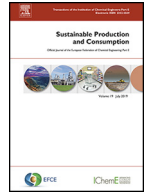




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Understanding the expansion of circular markets: Building relational legitimacy to overcome the stigma of second-hand clothing[☆]

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ABSTRACT

Despite evidence showing that the expansion of circular markets, particularly second-hand clothing markets, may be constrained by so-called green stigma, our understanding of the extent to which stigma can be decreased is limited. By focusing on the cultural construction of the mass second-hand clothing market in a European country, this study demonstrated that the emotional and validation work carried out by institutional actors—i.e., players (vendors), media and consumers—constructs the relational legitimacy of the market, which eventually leads to market expansion. The results of this study provide a novel explanation of market expansion by unveiling a key mediating process: the formation of a new *habitus* that, in turn, sustains the construction of relational legitimacy judgements of circular business models by overcoming green stigma. The results also inform the study of transitions by showing that micro-foundational work can explain market expansion.

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1. Introduction

Circular business models have been defended as a means to reduce industrial environmental impacts while creating business opportunities for repair and reuse (Johansson and Henriksson, 2020). In the fashion industry, second-hand clothing or second-hand clothes (hereafter SHC) markets are championed as a way to curb the worst environmental impacts of the industry (Armstrong et al., 2015; Farrant et al., 2010; Fortuna and Diyamandoglu, 2017; Sohn et al., 2021), notably textile waste (Hole and Hole, 2020). Although markets for used clothing are not exempted from negative environmental impacts (Sandin and Peters, 2018), they are widely regarded as one of the main strategies for reducing the impacts associated with textile waste (Dahlbo et al., 2017).

Reused clothing markets comprise markets of vintage, luxury and SHC mass markets (Pal and Gander, 2018). This paper focuses on SHC mass markets (hereafter SHC markets) that encompass different business models such as thrift stores, online marketplaces and P2P matcher models (Pal and Gander, 2018; Pal, 2017;

for a more detailed analysis of business models in second-hand markets see Yrjöla et al., 2021). The expansion of these markets requires consumers to play a twofold role: as offerers, donating or selling their unwanted garments to intermediaries or directly to other consumers, and as buyers, purchasing reused garments (Gopalakrishnan and Matthews, 2018).

Several studies have demonstrated that one of the most important barriers for purchasing reused garments is the perceived stigma or deprived social status associated with used garments (Armstrong et al., 2015; Habinc, 2018; Hur, 2020; Kim et al., 2021; Lang and Zhang, 2019). This perception is also associated with other circular clothing solutions such as garments made from recycled fibres (Diddi et al., 2019) and with green products more broadly (Johnstone and Tan, 2015). This stigma is attributed to the cultural meanings of “used garments” as a low-status good (Laitala and Klepp, 2018; Laitala et al., 2021; Rulikova, 2020) and the perception of “negative contamination” by their previous users (Hur, 2020). Although consumers may acknowledge the economic and environmental benefits of SHC (Diddi et al., 2019; Hur, 2020) and although some consumers have started buying them (Machado et al., 2019), the belief that SHC is dirty, ugly or outdated and emotions of disgust, fear and embarrassment activated by such beliefs are prevalent among non-users of SHC markets and can explain the resistance among consumers to purchase

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SHC (Hur, 2020; Laitala and Klepp, 2018; Liang and Xu, 2018; Silva et al., 2021; Yan et al., 2015). This stigma is not as prevalent in the vintage and luxury used garment markets (Appelgren and Bohlin, 2015; Fischer, 2015).

Therefore, although SHC markets may be an adequate solution for reducing textile waste, these markets are not yet considered legitimate or “desirable, proper, or appropriate” by consumers (Suchman, 1995: 574). More specifically, past research on SHC has suggested that the limited relational legitimacy of SHC and the perception that purchasing SHC reduces the self-worth of individuals are major blocks in the expansion of these markets. However, other studies have shown that these perceptions are changing (e.g., Ferraro et al., 2016; Machado et al., 2019; Lang and Zhang, 2019; Liang and Xu, 2018).

Studies from other industries have shown that legitimacy beliefs can be shifted (Humphreys and Latour, 2013; Navis and Glynn, 2010) and that market expansion is concomitant with such shifts (Humphreys, 2010a,b; Tost, 2011). In particular, studies in other domains have demonstrated that shifts in relational legitimacy occur as a result of the institutional work of actors (Hoogstraaten et al., 2020; Suddaby et al., 2017) or the “purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions” (Lawrence et al., 2011). As an example, Sandikci and Ger (2010) showed how multi-actor institutional work destigmatized veiling in Turkey, which became a fashionable practice for middle-class women. Similarly, studies of consumer subsegments—such as fashionistas (Scaraboto and Fischer, 2013) or the gay community (Kates, 2004)—have shown that the institutional work of consumers can help these subsegments gain relational legitimacy in the market.

Although the results of these studies provide initial evidence that relational legitimacy judgements can be shifted, they did not specifically focus on the construction of legitimacy. Studies that examine how the relational legitimacy of circular solutions such as SHC can be constructed are limited. Thus, the aim of the present study was to redress this gap and thereby advance our understanding of how circular markets can be developed. In particular, examining how relational legitimacy is constructed in SHC markets may offer valuable insights to better understand the transition to sustainability pathways in other industries for which green stigma is a major cause of rejection by consumers (Johnstone and Tan, 2015).

Drawing from research on legitimacy construction (Bitektine and Haack, 2015; Tost, 2011; Voronov and Vince, 2012) and cultural approaches to market formation (Fligstein and Dauter, 2006; Humphreys, 2010a,b), we examined multi-actor institutional initiatives (Navis and Glynn, 2010) intended to construct relational legitimacy in SHC markets. More specifically, we focused on the role of emotions (Moisander et al., 2016) in constructing relational legitimacy judgements about SHC. The emotions of actors are important for constructing relational legitimacy judgements because emotion may be a source of resistance to changing legitimacy beliefs (Huy et al., 2014) and leverage for the adoption of sustainable solutions (Diddi et al., 2019; De Medeiros et al., 2021).

To study the market expansion process from the perspective of relational legitimacy, we examined the formation of SHC markets in Spain by studying the emotional impacts of niche players (sellers of SHC) and the media over the last 20 years and micro-influencers over the last five years. We identified a set of three emotional strategies that are consistently enacted by these actors (*decontamination, aestheticization, valorization*) and that together can erode the stigma associated with SHC. Furthermore, we observed that actors also engaged in validation work intended to create an impression of consensus around a new *habitus*. These forms of work produce relational legitimacy and expand the SHC market.

The results of this study provide a novel explanation for the expansion of SHC markets by unveiling a key mediating process: the formation of a new *habitus* that, in turn, sustains the construction of relational legitimacy judgments of reused clothing. It also enriches the study of transitions by showing the micro-foundational work that can explain the linkages from micro- to macro-regimes.

2. Conceptual framework

Legitimacy has three content dimensions, each of which forms part of the base for sustaining the legitimacy of a given entity (Tost, 2011): pragmatic or instrumental (the belief that a given entity is instrumental for manifesting an actor’s goals or beliefs about effectiveness, efficiency or utility); normative or moral (the belief that a given entity conforms to ethical values); and relational legitimacy (the belief that a given entity affirms the social identity, status or self-worth of actors). These dimensions are not mutually exclusive; rather, they overlap with one another (Humphreys, 2010a,b; Valor et al., 2021). Cognitive and regulatory legitimacy result from the construction of these dimensions (Tost, 2011). When a given entity gains cognitive and/or regulatory legitimacy, it can be said to be institutionalized (Geels, 2005); in other words, market formation demands the attainment of certain levels of legitimacy (Brandstad and Solem, 2020).

This study specifically focused on the relational dimension of legitimacy or the belief that a given practice affirms the social identity or self-worth of individuals (Tost, 2011). We contend that relational legitimacy depends on the fit with a given *habitus*. The Bourdieusian notion of *habitus* has long been used in the sustainable production and consumption literature and is considered to be a fundamental structuring force of social practices and markets that may facilitate or hinder the adoption of sustainable practices (Stephenson et al., 2010). Bourdieu (1984) defined *habitus* as “systems of dispositions, characteristic of the different classes and class fractions” (p. 541). In our analysis, *habitus* was assumed to form the basis of judgments of taste and shape beliefs regarding the appropriateness of a particular mode of consumption for a given social group (Anantharaman, 2017; Kates, 2004; McMeekin and Southerton, 2012; Sandikci and Ger, 2010) because it provides status (Puaschunder, 2017).

Cultural studies on SHC markets (e.g., Habinc, 2018; Rulikova, 2020) have shown that in many countries, used garments are considered to be a suitable mode of consumption for impoverished groups but not for groups positioned at higher social echelons. Indeed, studies on consumer attitudes towards SHC repeatedly show that purchasing used garments signals a lower position in the social hierarchy, depriving consumers of status and social/self-worth; for this reason, such garments are perceived as stigmatizing (e.g., (Herjanto and Hendriana, 2020); (Laitala and Klepp, 2018); Lang and Zhang, 2019; Liang and Xu, 2018; Na’amneh and Al Husban, 2012). This evidence supports our assertion that the relational legitimacy of SHC depends on the *habitus* of different social groups, so that if SHC is deemed (un)suitable, the practice will have a (lower) greater relational legitimacy and vice versa.

The notion of *habitus* comprises both cognitive and emotional dispositions (Voronov and Vince, 2012)—what we think and what we feel about a given identity. To emphasize the emotional dispositions captured in *habitus*, Voronov and Vince (2012, p. 64) coined the term *emotional habitus*, defined as the “tendency to more or less automatically produce emotions, desires and fantasies that are prescribed and valued in the particular field and that correspond to the individual’s position in it”. These emotional tendencies are linked to social distinctions (Voronov and Weber, 2016), as scholarship on emotions, social identities and social stereotyping has shown (Hogg and Terry, 2000; Mackie et al., 2008).

Studies showing that individuals report feelings of disgust, fear or shame in relation to SHC have confirmed that emotions are part of *habitus* (Hur, 2020; Yan et al., 2015); these feelings can result from—and amplify—the perceptions of used garments as stigmatizing, and both derive from the perception of buying used garments as a low-status practice. In other words, we claim that these emotions are individually experienced and reported as such in psychological studies; however, these emotions are socially conditioned (Voronov and Weber, 2016; Zietsma and Toubiana, 2018) and shaped by the *habitus* from which the use of SHC is assessed. Because emotions have characteristic action tendencies, they also shape the dispositional behavior of a given group (Voronov and Vince, 2012) (in our study, the rejection of purchasing SHC). This is consistent with past studies showing that emotions may be a source of resistance to shifting or forming legitimacy judgments (Huy et al., 2014).

Thus far, we have discussed the structuring role of *habitus* as a cognitive-emotional disposition towards an entity that is shared by members of a social group and that, in our domain of study, is posited to hinder the expansion of SHC markets. Its structuring role does not imply that *habitus* is fixed and immutable; rather, it can be altered as a result of strategic action (Stephenson et al., 2010).

Past work has shown that *habitus* is changed discursively with the production of texts (including images) that shift users' patterns of thought and feelings (Anantharaman, 2017; Hoogstraaten et al., 2020; Geels, 2004; Geels and Schot, 2007). Drawing from neo-institutional theories, we will use the notion of emotion work to refer to the strategic discursive work of actors intended to shift an existing *habitus* by eliciting the emotions that support the adoption of a practice and neutralizing the resistant emotions while simultaneously acting upon the meanings that activate such emotions (Jacobsson and Lindblom 2013; Moisaner et al., 2016; Toubiana and Zietsma, 2017; (Zietsma and Toubiana, 2018)). As past studies show, meanings and emotions are interlinked (Parkinson, 1996): beliefs activate affective dispositions, and emotions simultaneously affect beliefs (Haack et al., 2014; Lerner et al., 2015; Valor, 2020).

The sociological literature (Goodwin et al., 2009; Jasper, 1998) has also shown that the enactment of emotion work can successfully shift both collective emotions and collective perceptions, and in so doing, the social worth of a given group—and the self-worth of its members—can be enhanced (Jasper, 2011). To illustrate, in her study of abused children, Whittier (2001) demonstrates that the emotional disposition of shame, together with the self-perception of inferiority and worthlessness, hindered their collective action; the use of emotion work shifted these emotions and perceptions so that eventually, the social notion of “abused child” was reconfigured. This example shows that emotion work, aimed at shifting the cognitions and emotions felt towards an entity, may also affect the social consideration of groups, thus being a mechanism for influencing relational legitimacy judgments about such entities (Voronov and Vince, 2012).

Our analysis of the construction of relational legitimacy in the SHC market is structured by five main axioms. First, we argue that the relational legitimacy of purchasing SHC depends on the fit of this practice with the given *habitus* or predisposition of a social group. Second, we claim that thinking and feeling are reciprocally affected and that both affect the disposition of a given social group to behave. Third, the emotional response of actors may shift the thoughts and emotions directed towards an entity and, in so doing, shift judgments about the potential of this entity to confer worth to groups and individuals. In other words, we posit that emotional responses may be a micro-social mechanism for constructing the relational legitimacy of a practice. Finally, we contend that the construction of relational legitimacy will result in market expansion.

3. Methods

3.1. Context description

The aim of this study was to unveil the social mechanism that can explain the shift in the legitimacy perceptions of SHC retail markets. We followed a generativist understanding of causation (Ekström, 1992; Papachristos, 2018), accepting that any possible effect is the result of the actions of an entity in a given system. More specifically, we observed and interpreted the “causal powers” (Ekström, 1992, p.115) of emotional work, by unveiling the properties of such work (e.g., how this work is put into practice by the examined actors), the sequence of this work over time, and the ways in which this work unfolds in the particular context under examination.

We focused on the Spanish SHC market. As has been shown to be the case in Jordan (Na'amneh and Al Husban, 2012), Norway (Laitala and Klepp, 2018); Slovenia (Habinc, 2018), Korea (Kim et al., 2021), China (Lang and Zhang, 2019; Liang and Xu, 2018), the Czech Republic (Laitala and Klepp, 2018; Rulikova, 2020), Indonesia (Herjanto and Hendriana, 2020), Portugal (Silva et al., 2021), and the UK (Hur, 2020); Zampier et al., 2019), in Spain, SHC carries the stigma of poverty. Contrary to other countries where these garments have been traditionally donated and re-sold in charity shops or flea markets, in countries such as Spain, unused garments are either shared in inner circles within a family (and normally only among children) or donated to churches, which distribute them to impoverished groups (Lane et al., 2009). Consequently, wearing SHC is considered to be a low-status practice, which explains the associated stigma.

Therefore, SHC had no market value until very recently, as reflected by a significant growth in SHC markets (Section 4.1). To analyze the emotional work that led to the construction of relational legitimacy in the SHC market in Spain, a country where the reused clothing market was constrained by green stigma, we conducted a longitudinal analysis to observe the evolution of the emotional work done by three main actors in the retail market. We analysed the data following grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1994), one of the most common methods for process theorization (Langley, 1999) and system change analysis (Papachristos, 2018). In the next section, we describe the data and analytical methods used in this study.

3.2. Data used

We examined three main institutional actors using several sources of data: players (second-hand stores), general and fashion media, and micro-influencers (videoblogs or vlogs posted by consumers). Previous studies have shown that the institutional work of these actors can affect the legitimization of markets (Dolbec and Fischer, 2015; Humphreys, 2010a,b; Scaraboto and Fischer, 2013). As explained in the Introduction, we intentionally excluded data points in which vintage or luxury fashion was discussed without reference to SHC.

Players. The mass SHC market in Spain consists of three different business models (Pal and Gander, 2018; Pal, 2017; Yrjöla et al., 2021): nonprofit players (who resell garments donated by consumers in brick-and-mortar stores, e.g., Humana, Koopera, OSAD and Ropa Ocasión), e-stores (garments are bought from consumers and resold through e-commerce, e.g., Hibuy, Micolet and Percentil) and “peer-to-peer matchers” (sellers who post their garments in the marketplace and are contacted directly by buyers to close a deal, e.g., Facebook Marketplaces, Vinted, Wallapop, Best for Less). We examined the first two players because matchers have less control over the emotion work of their members: the sellers se-

lect and post the images and text for each garment, resulting in a heterogeneous catalog of practices.

All existing e-stores operating at a national level in Spain at the time of writing were included (namely, Percentil, Micolet and Hibuy). We examined two nonprofits that exclusively resell SHC and operate at the national level (Humana – 47 stores – and Koopera – 32 stores –), thus excluding those that sell only in a single province (Ropa Ocasión in Valencia or OSAD in Canarias). We conducted a longitudinal study by analysing the websites and social media accounts (Facebook and Instagram) of these nonprofits over the past 20 years because the internet was democratized in Spain between the years 1997 and 2005 (Lera-López et al., 2009). To examine the changes over time on the players' websites, we used a website repository <https://archive.org/web>. The Internet Archive, a member of the American Library Association, is a nonprofit digital library of internet sites and other cultural artefacts, such as newspapers, books and videos. Currently, the Internet Archive has more than 25 years of web history accessible through the Wayback Machine. Archival web data are frequently used in sociological research (Gomes and Costa, 2014) since websites are one of the primary sources of communication between different market actors. As website information is rather ephemeral, the textual study of online content can reveal the strategies and actions that different market actors implement over time. We noted all reported website changes and coded the different messages embedded in the websites as well as the changes in the websites' designs by year. In total, we observed 810 changes among the top five retailers in the market.

Media. A general media search was conducted through the news and business information search tool Factiva, focusing on Spanish newspapers and generalist media between 2000 and 2020, using the string “(Micolet OR Hibuy OR Koopera tienda* near4 Humana OR Percentil) and (ropa_de_segunda_mano or ropa_usada)” ($n = 358$). To examine the work of fashion media, a search with the same keywords was conducted in the six most frequently read fashion magazines in Spain (Ehlea, 2020), i.e., Vanity Fair, Elle Magazine, Vogue España, Telva, Cosmopolitan and Harper's Bazaar ($n = 334$).

Micro-influencers. We examined the SHC fashion hauls posted by consumers on YouTube (using the keywords “ropa segunda mano” OR “ropa usada”) and analysed the 35 videoblogs with the highest number of views (totalling 673,494 as of 12/04/2021), albeit saturation was reached with the first 20. Hauls or unboxing videos are videos where consumers explain their most recent purchases, showing each of the pieces to the camera and describing where it was bought as well as why and for what purpose (Schwemmer and Ziewiecki, 2018). The analysed hauls were hybridized with lookbooks to allow consumers to visualize the garments when worn and to show how they can be combined to form outfits. We excluded consumers' hauls that did not refer to the Spanish market.

3.3. Analysis

Following previous studies (Scaraboto and Fisher, 2013; Valor et al., 2021), we conducted an interpretive analysis of the content published by the abovementioned actors during the period of study. Specifically, we coded the emotional work conveyed in the texts and images from the websites, media posts and videoblogs of the actors; emotional work is multimodal and can be carried out through both text and image (Kress, 2013). Our unit of analysis was the emotional work of actors or the discourse of actors intending to elicit/neutralize emotions by targeting meanings associated with SHC. Intentionality should not be mistaken for rationality: “feelings and actions may be strategic—that is, oriented at achieving some sort of personally desirable objectives—without

being available for individuals' conscious reflection” (Voronov and Vince, 2012, p. 73).

We first analysed data chronologically to understand the formation process of this market (Dolbec and Fischer, 2015). The coding showed regularities in the emotional work strategies in certain periods as well as discontinuities across time. This thematic analysis of the sellers' websites and news showed a marked shift in the strategies used in the three periods labelled as “inception” (2000–2010), “second-hand for sellers” (2011–2016) and “repositioning as second-hand fashion markets” (2017–2021). A detailed explanation of the institutional work of actors in each of these periods is presented in the next section (Section 4.1).

Then, we focused on the discursive strategies deployed in the period 2017–2021, regardless of the year in which the strategies were implemented. The data points in this period were analysed in two stages, following the guidelines of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1994), one of the most common methods for process theorization (Langley, 1999) and system change analysis (Papachristos, 2018). First, each of the identified discursive strategies was isolated (see table 1); then, they were coalesced into superordinate categories and labelled with an umbrella term. Each of the researchers examined one of the actors separately. When we discussed the findings, we realized that the strategies were very similar across actors; thus, they are presented together. We also found that although the volume of content produced by each actor was different, the specific emotional work strategies did not change across actors.

4. Findings

4.1. Formation and expansion of the market

Three different stages in the formation of the SHC market were identified: *inception* (2000–2010); *second-hand for sellers* (2011–2016) and *second-hand fashion* (2017–2021). First, we will describe the actions of the players through a timeline, and later, we will explain the institutional and validation work that the key players undertook in each of these stages intended to alter the existing *habitus* through emotion work aimed at constructing the content of the relational judgements.

During the 2000–2010 decade (*inception*), the market was dominated by Humana, a player that competed alone for an underdeveloped market based on donations. Humana collected used garments through 5000 donation “containers” subsequently sent out to the 50 stores located around the country. Its website design was simple, with no images of the clothes; rather, it foregrounded information about the location of the containers and about the development projects being undertaken. Simultaneously, during the decade from 2000 to 2010, general media and fashion media barely mentioned SHC. Ten news items in the general media referred to used garments (instructing readers to recycle them adequately), and only one article in fashion media was found (Vogue, 14/03/2006), in which SHC was introduced as an original and unusual form of fashion consumption (“you would never find such pieces doing your usual shopping tour”) as well as a fashion trend (“these [second-hand] garments are used by a multitude of fashion editorials that publish the most prestigious magazines”).

During the decade 2011–2021, new players started operating with different business models: e-stores (between brackets the name of the store and the year of change) (Percentil, 2013; Micolet, 2015; Hibuy, 2019), nonprofit stores (Koopera, 2019) and peer-to-peer matchers (Chicfy—now Vinted, 2013; Wallapop, 2013; Best for Less, 2019). Out of the 881 archived websites found, 107 came from 2000 to 2011, 221 from 2012 to 2015 and 509 from 2016 to 2020, demonstrating a growing amount of activity in the market.

Table 1
Emotional and validation work strategies of institutional actors.

Emotional work	Negative meanings of targeted SHC	Positive meanings of SHC	Emotions elicited towards SHC	Emotions towards SHC neutralised
Decontamination	Dirty Worn Bad odours	Clean Hygienic New Pristine		Disgust Fear Anxiety
Aestheticization	Ugly Unappealing Outdated	Beautiful Attractive Unique Original	Admiration Excitement Nostalgia Envy	Shame
Valorization	Used garments as residues or waste	Bargain Treasures Jewels	Pride Joy Hope	Disgust Shame
Validation work	Marginal, underground, poor people buy SHC	Buying SHC is popular, fashionable, and smart	Admiration Excitement Envy	Disgust Shame Fear

More importantly, for this study, not only did their activity increase, but their discursive strategies also changed. The period from 2011 to 2016 (*second-hand for sellers*) was characterized by the positioning of SHC as a way for sellers to earn additional income. Players conveyed utilitarian messages around second-hand selling being an opportunity to gain money, clean out and renew one's wardrobe (Micolet 2020) and to leverage no longer useful children's garments (Percentil). Website designs were simple and functional and catered to sellers (e.g., procedures for selling SHC and possible savings). Stock was limited and plainly presented, and no stylized pictures were observed. At the end of the period, branded SHC were featured more prominently, although they were limited to high street brands such as Zara and H&M (supplementary file for review).

In this second period, the general media featured news stories ($n = 142$) explaining how to obtain extra income by selling unused items (El País, 7/10/2013; Trendc, 7/09/2016) or emphasizing the savings potential of buying SHC (Reuters, 23/09/2012; el Economista, 21/10/2015). In fashion media, conflicting discourses were found. On the one hand, SHC began to be portrayed as an accepted, and even desirable, option, and some of the emotional work strategies described below were observed. On the other hand, discourses reproducing the "SHC stigma" also began to emerge. In particular, fashion journalists emphasized the "residue" or "waste" associated with SHC (e.g., "second-hand [clothes] smell like closed spaces", Vanity Fair, 29/04/2015; "surely that [second-hand] piece is, as 90% of what is sold on that platform, authentic garbage only suitable for someone with Diogenes syndrome", Vanity Fair, 23/12/2016). Similarly, other articles reproduced the belief of used garment stores selling non-valuable pieces (e.g., "I would go to the second-hand shops in my town and buy men's suits, because they were the only pieces that fit me", Vanity Fair, 18/03/2014) or associating SHC with "cast-offs" ("Most of the second-hand pieces are anonymous donations", Vogue, 11/12/2015). Not only were garments stigmatized, but the sellers and buyers of SHC were also portrayed as "poor" (e.g., "The actress needs cash, so she has decided to sell some of her most expensive outfits in second-hand stores", Vanity Fair, 9/12/2012).

During the third period (*second-hand fashion*) spanning from 2017 to 2021, there was a significant change in the discursive strategies of the players. Premium brands and accessories were added to the offerings of some players (e.g., Micolet 2020), websites were redesigned (except Humana) to imitate the look and feel of fashion brand websites, the term "second-hand" was omitted, and the opportunity to obtain unique goods at a low price was emphasized. Additionally, players' websites included social media links, declarations from influencers and media stories endorsing SHC. From 2017 onwards, the negative discourses around

SHC disappeared in fashion media. The general media ($n = 216$) emphasized the environmental impact of textile waste and the need for second-hand markets (La Vanguardia, 25/10/2017; Día de Soria, 4/07/2019), which justified giving unused clothing "a second life" (El Mundo, 25/07/2018). Additionally, new terms, such as "resell markets" (El Economista, 19/05/2018), "preloved" (Modes, 2/11/2020) and "the influencers' wardrobe online" (Modaes.es, 29/08/2018) were used to refer to SHC, and the market itself was referred to as "the fashion market of the new age" (Trendc, 10/04/2018). Fig. 1 shows the evolution of comments related to SHC in both media and videoblogs. Specialized media increased their coverage of SHC around 2015, but consumers' YouTube hauls did not increase until 2019.

Determining the overall effect of this institutional work in the market expansion of SCH with a high level of accuracy is difficult. Although information on the evolution of the Spanish market is limited, we found reasonable evidence that judgements about the relational legitimacy of SHC have changed. In its Circular Report 2019, Micolet explained the results of a survey that found that almost 40% of women bought SHC in 2019 and that 6 out of 10 had a better perception of SHC than they had in the past. In view of these findings, Micolet concluded that "second-hand garments no longer carry a social stigma". Similarly, headlines in general media evidence a change in relational legitimacy, e.g., "why buying second-hand is no longer for the poor" (El Confidencial, 1/11/2020).

There is also evidence that the SHC market volume has increased significantly, an expansion that we attribute to the shift in the discursive strategies deployed by institutional actors. For example, Humana reported 23% growth from 2016 to 2019, reaching 1.9 million customers and 5.2 million goods sold (+18%). Koopera reached 708.900 customers in 2019. Similarly, Percentil declared having reached 104,000 families in 2019, a twofold increase over 2015. In its Circular Report 2020, Micolet explained that the garments sold to the company doubled in one year, and the overall market share of SHC increased by 50%, although it still represented only 3% of the total market. Over the last decade, Percentil sales increased by 3915% (72.935€ in 2012; 2.928.145€ in 2019), and Micolet sales by 1287% (97.878€ in 2015; 1.357.436€ in 2019).¹ As further evidence of market expansion, since 2019, regime players have also added second-hand marketplaces to their business models (e.g., pre-owned clothes in the ASOS marketplace, H&M Group brand COS resell, and Macy's resell collaboration with thredUP).

It is worth noting that these changes in the niche market are also affected by wider societal trends or landscape components

¹ 2019 is the last year reported in SABI, consulted on the 30th April 2021; information about profit and loss statements could not be found for Hibuy or the nonprofit stores.

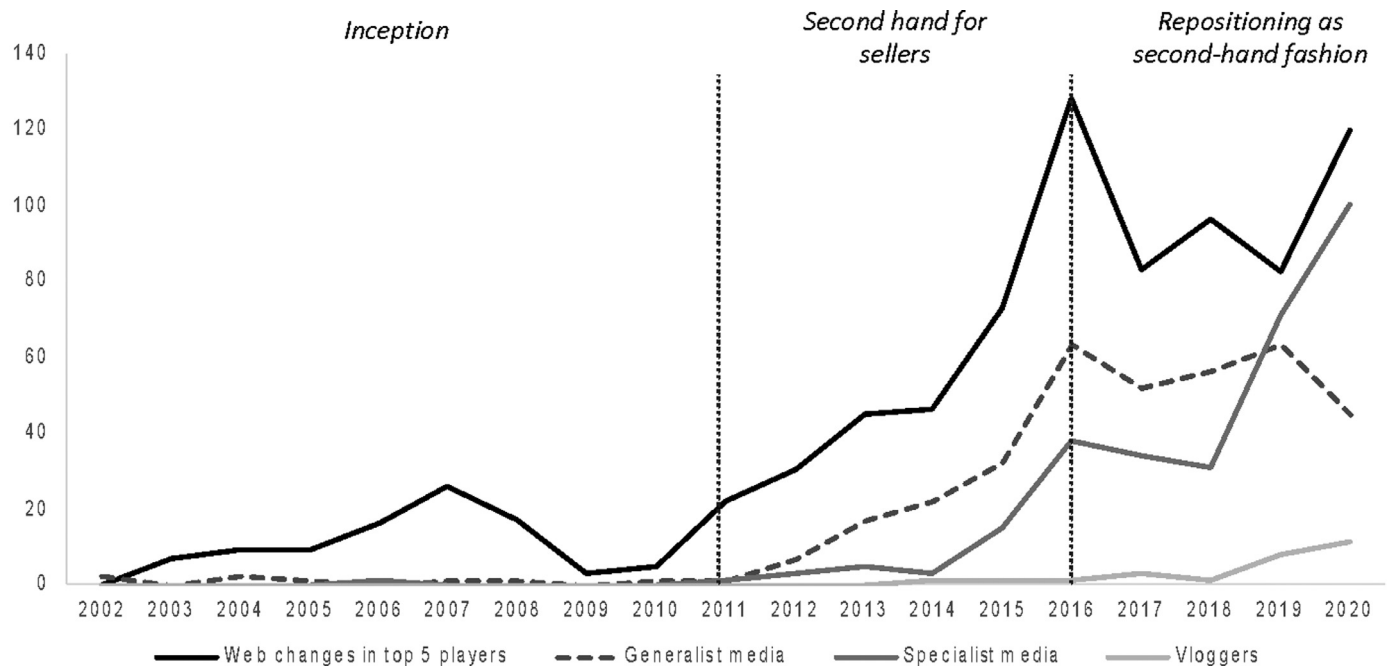


Fig. 1. Evolution of data points.

(Smith et al., 2010). First, we observed a growing societal rejection of waste and the construction of the social norm of using resources to effectively reduce environmental impacts (Johnson and Chattaraman, 2018). The legitimization of collaborative consumption has surely facilitated the destigmatization of redistribution markets (De Rivera et al., 2017). Third, governmental pressures on fashion firms to go circular have grown, and companies are encouraged to develop, among other solutions, product-service markets such as the SHC market (Pal et al., 2019). Finally, the international crisis of 2010 prompted consumers to find lower-priced goods while maintaining their old lifestyles, as noted in other countries (Na'amneh and Al Husban, 2012).

4.2. The construction of relational legitimacy

This section presents the institutional work of the three main actors in the market (players, media and micro-influencers) that helped alter the existing *habitus* and form a new one. The analysis showed that actors carried out emotion and validation work (Fig. 2). Emotion work involves three discursive strategies (*decontamination*, *aestheticization*, and *valorization*) aimed at constructing the propriety component of legitimacy judgements (Bitektine and Haack, 2015)—in our case, the content of relational judgments. More precisely, these strategies displace negative beliefs and emotions underpinning the stigma associated with SHC and prompt the formation of positive new ones (table 1 contains a summary of these strategies). As explained above, these forms of emotion work were initially enacted by players and later also carried out by the media and micro-influencers (vloggers). The work of the media and vloggers amplified—as it reached a wider audience outside the niche—and increased the credibility of the players' emotion work. This is consistent with past research showing that eWOM by other actors increases the intention to buy SHC (Mohammad et al., 2020).

Second, we explain the validation work of actors and the discursive strategies used to create the impression of consensus around the beliefs and emotions forming the new *habitus* (Haack et al., 2020). Indeed, the mere reproduction of the players' emotion work by the general and fashion media is in itself a form of valida-

tion (Bitektine and Haack, 2015). Additionally, actors use *endorsement* and *authorization* as validation work strategies, which are fundamental for the success of niche markets, as past studies have shown (Smith et al., 2010).

Based on the analysis, the emotional and validation work strategies of actors seem to be able to shift the stigmatizing view of SHC and prompt the construction of new relational legitimacy judgements that, in turn, drive market expansion. The model depicted in Fig. 2, which is based on the analysed data, was built with the recognition that some of the strategies (notably *valorization*) may also affect pragmatic and normative legitimacy judgements.

4.2.1. Emotion work

Decontamination. This form of emotion work is found in the discourses of players explaining the procedures for garment selection, sanitization, and presentation intended to erase signs of the garment's use or to disconnect the garment from its previous user. On their websites, e-stores emphasize that resold garments are manually selected by the company so that only neat and pristine—or entirely new—garments are resold in their stores. Additionally, they emphasize that garments should meet a series of quality checks before they are accepted for reselling. Decontamination is also carried out with the use of images; for instance, garments are depicted hanging against a white background. With these discourses, players intend to shift the association of SHCs with being dirty, worn and old and neutralize feelings of disgust, fear or anxiety towards them.

Fashion magazines also reproduce this form of work with texts highlighting the strict garment selection process conducted by specialists that ensures the quality of SHC (e.g., “the quality of the garments is ensured through arduous control processes”, Harper's Bazaar, 16/03/2018; “each piece they sell goes through their central offices, where a team of specialists is in charge of thoroughly ensuring the perfect condition of each garment”, Telva, 13/05/2016). Other texts foreground the good and clean condition of the garments, which often look no different than new garments. To illustrate, “the garments sold are perfect and ready to be used” (Elle, 5/01/2016) or “pieces that still retain the label and are unused can be found” (Elle, 18/10/2018).

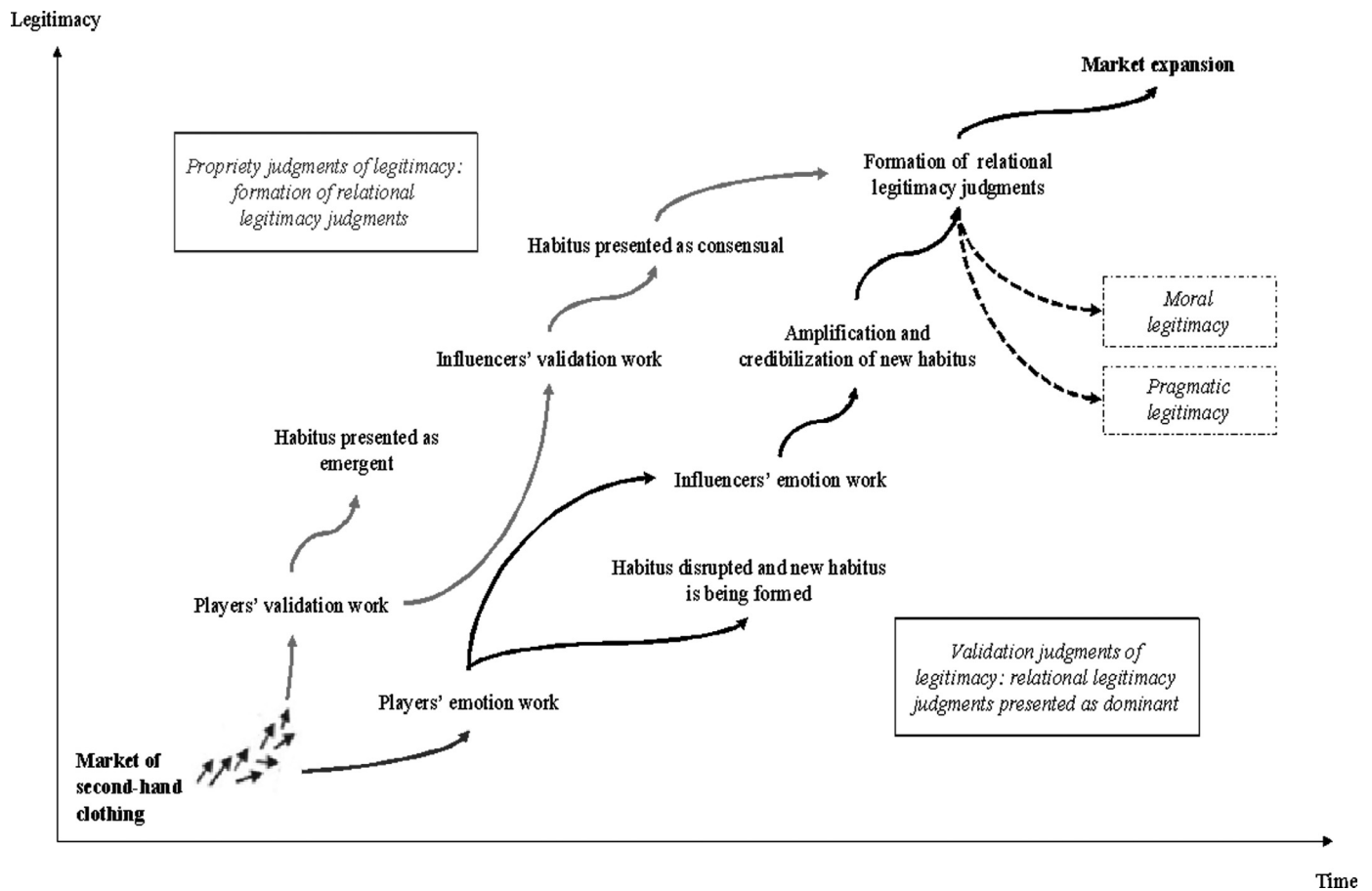


Fig. 2. Summary of the observed processual dynamics.

Similarly, vloggers repeatedly say that SHC are odourless or sanitized (Usua and Alexa, 6/12/2020) and that they even carry the original labels (Patrizienta, 21/04/2019); they reiterate that the garments are pristine and have no traces of the previous users (e.g., Sira AM, 22/01/2021). Some even discredit those who could feel disgust towards garments (“I don’t understand it, it is perfectly clean! same as new!”, Laura sí que está, 21/09/2016).

Aestheticization. This form of work includes all practices that strategically present garments as attractive and fashionable, usually copying the product presentation strategies of new garment stores. To illustrate, players post stylized pictures of outfits drawn from their stock (e.g., Percentil or Humana) or offer icon sections where users post pictures of themselves wearing SHC (e.g., Micolet or Hibuy). Most stores avoid the use of “second-hand” garments, instead referring to the clothes as “almost new” (Micolet 2020), “sustainable garments” (Percentil, Koopera), “preloved fashion” (Hibuy) or “used clothes feeling young” (Koopera). The only exception to this “term avoidance” is Humana, which uses the English term “second-hand”. This change in the category label is relevant, given the influence of such labels on identity codes and consumers’ expectations (Navis and Glynn, 2010). Finally, players prominently display the auratic, premium brand garments they sell and/or include logos of the most admired fashion brands on their websites. This form of work intends to shift the associated meanings of SHC being ugly and out-of-fashion to them being stylish and fashionable while simultaneously eliciting feelings of admiration, envy or idolization of the players’ stock. It also intends to trigger excitement at discovering unique pieces in the players’ stock, a frequent motive for buying SHC (Laitala and Klepp, 2018).

This form of emotion work in fashion media includes publications emphasizing that SHC is fashionable, chic, beautiful and easy to combine, as well as images where SHC is portrayed as aesthetically appealing. Specifically, four discursive strategies are found in fashion media. First, fashion journalists instruct their readers on creating original and chic styles by adding second-hand pieces to an outfit (“getting special pieces [from second-hand stores] and mixing them with seasonal clothes is my best style tip”, Telva, 05/04/2018). Second, they emphasize the uniqueness of each garment (“it is not just about selling original clothes, they have to be beautiful, elegant, stylish and, above all, be fashionable”, Harper’s Bazaar, 29/04/2016; “we believe that these [second-hand] garments are unrepeatable, and make any look a miracle”, Vogue, 27/07/2017). Third, the texts elicit nostalgia by highlighting the retro look of certain garments and stores (e.g., “with that [second-hand] piece I feel sophisticated, it has a retro air that I love”, Vogue, 21/07/2014; “their retro air, the feeling that behind each dress there is a story saved”, Harper’s Bazaar, 3/02/2015). Finally, the media share pictures of celebrities styled with second-hand pieces, street-style pictures in which SHC is portrayed as the latest fashion trend, or pictures of second-hand stores that look neat and modern. In fact, it is acknowledged that some stores use “a catalog of second-hand garments worn by models as if they were first-hand clothes” (Elle, 1/09/2020).

Consumers also attribute similar meanings and emotions with their hauls. They defend their choice of SHC as an opportunity to discover unique pieces to construct an authentic style (Silvia Abejon, 11/3/2011), to create the perfect outfit for different occasions (Sira AM, 22/01/2021) or to find rare and desirable garments that could not be found in other stores (Jessica Blanco,

4/10/2017). They also elicit admiration when they explain the desire and attraction felt towards used garments. Vloggers use expressions such as “it [the garment] is super beautiful” (Miriam Garmendia, 23/12/2020) or “it is super nice, I love it” (Amparo Angoso, 20/02/2021), “I could not wait to wear it, it is soooo coool (Rebeca Terán, 05/05/2019), “it was a must-have” (Lau Brownie, 20/11/2020), “I instantly fell in love with it [garment]” (Silvia Abejon, 11/3/2011), “I saw it and I knew I needed to buy it” (Patrizienta, 21/04/2019), “It is so nice! I like it a lot!!!” (DearDiary-Blog, 3/11/2019).

Valorization. With this form of work, players discursively construct the view of SHC as worthy; they aim to eliminate the perception of used garments as the residue or textile waste of others, thus neutralizing feelings of disgust and shame. Simultaneously, they intend to elicit an appreciation of the economic and environmental values of SHC and the positive emotions that this appreciation activates.

To create the belief that used garments have economic value, players use discursive practices targeting both potential sellers and buyers. E-stores explain that unwanted garments that are still in good condition will be bought by the company and resold on the platform, and sellers can gain a small commission for this. Similarly, nonprofit stores encourage consumers to donate their unwanted garments so that the nonprofit can sustain its philanthropic projects. Both discursive practices intend to show that a used garment has economic value, be it for the seller or for the organization. Texts targeting buyers foreground the potential bargains that can be found in their stock and the potential environmental benefits of buying used garments. With this form of work, the texts are intended to elicit pride and joy among consumers as a result of their intelligence for selling unused items, their support for charity work or their contributions to the planet. This work also aims to elicit the hope of finding a bargain.

Stores also emphasize that used garments have environmental value, with texts describing the saved emissions or water associated with buying used garments (Hibuy), that the most sustainable garments are used garments (Percentil) and that circular fashion is an appropriate response to the environmental crisis (Micolet 2020). Nonprofit stores also produce texts where they foreground the employment opportunities generated by their stores or the number of beneficiaries served through the resell market. Koopera even offers an app to calculate the social footprint of donated/purchased garments. The emphasis on the environmental value of SHC also elicits pride, joy and hope, as the valorization of SHC emphasizes that this market will counterbalance the worst effects of fast fashion, support the transition to sustainable fashion and/or have positive social impacts in impoverished communities.

The fashion media reproduces this form of work as it deconstructs the idea of used garments as residue or waste with statements that present them as consumption goods that are still usable: “you give a new life to garments that are already made” (Harper’s Bazaar, 5/03/2021). The economic value of used garments is directly highlighted when stories emphasize that great, exclusive or unique pieces can be found there for a fraction of the price of a similar first-hand garment. These posts intend to elicit pride, joy or hope associated with finding a great deal (e.g., “you can return home with real treasures in your suitcase”, Elle, 16/03/2014; “the most iconic and hard-to-find pieces are sold at a great price”, Vanity Fair, 5/09/2016; “they cost a fraction of what they would cost in New York”, Vanity Fair, 8/10/2017). Second, the fashion media portrays the environmental value of SHC with text explaining the contribution of second-hand markets to sustainability targets (“[second-hand fashion] is a new concept of responsible and alternative consumption”, Telva, 8/10/2015: “behind a new garment there is a lot of suffering in terms of planet costs and social costs”, Vanity Fair, 24/06/2016; “[wearing SHC] is a way to protect the en-

vironment”, Elle, 5/01/2016). These texts also elicit pride and hope because purchasing SHC is akin to being part of the fashion market’s transition to sustainability.

Vloggers also emphasize the economic value of used garments by pointing to their low purchase price, which does not match the greater economic value conferred to the garment (“a Purification García [a premium brand] shirt for 1 euro!, Irene Ronda, 07/02/2021). In some hauls, consumers decry the purchasing of new garments, arguing that it makes no sense to pay for new garments when essentially the same garments can be found for less (“it is stupid to buy in Mango when you have it almost new for half the price” (Irene Ronda, 07/02/2021, similarly DearDiaryBlog, 3/11/2019 or Silvia Abejon 11/03/2011)). Vloggers also underpin the environmental value of used garments and state that buying SHC helps them balance their environmental footprint (Sira AM, 22/01/2021; MCoqueta 6/12/2020).

4.2.2. Validation work

Players’ validation work consists of two strategies. Players use *endorsements* when they post prominently factual information about the number of users (e.g., Percentil) or the growth of second-hand markets (e.g., Micolet 2020). They also resort to *authorization* by depicting the approval or admiration of high-status figures. To illustrate, e-stores have dedicated sections to local celebrities’ wardrobes that can be bought on the e-stores’ platforms (e.g., the Hibuy Influencers section or Browse the Wardrobe in Micolet and Percentil). Nonprofit stores also share interviews with celebrities that publicly support the SHC market (e.g., Koopera magazine 2020).

As mentioned above, headlines such as “second-hand garments are all the rage” (El Mercantil Valenciano, 22/12/2016), “why we are crazy about second-hand buying” (Expansión, 27/06/2016), “the unstoppable growth of garment reselling” (Trendc, 5/05/2018) and “the growing embarrassment of buying first-hand garments” (ABC, 4/11/2019) in the general media are forms of validation work, as they create an impression of consensus about the new *habitus*.

Specifically, the fashion media carry out *authorization* strategies when SHC is depicted as a symbol of admirability and originality. Two discursive strategies are found here. First, journalists post stories and interviews where second-hand purchasing is presented as a common practice among celebrities (“I like to buy second-hand [clothes]”, Zoëy Deschanel, Vogue, 3/07/2012; “I have bags full of things that I bought in thrift stores”, Alexa Chung, Elle, 3/03/2015; “In New York I go crazy with thrift stores. They are the most special and beautiful pieces that I have”, Ingrid García-Jonsson, Vanity Fair, 20/04/19). Second, SHC purchasing is presented as a regular, non-stigmatized practice in cities or countries that Spanish consumers usually associate with great style. Statements such as “London is the mecca for second-hand shopping” (Elle, 16/03/2014), “she found the red skirt for this look in one of the second-hand Parisian temples” (Vogue, 21/07/2014), and “the Hollywood bohemian wears second-hand clothes” (Vanity Fair, 23/09/2011) help validate SHC markets.

Vloggers also carry out *endorsement* as a form of validation work, rhetorically defending the penetration and growth of second-hand markets. Whereas players use factual data in their validation work, consumers produce texts detailing their impressions. Some consumers post videos of their visits to second-hand stores and foreground the public they attract (“See how popular it is!”, Carolina Colobón 1/12/2019) or claim that purchasing SHC is a fashion trend (MCoqueta 6/12/2020; Alicia Vilanova, 13/04/2021). Many start their videos denying the old *habitus* in modern Spain (“the taboo or shame associated with second-hand buying is over”, Rotci Martínez, 10/03/2019). Others present the growth of second-hand markets as “inevitable” (Lau Brownie, 20th/11/2020; Vestir bien for

men, 26/01/2021), which is another consensus creation practice (Bitektine and Haack, 2015).

5. Discussion

Building on previous research showing the relationship between legitimization and market expansion (Humphreys, 2010a,b), this study focuses on the construction of relational legitimacy in sustainable markets, a dimension of legitimacy that has been overlooked in past studies. In particular, we studied the SHC market in Spain as an example market in which green stigma has affected the use of SHC. The processual model is grounded on the analysed data and explains how the mass SHC market has expanded thanks to the emotional and validation work of market players and influencers.

More specifically, the results of this study show that the construction of relational legitimacy judgments is a micro-social process that underpins market expansion. We show that the emotion and validation work of institutional actors successfully undermine green stigma, thereby contributing to market expansion. By discursively targeting the negative ideas associated with SHC (i.e., old, dirty, outdated) and the emotions activated by such meanings (i.e., shame, disgust, fear), actors altered the old *habitus* that hindered market expansion and reconfigured a new *habitus* in which SHC is positively perceived (e.g., beautiful, fashionable, valuable) so that supporting emotions are activated (e.g., admiration, envy, hope, pride). Once the new *habitus* was formed, actors validated it with the discursive strategies of endorsement and authorization so that a perception of consensus was established and relational legitimacy was forged. As a result, the market expanded.

This micro-social process might also have underpinned the construction of the *habitus* sustaining the expansion of other markets, such as organic food (Martínez-de-Ibarreta and Valor, 2018), collaborative consumption (Carfagna et al., 2014) and sustainable mobility (Thøgersen, 2018). However, past cross-sectional studies did not account for the effect of time in the expansion process of the markets under study and thus did not explain what kind of institutional work is necessary or what degree of effort (time, resources, strategies) has been required in each of these markets to curve consumers inertia and/or resistance to change in order to shift relational legitimacy judgements. We speculate, bridging transition research with that of other disciplines (Boon et al., 2020; Fligstein and Dauter, 2006; Kaplan and Tripsas, 2008; Suarez et al., 2013), that institutional efforts to construct relational legitimacy may be subject to boundary conditions of markets such as industry concentration, incumbent power, the speed of innovativeness, and technological change.

From the individual perspective, the predisposition of different targets to form judgements (passive vs. evaluative modes of legitimacy judgement) may influence the evolutionary processes of markets. Judgement formation is an important factor to consider since the two modes differ in the sources of information used, the cognitive effort involved and the effects they have on the generalized legitimacy judgement reached (Tost, 2011). For example, the expansion of new product markets calls individuals to be actively engaged in a conscious effort to construct a judgement of something new. However, when dealing with existing products, individuals are engaged in a passive mode that conforms to cultural expectations, and mere acceptance drives the judgement of generalized legitimacy. In this case, it will be necessary for market expansion to create a mechanism that prompts individuals to move away from passively accepted institutional arrangements (in our study, the green stigma) to judgement assessment stages and evaluative modes. Institutional theorists suggest that players may use three sources to trigger this mechanism: jolts such as technological changes, the actions of competitors, regulatory changes and

social upheaval (Battilana et al., 2009); contradictions that arise (Greenwood and Suddaby, 2006) and the fostering of reflexivity (Mutch, 2007). We speculate that in our study, the shift in societal trends discursively seized by players and reflected in media content may have provided consumers with jolts for new judgement formation.

These findings have implications for different streams of scholarship. First, by zooming out and examining the construction of markets, the results of this study complement studies that have examined individual beliefs and emotions regarding SHC. There may be reciprocal relationships between the two, causing institutional actors to tap into SHC purchasing drivers and using them in their discursive strategies; these strategies, in turn, provide the cultural templates and scripts on which individuals' beliefs and emotions are anchored. Indeed, excitement about hunting for treasures has been shown to be a reason for second-hand purchasing (Baker and Yurchisin, 2014; Cervellon et al., 2012; Laitala and Klepp, 2018), as have beliefs about economic and esthetic value (Kim et al., 2021; Sihvonen and Turunen, 2016).

Relatedly, we also contribute to scholarship on the green stigma (Brough et al., 2016; Johnstone and Tan, 2015; Pinna, 2020) by showing that such stigma can be undermined as a result of the emotion and validation work of actors that confirms the importance of narratives in market expansion (Otto et al., 2020). Additionally, we provide evidence that to destigmatize eco-markets, discursive strategies should go beyond constructing a practice as environmentally ethical (Anantharaman, 2017) and target its esthetic and economic value so that the sustainable solution is a source of social status. Thus, our findings may have repercussions for sustainable business models because they identify crucial activities for value creation and delivery (Tunn et al., 2019) that are necessary for market expansion.

Second, whereas the literature on transitions has long acknowledged the role of external actors as shapers of transition pathways (Köhler et al., 2019), consumers have seldom been considered such actors; rather, consumers are usually treated as the recipients of business models who exercise agency by accepting or rejecting an innovation (Clausen and Fichter, 2019). Research on circular economies has recognized that consumers need to adopt a more active role to ensure the feasibility of these markets (Baah et al., 2021; Korsunova et al., 2021). In addition to the previously identified roles of “upcycler, thrifter, expert/learner, giver/benefactor and conservationist” (Korsunova et al., 2021), our findings show that consumers may play another fundamental role as “market legitimizers”; indeed, consumers play a central part in altering and reconfiguring the *habitus* underpinning a given market. This finding has implications for the study of transitions in other industries, as it suggests that the institutional work of consumers should be analysed alongside that of other institutional entrepreneurs (Hoogstraaten et al., 2020).

Third, this research provides useful insights for the study of transitions since it enriches extant explanations of the micro-to-macro transition of eco-markets (Gunarathne et al., 2021; Köhler et al., 2019). In particular, it foregrounds the role of micro-foundational work in the stabilization and growth of niche markets. Our study shows that the reproduction of players' institutional work by influencers and the alignment of discursive strategies among actors strengthen the construction of the market's relational legitimacy. This shift, in conjunction with landscape pressures, facilitates not only the consolidation and expansion of niche markets but also the reconfiguration of the regime because regime actors (e.g., fashion retailers such as Asos or H&M groups) have begun including SHC in their business models. This trend points to emerging niche transfer, which may eventually reconfigure the fashion regime (Papachristos et al., 2013), especially if the relational legitimacy judgements around used garments spill over

to recycled fiber markets or even other fashion product-service systems. However, given that we are studying a market “in-the-making”, it is difficult to forecast the trajectories of SHC markets. Indeed, a segment of the population still exhibits negative beliefs and emotions regarding SHC. Although it may be a question of the time needed to build the cognitive legitimacy of SHC, it is also possible that some consumers are still resisting this innovation, so the SHC market is not fully institutionalized.

6. Conclusion

By focusing on the construction of the second-hand clothing market in a European country, the results of this study show that the emotional and validation work carried out by institutional actors—i.e., players (vendors), media and consumers—undermined the green stigma associated with SHC, which constructed the relational legitimacy of the market and led to market expansion. The results of this study provide a novel explanation of market expansion by unveiling a key mediating process: the formation of a new *habitus* that, in turn, sustains the construction of relational legitimacy judgements.

This study is not exempt from limitations. First, the study was carried out in just one country that, despite being exemplary of the green stigma condition in SHC markets, may enjoy unique contextual factors, which may limit the generalizability of the results to other countries. Another limitation stems from the generative interpretative methodology that, despite being appropriate for uncovering the causal properties of the emotional work undertaken by players and influencers, does not (and cannot) predict the actual growth of SHC markets. Although measuring the impact of each individual player was beyond the objective of the study, the observation of more active and intense work from the e-tailers compared to the nonprofit actors may suggest different levels of efficacy and impacts on the legitimacy shifts and the SHC market expansion. The approach used in this study does not allow us to offer a definite answer to this question.

In addition, the results of this study indicate interesting lines of future research. First, we pointed out that spillovers may occur across systems (from SHC markets to recycled fiber and other recirculation markets); however, proving such an effect was beyond the scope of this study. Future studies should take a multi-system view (Köhler et al., 2019) and examine whether and how these cross-effects occur. Second, we excluded from the analysis the P2P matcher business model, as such players have limited control over the work of the participating actors. Further studies should examine whether actors' work in these business models adds to or undermines the legitimization of these markets. The latter effect may occur if participating actors reinforce the negative beliefs and emotions that sustain the old *habitus*. Third, future research in consumer psychology may help isolate the effectiveness of each of the identified discursive strategies for shifting beliefs and emotions or may focus on resistant consumers to determine which discursive strategies can help shift their current legitimacy judgements. Examining the reciprocal influence of public discourse related to SHC on the private meanings held by consumers could be a fruitful line of future work. Finally, research on the specific impact of each actor would shed light on appropriate strategies and investments to expand markets in transition.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Supplementary materials

Supplementary material associated with this article can be found, in the online version, at doi:[10.1016/j.spc.2021.11.027](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.spc.2021.11.027).

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