in the brand image, these moves toward a more sustainable image can already be seen by firms like H&M and IKEA.

Below a table is presented where the points of higher relevance in relation to each specific factor is displayed.

Table 3 - Summary of data

Ranking of factors	Summary of data
<p><b>1. Financial</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most important factor for most respondents</li> <li>• Financial/monetary reasons are why most firms chose to share</li> <li>• Potential participation in a B2B platform is highly motivated by managers to seek a way of saving money and make a good business deal in order to profit</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Uncertainty</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncertainty regarding regulation and taxation is central</li> <li>• Unions are not that big of a problem</li> <li>• Smaller firms can handle more risk</li> <li>• Smaller firms will bring the transformation</li> <li>• Uncertainty could in some instances be decreased by sharing since you can avoid fronting capital to buy the asset</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Convenience</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use technology to increase the convenience levels</li> <li>• Sharing must be time-efficient</li> <li>• It must be easy to share</li> <li>• People are willing to pay extra for ease of use</li> <li>• Convenience must exist otherwise potential users will not participate and stay.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Sustainability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing is inherently sustainable</li> <li>• Only claim to be sustainable if you can quantify it</li> <li>• Stance toward sustainability depends on context, industry and the people within a firm</li> <li>• Can be important for company branding</li> </ul>

## 6.0 Analysis

First, the structure of the analysis is presented. Then then the chapter continues with a comparative analysis of the secondary and primary data, factor by factor. To determine which factors entice or deter management participation in the B2B sharing economy and to what extent. Last, additional findings from the primary data is discussed.

### 6.1 Structure of the analysis

In order to structure the analysis and provide a fundamental understanding regarding the four factors which drives or hinders management to participate in the B2B sharing economy. The conceptual model presented in the theoretical framework is used to structure the analysis. However, it is worth mentioning that some subfactors do not possess their own title due to the limited results surrounding the subfactor in question. Instead, a more comprehensive analysis supporting each factor is provided.

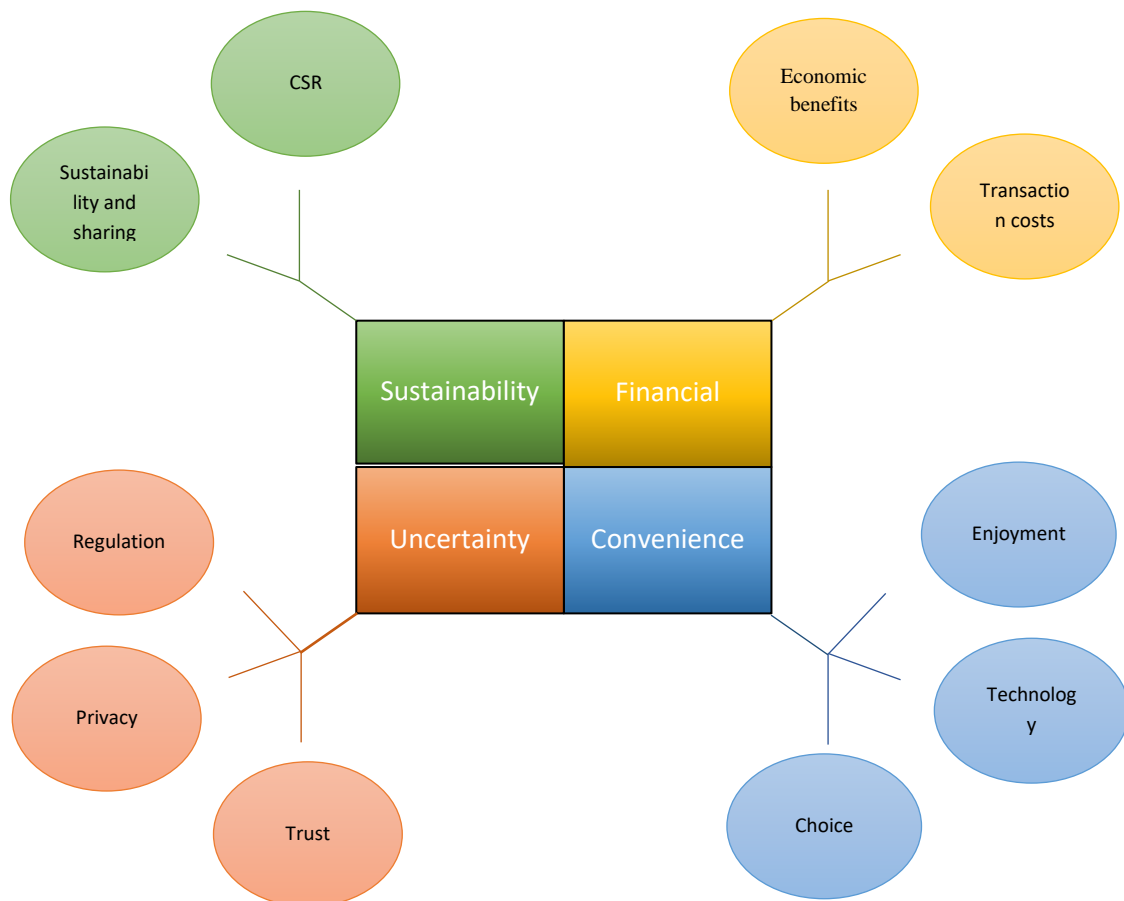


Figure 11 – Conceptual model - Created by the authors

## 6.2 Convenience

All respondents were unanimous that convenience is a critical factor for B2B participation in the sharing economy, even though they had different perspectives on its significance in relation to the other factors. This was also the case when comparing the C2C literature. An overall category which was brought up during the interviews was convenience in terms of time-efficiency and that convenience is a fundamental part in any kind of business. There is a substantial amount of literature surrounding the factor and its relevance. However, what was noted when analyzing the results was that convenience ought to be an integral part of every business though its relevance in relation to the other factors was not that imperative. When looking at how the respondents ranked the relevance of the factors on average, convenience as a potential driver or barrier was only on the third place. Behind the financial and uncertainty factors but before the sustainability factor. What also was noted was the technological relevance for convenience where technology was used as a mean of making the service of participating in the platform easier and hence more convenient.

### 6.2.1 Enjoyment

Even though Hamari et al. (2016) write that enjoyment is a strong motivator for active participation in the sharing economy, enjoyment as a theoretical factor for convenience is not highlighted in the B2B sharing scenario. Hamari et al. (2016) found that convenience is an important factor of attitude which also seems to be the case in the B2B context. All respondents were unanimous when explaining that in order to partake in a B2B platform it must be convenient. On the other hand, the arguments were mostly about time-efficiency in the business case while Hamari et al. (2016) wrote that imperative subfactors to convenience were to make it pleasurable, communal and ideological. Furthermore, Hamari et al. (2016) found in their studies that the curiosity of human nature, in relation to increased technology, creates an intriguing atmosphere where people want to participate because it is fun. However, this is not directly applicable in the B2B case. Though, it cannot be omitted that enjoyment plays no role whatsoever in the B2B case. However, from the data gathered it was noticed that the respondents never argued for enjoyment as an intriguing factor for companies in order to participate in a B2B sharing platform. As such, enjoyment is believed to be of minor importance when it comes to partaking on a B2B sharing platform. Hence, marketing towards companies should rather have a higher focus toward other factors analyzed in this study, which has a higher significance.

### 6.2.2 Technology

The majority of the respondents mentioned the evolvement of the digital infrastructure as incredibly important since this ease matching of demand and supply. Groves argued that markets evolve when the existing market is inefficient and can be improved through the use of technology. This is in accordance with Zhang et al. (2018) studies where they found that consumers want convenient access to information and professional service quality, which technological development can help improve. From the analysis of the qualitative data, one can also tell that this is in accordance with Hansen & Iwona's (2016) argumentation that without the technology as we have today, we would not have any sharing platforms, hence, the transaction costs in these commercial markets would be high.

Based on the literature and qualitative data gathered, it becomes clear that the technological factor is important in order to improve the user experience when using B2B sharing platforms. Further, technological development will decrease transaction costs as well as increasing the level of perceived convenience of B2B sharing.

### 6.2.3 Choice

Näslund pointed out in the interview that what we do not easily see, we will not buy and this is in accordance with what Botsman & Rogers (2010) explains in their book that there must be enough choice, so the customer feels satisfied with what is available. This was further highlighted by Groves who gave an example of some problems that arose when he started up Rubberdesk. He noted that there was a demand for this kind of service on the market, however, in the start he possessed a limited amount of supply, hence, it became hard for him to attract customers. Hence, what is noted here is the importance of marketing these platforms to create a supply in order to meet the demand from the customers. To be able to show the user that there is supply to access is an imperative step in attracting managers to participate in a B2B platform.

## 6.3 Financial

The results of this study indicates that the financial factor was the primary driver for management participation in B2B sharing platforms. The interpretation from the results indicates that if managers acknowledges that there exist opportunities to expand the business, reduce their costs or if they can tell there is a way for them to make more efficient use of their unused resources, the potential motivation for them to participate in a B2B platform becomes higher. This is in relation with Sundararajan's (2014, pp. 5,6) findings where he explained that economic consequences in the sharing economy stems from the low market transaction costs, and further that anticipated economic effects is productivity gains, entrepreneurship, innovation and shifts in assets markets. Any active moves by a company seems to be in contrast with the question whether the company can increase its revenue by doing that activity. As with convenience, technology contributing to lower transaction costs were mentioned in relation with the financial factor, as a mean for companies of saving time and by that make the company's day to day operations smoother. Consequently, this would increase their revenue and reduce their costs. What also was recognized was how the use of a sharing platform may act as a mean of increasing the company's customer base, hence increasing its revenue. This is further in relation with Sundararajan's (2014, pp. 5,6) findings that potential economic consequences with participation would be expansion in consumption.

So, from the results and in accordance with the literature, the financial factor acts as the main driver towards participation on a B2B platform and hence marketers of platforms should take this into account by highlighting what potential financial benefits there stand to gain by participating.

### 6.3.1 Economic Benefits

As stated by Hamari et al. (2016), financial benefits, in such as saving money and time, had a significant impact on behavioral intentions. Which also seems to be the case when relating this to the qualitative findings analyzed. The analysis of the interviews confirmed this statement where the respondents argued that managers would like to participate if



they can tell that there exists a way for them to utilize their underused assets and by that saving money and time. Which was due to the fundamental motivations of managers to find an effective business deal. The interpretation of the results suggests that managers must see the financial benefits of participation in a platform or it will otherwise not be attractive for them. However, Hamari et al. (2016) also indicated that in a C2C setting, financial benefits seemed to be less important when it came to its impact on attitude which is also confirmed by interpreting the results.

From the results of this study, Ahlman was the only respondent who mentioned competitiveness as a motivating factor for participation in a B2B platform. This is comparable with Belk's (2007) findings that organizations today do recognize that the sharing economy is creating an enormous amount of wealth and that they are not slow to adapt to this new type of economy. However, it is noted from the results that sharing platforms creates an alternative mean for companies to use in order to make efficient use of their resources and potentially acquire other resources which could otherwise not be acquired. This then enables the company to continue with its operations and hence increase its profitability. We believe based on the results that adapting to these changes in the market are imperative for companies to stay competitive which also is confirmed by Belk (2007). Managers see profitability in the organization as the highest motivator, as such staying competitive by using these platforms can be one mean to secure profits.

### 6.3.2 Transaction Costs

While lower transaction costs were to a higher degree associated with convenience, it was followed up as a mean of increasing the financial prospects. Use of a B2B platform was recognized as an opportunity for companies to expand their business, find business opportunities and use their resources more efficiently. A B2B platform could act as a mean for lowering transaction costs in terms of meeting and integrating with other firms than the traditional way of making deals. Meaning that if company A was looking for a product, the easiest way to acquire it could be to find another company on the platform to exchange with, henceforth, company A could acquire the product without too much effort. This is in relation with Habibi's et al. (2017, p. 2) findings that digital platforms, as a result of improved technology, are decreasing transactions costs in terms of searching, contacting and contracting. In addition, Habibi et al. (2017, p. 13) argued that the lower transaction costs enables smaller companies to enter the market, while on the other hand, larger companies also may benefit from this. Rehman pointed out that smaller firms may use the platform as a mean of improving their financial prospects while on the other hand, larger companies may use them for improving their brand value. Yaraghi & Ravi (2017, p. 19) mentioned in their article that there exist three costs associated with switching to a platform which are training, learning, time and trust which are all factors covered in this study which is highly related to convenience and financial. Further, it is important for B2B platforms to address previously mentioned costs, if they are too high companies will not participate in sharing. However, if the costs are relatively low, managers will see the potential gains in terms of time and revenue and are therefore more likely to participate on a B2B sharing platform.

## 6.4 Sustainability

The attitude towards sustainability has changed the last decade, this is showcased by the increased number of international initiatives when it comes to promoting projects and science within the area (Kates et al., 2001, p. 641). Reham had a similar take on the matter, he stated that customers today have a different way of evaluating products due to that customers today want more than good quality, they want the product to be manufactured a certain way. In addition, Näslund stated that society as a whole is moving toward a more sustainable way of living and how the next generation will put higher demands when it comes to sustainability than current generations.

From the business side of things, there has also been increased interest for sustainability, even if some research suggests that this is mainly due to self-interests and not a genuine desire to be sustainable (Gray, 2010, p. 48). Reham talked about the business side of things as he is convinced that the mindset of entrepreneurs are changing, and that sustainability will be integrated into the business models of the future.

All respondents were unanimous in the view that sustainability is connected with sharing and brand image. However, the factor on average is the lowest rated as a driver for engagement in B2B sharing. Hence, even though sustainability is an important part of society and a factor that could grow in importance, one could argue that B2B platforms should prioritize the other factors in their marketing.

### 6.4.1 Corporate Social Responsibility

The focus of the stakeholders has lately shifted toward a larger focus on legitimacy and sustainability questions (Nalband & Al-Amri, 2013, p. 284). The will of large stakeholders such as investors and customers can sway the stance of a firm regarding large questions. One can see the reaction from large corporations, as the example Ahlman brought up with IKEA's free listings for used furniture, and as Näslund discussed H&M have taken initiatives to become circular. Furthermore, much literature suggest that customers consider sustainable characteristics of firms and products during their purchase process (Bhardwaj et al., 2018, p. 205). Näslund discussed how the next generation seemingly put a larger emphasis on sustainability, and since they are the future consumers firms tend to react in their long-term strategies. In addition, Lagander stated that CSR was a main argument for many of the firms that have joined the platform. However, Näslund stated that firms should not use sustainability in order to greenwash themselves, which is coherent with Groves statement "we shouldn't be banging the green drum unless we are tangible and quantifiable green".

By analyzing previous literature and the data collected, it is clear that the newfound interest of sustainability has already shifted the opinions of stakeholders, hence, the firms will adapt. However, it is a thin line for the firms to walk on the one hand they want to brand themselves as sustainable, on the other hand they risk being seen as "green washers" which can have the consequence of eroding trust. One way of becoming more sustainable is by utilizing B2B sharing.

### 6.4.2 Sustainability in the Sharing Economy

There is an ongoing debate in regards to if sharing is sustainable, but most research point toward the conclusion that sharing by nature is sustainable (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, pp.

73,74). However, there are situations where sharing can have negative consequences on the community (Koster et al., 2018; Ward, 2017). In addition, there are relatively few empirical studies that suggest that sharing is sustainable (Daunorienė et al., 2015).

Groves view was that sharing is based on utilizing an asset by reuse or repurposing which ties very well into sustainability. Furthermore, Zide stated that it is important for the society and environment that commercial sharing takes off, and that it is within B2B sharing where the real difference for society will be made, further, Zide argued that private sharing will have a small impact on society as a whole. In addition, the sharing economy enables society to shift away from a culture of ownership toward a culture of sharing (Martin, 2016, p. 149). However, even if sustainability is an important factor for society it is not the main driver for participating in C2C sharing (Botsman & Rogers, 2010, pp. 73,74). Which is in line with what our respondents expressed for B2B sharing, that sustainability is not the main driver for either C2C or B2B sharing. This is clear by looking at previous literature as well as by looking at the results.

As mentioned in the results section, Minoz had an interesting argument regarding sustainability and how the saved consumption power gained by sharing often is spent on further consumption, which could negate the sustainable effects of sharing. This argument is compelling. However, it might be unfair to load a sharing platform for how the individual or firm decides to spend their saved income, they could spend it on flying somewhere, but they could also spend it on planting trees which could boost the sustainable effect of sharing rather than negate them.

Furthermore, we think that one should not underestimate the cultural shift that the sharing movement can bring, a culture of sharing would decrease consumption of new goods. Hence, decreasing the use of raw materials which would lead to a more sustainable society. Based on what our respondents expressed and what the majority of literature inferred, it is clear that sharing in general is sustainable.

## 6.5 Uncertainty

### 6.5.1 Regulation

The issue of regulation is widely recognized when it comes to sharing. Katz argued that the legal issues are similar to that of conventional businesses. However, there are some additional issues to tackle when it comes to the sharing economy (Katz, 2015, p. 1113). Further, Miller argued that these issues must be recognized by legislators so that special laws can be developed, moreover, it is important to realize that sharing have different legal needs depending on the industry (Miller, 2016, pp. 151, 152). These points go hand in hand with what Näslund stated, there are no clear guidelines in terms of legislation when it comes to tax rules, so both businesses and private consumers are uncertain on what is allowed or not allowed. In addition, Reham talked about it and concluded that many might avoid participating in sharing since the legal guidelines are too unclear. If some platforms are deemed illegal that might force the platforms underground and this would result in increased uncertainty when utilizing the platform (Berg et al., 2013, p. 76). In addition, we would argue that legal issues also will tie into the geography, depending on in which country the firm is active. It might run into completely different obstacles, as expressed by Reham, in Dubai it is often quite easy to conduct sharing from a legal standpoint since tax rules there are lenient.

We consider regulation as a crucial issue, looking at both the interviews and the secondary sources the importance of regulation becomes apparent. If the laws are unclear, it is safe to assume that fewer entrepreneurs would be willing to start a platform, since it might be deemed illegal once it is launched. Further, it is clear from the results that for businesses to utilize sharing at a large scale it is important with clear regulations when it comes to both usage and tax issues.

### 6.5.2 Privacy

There are as discussed, some ethical dilemmas when it comes to data collection. Some sharing platforms do not only accumulate value from their services, but also from the immense amount of data that they often collect. For example transportation platforms like Uber and DiDi collect data regarding destinations and origins of the trips, this data is to some extent reasonable to collect. However, it can be used to predict patterns in people's personal life, thus, the data can be used to price discriminate depending on your location and time (Yaraghi & Ravi, 2017, pp. 15,16). Though as pointed out by Trop (2014), one could argue that many conventional businesses collect much of the same data. The issue was discussed by Groves who mentioned that privacy is more important than ever due to what Facebook and other social media platforms have gone through lately. The issue of privacy has gotten immense publicity the last year due to GDPR and the issues with Facebook. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that there will be increased pressure on all firms, sharing or not, to be transparent with how they use the data and what data they collect. In addition, some firms might be thinking twice before using a sharing platform since there is a potential that the platforms sell their data to competitors or other entities. Therefore, it is important for the platforms to create a trustworthy image.

### 6.5.3 Trust

Trust is a factor that is known to create uncertainty, especially in an online context (Gefen et al., 2003, p. 307). This fact makes it very relevant for the research, since a large challenge for the web-based platforms is to lower the uncertainty by increasing trust. The point is enforced by Groves statement, that trust is crucial for a marketplace and that users must be convinced that it is safe, to the extent that they are willing to enter personal data and their credit card information. Furthermore, one example of how trust is locking the society into old systems is brought up by Reham. Where he explained that many people would rather not use a bank but there is no other player that can provide the same securities, when it comes to those types of services. Thus, the results suggest that trust is a significant underlying barrier in certain industries. However, Reham mentioned that the interest for starting a sharing business that competes with banks is immense. The idea is that, businesses could with the help of a B2B lending platform, share money with each other instead of going to a bank. Further, development of sharing economy platforms will result in increased awareness, and if the job is done right by the platforms trust levels will increase, this success can already be seen at the consumer side of things, platforms like Uber and Airbnb have improved their trust levels and are now part of the norm for many people.

## 6.6 Other

Apart from the factors of investigation in this study, competitiveness as a potential driver for management participation was identified. Competitiveness is important for firms in

order to stay ahead of their competitors and use of sharing platforms could work as a mean of ensuring companies a competitive edge. To separate the factors of investigation in this study may inherit a fundamental value, though according to some respondents it is hard to differentiate between which ones weigh heavier than the other due to that the factors being very correlated. Hence, it will be of value for future research to investigate these factors, along with competitiveness, in relation to one another. Furthermore, we noticed that applying a general result over the B2B sharing economy may be hard due to the complex surroundings companies inhabit. How big the company is, what kind of resources they possess and what the prerequisites look like are all critical circumstances affecting the choices for companies. Additionally, what was noted among all our respondents, was that if a company sees an opportunity to make the business more convenient, profitable or more useful for customers then it is interesting for all companies.

## 7.0 Conclusion

The following chapter answers the research question and purpose by summarizing the findings and by providing practical as well as theoretical contributions of the research. Furthermore, limitations and speculations of future research is discussed.

Why and to what extent do the factors convenience, financial, sustainable and uncertainty entice or deter management participation in the B2B sharing economy?

### 7.1 Theoretical contribution

The purpose of this thesis was to determine how B2B sharing platforms can improve their target marketing by determining what convenience, financial, sustainable and uncertainty factors, entice or deter management to participation in the B2B sharing economy, the model presented in chapter 3.6 has been revised (*figure 11*). It is now presented in a hierarchical order to make a better representation of what factors of investigation seem to have the largest motivating or demotivating effect on management participation in a B2B sharing platform. Where the financial factor (number 1) acts as the largest motivator and where the sustainability factor (number 4) acts as the least motivating factor. The revision of the model will be conceptualized upon further below and is based on the secondary and primary sources analyzed in this study.

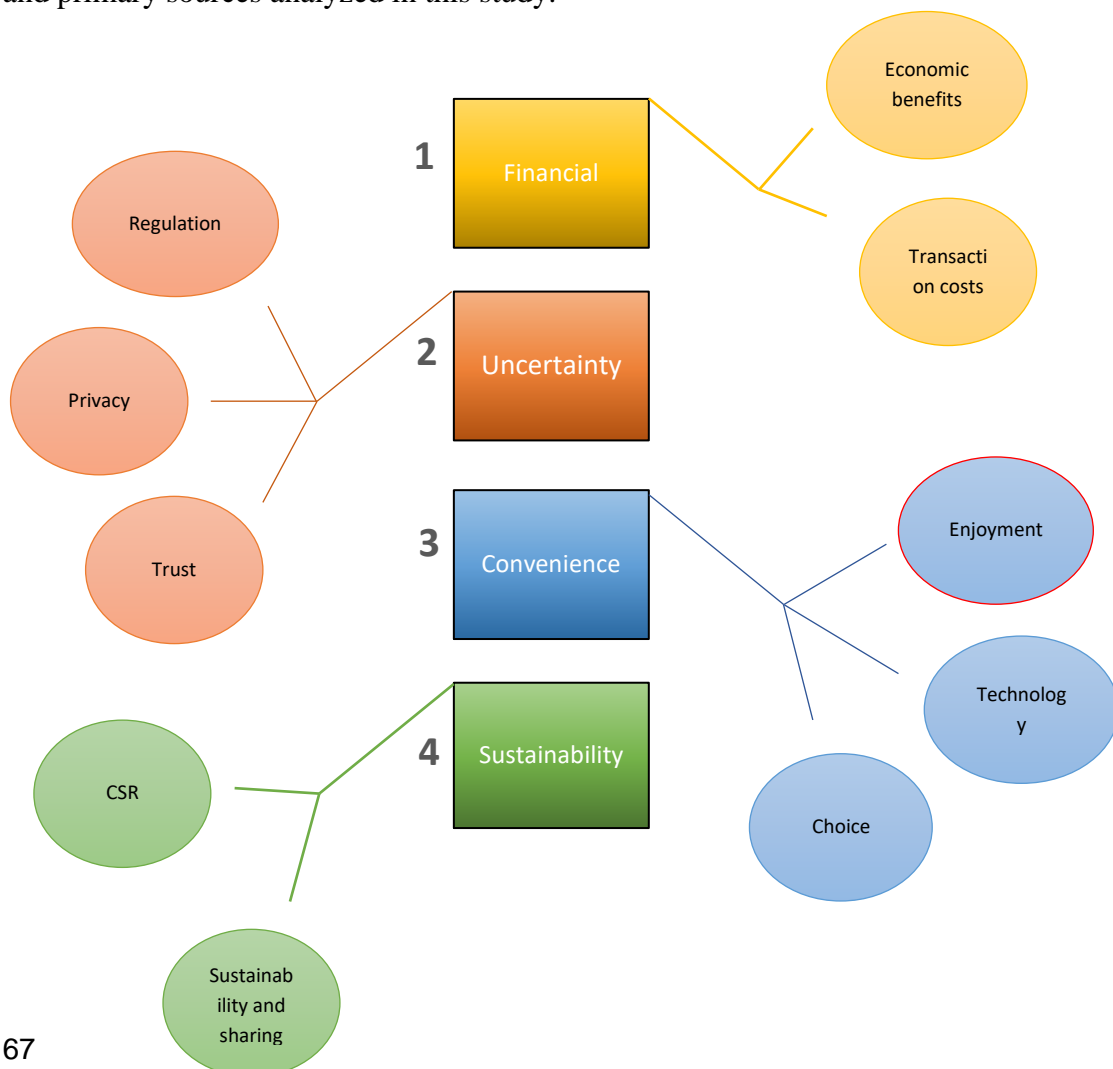


Figure 12 The modified conceptual model of B2B sharing drivers

## 7.2 Financial #1

B2B sharing platforms should focus on the financial benefits there stand to gain when marketing towards companies. It is clear both from the literature review and from the responses from the respondents that companies do embrace change if they can tell that they stand to gain economic benefits by participation. What was acknowledged from the interviews was that companies may embrace sharing platforms in order to decrease resource costs, make more efficient use of unused resources or find potential business deals. Companies seem to move to action with the question of whether the company can increase its revenue by doing that specific activity. Lower transactions were furthermore an integral part of this due to the importance of saving time and hence increase the efficiency for the company's day to day operations. Another motivator of participation was to increase the company's customer base. Hence, indirectly increase the revenues as Sundararajan (2014, pp. 5,6) also found that economic consequences with participation could be an expansion in consumption. Therefore, it is of the essence for B2B platforms when marketing towards companies to present how the companies can come to reduce their costs, increase their revenues and the opportunities it presents to find new business deals. However, if the process of participating in a B2B platform becomes too complicated, then the company will withdraw. Hence, it is also of importance for the platform to make the platform smooth and easy to access.

## 7.3 Uncertainty #2

The secondary and primary data shows a consistent image when it comes to uncertainty. We concluded that there are large uncertainties around regulation, privacy and trust. Furthermore, uncertainty is considered very important and only second to the financial factor. The reason for this is that firms are reluctant to face risks and the uncertainties involved with sharing regarding tax, privacy, regulation and trust. In addition, smaller firms are able to handle more risk, hence, it is fitting for B2B platforms to focus on smaller firms in their targeting. Further, it is important for B2B platforms to clarify all question marks that potential customers might have regarding tax, privacy, trust and regulation.

## 7.4 Convenience #3

Even though convenience was an important factor for participation both in the literature and from the interviews, we placed it as the third most important factor out of the four. This was largely based on the respondent's own answers where they got to rank the factors and where convenience turned out to be the third factor but also in relation with the literature analyzed. What is clear is that a platform has to be convenient or companies will not participate due to the time it takes to circulate around the complexity of not understanding how to proceed. While we decided to put technology as a subfactor to convenience in the literature, we noticed when conducting the interviews that the technological aspect in making a process more convenient was to a higher degree associated with the financial benefits a company, in the end, could gain. Thus, we noted that the development of technology in making a process more convenient was important, and is hence hard to differentiate between the financial and convenience factor, since they seem to go hand in hand with one another. However, even if convenience ought to be an anchored topic in previous research, it seemed to be rather taken for granted when conducting the interviews. The analysis from the interviews indicated that if a platform lacks convenience, companies will not participate. Hence, it is something a B2B platform

has to possess though they do not explicitly have to include it in their marketing towards companies. Because companies expect it to be convenient from the start.

While Hamari et al. (2016) wrote about the importance of enjoyment for active participation in the sharing economy, because it is fun and intriguing to try something new. We found from the interviews that enjoyment as a motivator for companies to participate in a B2B platform was never mentioned. Hence there seem to be a clear distinction between previous research and from our gathering of primary data where foremost Hamari et al. (2016) focused on people in a private setting while we focus on people in a business setting. Enjoyment does not seem to be of significance when comparing with the other subfactors and therefore we have marked it with a red circle in our revised model (*figure 11*). As such, B2B platforms should focus on making their service as convenient as possible because companies do expect it to be convenient, though the importance of trying to make it a fun experience is of lesser essence.

## 7.5 Sustainability #4

When looking at both the primary and secondary data, it became clear that sustainability only plays a trivial role in driving the sharing economy. It was concluded that firms see sustainability as something appealing, but in most cases, it will not be a main driver for participation in B2B sharing. However, it became clear that sustainability is growing in importance and the younger generation tends to value sustainable aspects higher. As such, future managers may come to value sustainability higher. For example, the primary data revealed that H&M and IKEA both adapt their strategies to fit the changing values of society with help of different corporate social responsibility actions.

Finally, we concluded that firms should not focus too much on sustainability while marketing towards businesses. Since it is not considered a primary driver and most firms already know that sharing is sustainable whereas other aspects of the B2B sharing economy is not as clear and could be prioritized in their marketing.

## 7.6 Other

Even though we have provided a framework for the separate factors motivating or demotivating participation in a B2B sharing platform to a higher or lesser degree, we noticed that in several cases these factors are integrated. For example, with the sustainability factor, it was noticed that even though sustainability did act as the least motivating factor of the four, it was considered a mean for financial success. Hence, if a firm is sustainable it is likely more efficient and wastes less resources and often this translates to increased profits. Furthermore, competitiveness as a motivating factor was acknowledged by one respondent which was not a focus point in this study. Hence, there could be a need for firms in the future to join sharing platforms in order to stay competitive. Thus, it would be of interest to investigate this factor further. In addition, several of the respondents argued for that sharing platforms will become so common in the future so we could come to name it human to human (H2H) instead as of today, when we separate it into C2C and B2B. As such, it could be suggested that sharing platforms should try to form a platform which suits the individual consumer as well as the profit-seeking businesses.



## 7.7 Practical contribution

The sharing economy is widely discussed by many entities of today's society, yet, there are relatively few B2B sharing platforms that have managed to gain traction. The ambition is that the results from this research will help B2B sharing platforms, by guiding how they should direct their marketing to attract firms to their platform. The revised model (*Figure 11*) can help managers at B2B sharing platforms in creating a compelling marketing strategy for their platform. Further, the model can help entrepreneurs improve their understanding of the current priorities of business customers which could help with development of platforms and business models.

Sharing platforms may act as a mean for companies to make efficient use of their resources where this can contribute to increased financial profitability, reduce material costs, increase convenient resource allocation and improve customer relations. Thus, today we recognize a relative fuzzy distinction between B2B and C2C where some people in society seem to be relatively unfamiliar with the topic, however, from the data gathered we can speculate that sharing in the future will become a common phenomenon. Hence, we believe based on the data gathered that sharing platforms in the future will be a central tool for certain companies in certain industries in order to improve their efficiency and stay competitive.

## 7.8 Limitations

The first limitation is from the selection of respondents where majority of respondents are from Sweden. This might skew the results toward a Swedish view of the sharing economy. Further, there are seven respondents in this study, which might be considered too low, but as explained in chapter 4.5 a sample of five to eight respondents is enough. Literature overall is very ambiguous on the correct number of interviews, but it is a potential weakness of the research.

Second, a limitation of the research is our understanding of the subject. Neither of us have worked in a B2B context or with the sharing economy, our knowledge comes only from literature which might give a dated picture of the subject. This point is especially relevant in such a new and quickly changing area as the sharing economy. Hence, we have listened to the respondents carefully to get the latest and greatest information available, further, we have modified the model based on literature with the new information gained from interviews.

Lastly, we have derived four factors that drive or hinder the B2B sharing economy. It is important to remember that there are other factors not looked upon in this study that drives or hinder management participation in sharing.

## 7.9 Recommendations to B2B platforms

Firstly, we have provided theoretical evidence that managers are driven to participate in a B2B platform for different reasons to different extent. The realization of this can be used by B2B platforms in their marketing campaigns where the platforms should focus on the factors of higher significance showed in the model (*figure 11*). The financial factor

acted as the main driver and hence it would be recommended for B2B platforms to parade the economic benefits a firm stand to gain with potential participation in their marketing.

Secondly, companies today have come to realize that the use of a sharing platforms can be a mean for making better use of under used resources, increase revenue or find business deals. This further put the company in a competitive edge over its competitors. Though, what is evident from the data gathered is that if a platform cannot provide convenience on the platform, then companies will not engage. As such, it would be recommended that B2B sharing platforms put their focus on making the platform as easily navigated as possible, though, this is not something that should be explicitly focused on in the marketing due to that this is not something extraordinary but rather something expected.

Thirdly, as previously mentioned, sustainability is ranked as number four in importance, but the younger generation do value sustainability higher, and the future managers will be from this new generation. Hence, platforms should monitor the development of this factor as it might grow in importance.

Lastly, uncertainty is something that is a real barrier and it is of great importance. We recommend firms to do market research to determine the exact areas in which businesses see issues with sharing. Further, the platform should highlight these issues in marketing and communication in order to gain trust and lower the barriers.

To conclude, firms should mainly put their marketing efforts in showing the potential efficiency and monetary benefits with sharing, in addition, they should work on building trust and lower the high level of uncertainty involved with sharing today.

## 7.10 Future research

During the study some additional aspects of B2B sharing that would be interesting for future research were identified.

First, it would be interesting to look at different industries and how the potential for B2B sharing differ in different branches. For example, it could be interesting to determine potential differences in attitude between two different industries, like transport and accommodation.

Second, we spoke with Reham about the issue of regulation and how it would be interesting to investigate further. It would be very fascinating to investigate different countries to determine how different regulation affect the number of sharing related firms.

Third, Minoz mentioned that the factors in this study are very intertwined, as such, to explore how the dynamics between the factors work is something that could be of interest.

Fourth, it would be interesting to determine if there is any attitude action gap at play. In this study many have a positive attitude towards B2B sharing. However, this study does not tell if the attitudes will lead to action.

Overall there is much room for further research, the subject is relatively new and literature on B2B sharing is scarce.

## 7.11 Societal aspects

This study contributes with knowledge on how B2B platforms should act to attract the commercial parts of society to participate in sharing. Hopefully, a trend will start similar to what happened on the consumer side of things. In addition, when asking the respondents how the prospects of B2B sharing looks the coming ten years, all of them had the view that B2B sharing will become the norm. Furthermore, this subject is very relevant for our time, as Rifkin (2016) highlighted with his claim that the sharing economy will be the “third industrial revolution”.

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## 9.0 Appendices

### 9.1 Appendix 1: interview guide sent out to respondents in Swedish

Teman	Frågor
B2B delning	Vad tror du driver deltagande i B2B delning?
Bekvämlighet	Är bekvämlighet viktigt för B2B delning enligt dig? Varför?
Finansiella	Hur påverkar finansiella faktorer deltagande i B2B delning enligt dig?
Hållbarhet	Hur viktig är hållbarhet som en drivande faktor för deltagande i B2B delning enligt dig?
Osäkerhet	Hur ser du på osäkerhet som en eventuell barriär när det kommer till deltagande i B2B delning?
Rankning	Rangordna följande teman "bekvämlighet, finansiella faktorer, hållbarhet och osäkerhet". Där 1 är den mest viktiga och 4 den minst viktiga.

## Framtiden

Hur tror du att B2B delning kommer att utvecklas de kommande 10 åren?

### 9.2 Appendix 2: interview guide sent out to respondents in English

Themes	Questions
B2B Sharing	What do you think are the primary drivers for B2B sharing?
Convenience	Is convenience important for B2B sharing according to you? Why?
Financial	How does financial factors affect participation in B2B sharing according to you?
Sustainability	How important is sustainability as a driver for participation in B2B sharing according to you?
Uncertainty	How do you view uncertainty as a potential barrier when it comes to participation in B2B sharing?

## Ranking

Rank the following themes," convenience, financial, sustainability and uncertainty". Where 1 is the most important and 4 the least important

## The future

How do you think B2B sharing will evolve the coming 10 years?

### 9.3 Appendix 3: Information sent out to respondents prior to interviews in English

Hello X!

Here is some information regarding the interview, so that you will have a chance to prepare!

We will ask the following questions before the interview:

- Are we allowed to record and transcribe the interview? If so, we will delete the recordings when we are done with the transcription.
- Do you prefer to be anonymous or not?

In the attached file you will find some additional information regarding the themes that will be covered. The interview is estimated to take approximately 30 minutes.

Best regards Adam and Christian

### 9.4 Appendix 4: Information sent out to respondents prior to interviews in Swedish

Hej X

Vi tänkte passa på att skicka lite mer information angående intervjun så att du får en chans att förbereda dig!

Vi kommer att ställa följande frågor innan intervjun:

- Om det är okej att vi spelar in samt transkriberar intervjun? Vi kommer i så fall ta bort inspelningen efter att vi transkriberat intervjun.
- Om du vill vara anonym i vår uppsats eller inte?

I bifogad fil följer lite mer information angående vilka teman intervjun kommer att behandla och vi estimerar att intervjun kommer att ta ca 30 minuter.

Har du några funderingar så tveka inte med att höra av dig"



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