

Mapping the Evolution of Sharing Economy Research: A SPAR-4-SLR Systematic Review of Theories, Contexts, and Methodologies.

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Article History:	ABSTRACT
Received: 2 nd October, 2025.	Purpose: This study aims to provide an inclusive review of recent literature on the sharing economy over the past eight years. The study focuses on interactions among constructs from a consumer behaviour perspective, drawing on relevant theories, contexts, and methods.
Revised: 12 th November, 2025.	Design and Methodology: A framework-based analysis of 20 articles identified the most relevant theories, contexts, and methods (TCM) in the sharing economy. The advanced SPAR-4-SLR method was implemented to ensure the inclusion of recent and relevant literature.
Accepted: 5 th December, 2025.	Findings: The findings show that sharing economy research is primarily guided by behavioural and technology-oriented theories, such as TPB, TAM, and SDT, and is broadly examined within Western, technologically advanced contexts using quantitative models such as SEM. It also underscores the lack of cultural diversity and qualitative depth, calling for broader, context-sensitive theoretical and methodological frameworks. Implications: The study offers valuable insights for scholars and practitioners, outlining directions for future research and strategies. By emphasizing theoretical gaps and methodological limitations, it contributes to advancing academic understanding and supports practical decision-making in the sharing economy. Keywords: Sharing Economy, Collaborative Consumption, SPAR-4-SLR, Systematic Literature Review, TCM.

1. Introduction

The sharing economy (SE), alternatively known as collaborative consumption (CC), is a phenomenon where people use resources, including property, accommodation, vehicles, clothes, music, and others, without necessarily having them in their possession. This concept has grown more prominent during the last decade. The modern notion that SE has significantly grown in recent times and changed at an impressive rate is still subject to the existing information and communication technologies that allow strangers to discuss and exchange goods and services with ease due to the exchange of surplus or used products (Yasar et al., 2025; Kim & Jin, 2020). Many of the industries today, including accommodation, transport, entertainment, and consumer products, like fashion, toys, as well as electronics, work on the SE models. The famous examples are Uber, Airbnb, Zipcar, and Spotify, which are the digitalization of consumption. Uber and Airbnb, which were launched in 2009 and 2008, had a significant impact on the formation of SE markets (Malecka et al., 2022). In 2011, Time Magazine named the sharing economy as one of the ten ideas that can change the world (Kim & Jin, 2020). PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC, 2015) reports that the global SE market was estimated to be valued at about US\$15 billion in 2015 and predicted that it would be US\$335 billion in 2025 (Jamsek & Culiberg, 2020; Lee & Cha, 2022).

Accommodation sharing follows entertainment and media as the second-largest category of the SE market with a market value of almost US \$15.82 billion in 2016-2017. As of 2018, it represented approximately 7 percent of the global lodging revenue and had been increasing by an average of 31 percent per year since 2013 (Aref, 2024; Faraji et al., 2024; Tunçel & Özkan Tektaş, 2020). There is also a rapid increase in transportation services, which include Uber and Lyft in the United States, DiDi in China, Ola in India, and Grab in Southeast Asia. Uber is a company that is valued at US\$120 billion (Lee & Cha, 2022). The online fashion-rental industry also demonstrates the same growth. According to one market report, it was estimated to be worth US\$1.95 billion and projected to grow on average 9.8 percent every year until 2026 (McNeill & Venter, 2019).

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This quick growth is attributed to several factors. The use of technology, the worldwide recession, and a re-engagement in the community have gained momentum in the adoption process of SE. There has also been an environmental awareness (Putra et al., 2024). The price of fuel, raw materials scarcity, climate, and related pressures have contributed to the move, as well as adjustments in consumption behaviour, with anti-consumption being a key example of these changes (i.e., a practice of making purposeful cuts in material use) (Agarwal & Steinmetz, 2019; Ter Huurne et al., 2017; Lee & Cha, 2022).

The SE has thus gained popularity as something permanent. It has now become a disruptive business model that facilitates cooperation and interconnectivity of industries with digital systems (Kim-Vick & Cho, 2024). This economic and technological trend has become the focus of many policymakers, business executives, and scholars because it is disrupting the orthodoxies of production and consumption (Eckhardt et al., 2019; Mohlmann, 2015).

The growth of academic interest in the SE has been dramatically high in less than a decade, yielding over 2,000 articles in reputable journals in a wide range of disciplines. These works focus on the topics of collaborative consumption, peer-to-peer exchange, and governance of digital platforms. Nevertheless, due to its blistering evolution and multidisciplinary nature, the field remains conceptually unclear (De las Heras et al., 2021; Hamari et al., 2016). Popular research subjects have been in theoretical foundations, platform security, sustainable tourism, consumer participation, government regulation, and environmental or social impacts. Tourism and accommodation, transportation, and digital technology are the most analyzed industries (Lee et al., 2021).

Although the SE scholarship has grown significantly, the studies are still disintegrated. Within the last 5 years, a great variety of views and approaches have been introduced, and yet research has been spread across a great number of subfields, which disrupts the ability of new researchers to have an overview of all the perspectives (Yasar et al., 2025). Some researchers have attempted to systematize the existing evidence and provide future research directions, such as Yasar et al. (2025), Agarwal and Steinmetz (2019), and Ertz et al. (2016). Since the SE remains in a state of development, there is still a need to synthesize published research in order to demystify behavioral patterns, theoretical applications, and methodological trends.

The current research serves this purpose by analyzing the coverage of SE in the academic literature, especially theories, settings, and methodology under the umbrella term of the TCM framework. It is aimed at summarizing the available evidence, pointing to the research domains that have been limitedly studied, and suggesting future research directions in order to allow consumer-behavior researchers to get a better idea of participation in SE markets.

Despite the current boom in publications on SE, there has been a surge in the number of publications on the subject, but the material is conceptually disjointed and methodologically varied, so it is difficult to engage in cross-disciplinary synthesis. Much of the past has been descriptive or exploratory, and it has not necessarily been transparent or replicable (Yasar et al., 2025). This then demands a systematic and evidence-based review methodology.

The present paper uses the SPAR-4-SLR (Scientific Procedures and Rationales of Systematic Literature Reviews) framework developed by Paul et al. (2021) to resolve this problem. The approach offers a transparent and repeatable procedure that increases the methodological rigor and theoretical accuracy. The purpose of the review is to summarize all the studies available on the SE phenomenon, organize them in a transparent manner based on the theories, situations, and procedures, and analyze their overall input to the research topic, and indicate the gaps in the existing body. With this systematic synthesis, the research forms a conceptual base on which dispersed findings are synthesized and future empirical and theoretical investigation of the sharing economy is established.

Section 2 of the paper provides the development of SE and specifies the research goals and research questions. Section 3 explains the review methodology, which covers sources of data used, the selection procedures, and the techniques of analysis. Section 4 provides the results of theoretical approaches, research settings, and trends in SE literature. Section 5 will provide knowledge gaps and give possible ways to develop the study further. Lastly, in Section 6, the conclusions and overall key findings of the systematic review are summarized.

2. Literature Review

Among the current business and consumption trends, consumer research reveals several practices associated with the patterns. They are sharing economy, collaborative consumption, the mesh, co-production, co-creation, consumer participation, peer-to-peer sharing, and online volunteering (Belk, 2014). As information technology has developed, as well as Web 2.0, many online platforms have been created, enabling users to share, collaborate, participate, and co-produce products and services with each other (Eckhardt et al., 2019). The example of Airbnb, Uber, Zipcar, FreeCycle, and Fashion Share proves that digital trust, sustainability, and convenience are taking an even greater role in shaping the patterns of consumption (Chameroy et al., 2024; Faraji et al., 2024).

The Oxford Learner Dictionary defines the sharing economy as an economic system where individuals are allowed to share possessions or services (typically through the internet) (Say et al., 2021). The SE in this paper will be perceived as a technology-based system, as all the activities in the system rely on an online technological platform. Therefore, the SE is viewed as a technological trend, but not a cultural or lifestyle trend (Belk, 2014; Schor, 2016). A market to be considered a part of the SE needs to operate via a site or a mobile application or both that is routinely used and sustained by the members (Belk, 2014; Yasar et al., 2025). The site that is only an advert about an offline event, like a local flea market, would not qualify to this requirement.

One of the key characteristics of the SE transactions is the focus on temporary access, rather than ownership. Users lend their goods and services on a short-term basis through all forms of peer-to-peer arrangements (Putra et al., 2024). It is not transferred permanently; they pay a fee or compensation to access and distribute it to the consumers. It is a sustainable model that helps to promote sustainable consumption and ensure global sustainability (Aref, 2024; Faraji et al., 2024). Recent studies also suggest that Generation Z customers are highly affected by environmental concerns, confidence in online platforms, and social identification to use SE platforms (Kim-Vick & Cho, 2024).

Sharing economy provides the opportunity to exchange in many different ways, such as using barter exchange, swapping, or trading, as long as monetary or non-monetary compensation is provided. The idea of gift-giving, where the ownership is transferred permanently, as well as uncompensated activities like couch surfing, does not fit into this definition (Belk, 2014; Eckhardt et al., 2019; Hamari et al., 2016; Putra et al., 2024).

From the discussion above, it is clear that sharing economy activities or markets are based on two main practices. 1) Their use of temporary access, non-ownership models for utilizing consumer goods and services with some form of compensation, and 2) their dependence on the Internet, particularly Web 2.0. Key definitions of the different sharing economy concepts are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Key Definitions

Concept / Term	Definition	Key Features / Focus	Reference
Sharing Economy (SE)	An economic system in which individuals share access to goods, services, or resources—typically through digital platforms—without transferring ownership.	Technology-driven, access-based, peer-to-peer, relies on digital mediation (apps/web).	Putra et al.(2024); Say et al. (2021); Belk (2014); Eckhardt et al. (2019)
Collaborative Consumption	A form of consumption where access to products and services is shared among consumers, often facilitated by online platforms.	Temporary access, resource efficiency, social exchange, and sustainability.	Botsman & Rogers (2010); Belk (2014)
Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Sharing	Direct exchange of goods or services between individuals using digital or mobile-based intermediaries.	Decentralized participation, user-to-user transactions, trust systems.	Hamari et al. (2016); Eckhardt et al. (2019)
Co-Production	The joint involvement of consumers and producers in the design, creation, or delivery of goods and services.	Active consumer participation, value co-creation, innovation.	Prahalad & Ramaswamy (2004)

Concept / Term	Definition	Key Features / Focus	Reference
Co-Creation	Collaborative process in which consumers contribute ideas, feedback, or designs to enhance product or service development.	Participatory design, customization, digital collaboration.	Ramaswamy & Ozcan (2018)
Consumer Participation	The extent to which consumers are involved in production, service delivery, or value creation processes.	Engagement, feedback loops, empowerment.	Hollebeek et al. (2019)
The Mesh	A network-based business model where access, not ownership, is central; consumers use connected services to borrow or share resources.	Connectivity, efficiency, minimal waste, platform economy.	Gansky (2010)
Online Volunteering	Voluntary activities performed remotely through digital platforms to contribute to a community or cause.	Non-monetary exchange, social contribution, technology-mediated collaboration.	Lough & Tiessen (2018)

2.1. Research Questions

The research questions that can identify the scope of this research are:

1. What theoretical lenses have been employed by researchers in sharing economy studies?
2. What methodological approaches have researchers used in sharing economy studies?
3. What are the main contexts of sharing economy studies?

3. Methodology

The literature review involves identifying, selecting, and evaluating previous studies related to the research goal. Different types of systematic literature reviews exist, such as meta-analyses, theory-based reviews, framework-based reviews, bibliometric reviews, theme-based reviews, and hybrid reviews. The structured framework-based review mainly focuses on the article's content, including its domain, theory, and methodology. In contrast, bibliometric reviews help identify research trends, their development, and the connections between researchers, citations, and countries (Akhmedova et al., 2021; Khatri & Duggal, 2022).

In this paper, we conduct a systematic, framework-based review that focuses on widely used theories, methodologies, and contexts in the domain of collaborative consumption. For this review, we employed the scientific procedures and rationales outlined by Paul et al. (2021) for the systematic literature review (SLR) method, as described in the SPAR-4-SLR framework. The (SPAR-4-SLR) method includes three main stages and six sub-stages that move in a coherent order. These stages are assembling (identification and acquisition), arranging (organisation and purification of literature), and assessing (evaluation and reporting of literature). Figure 1 sketches the complete flow of information.



Figure 1: Outline of the SPAR-4-SLR

3.1. Stage 1: Assembling- identification and acquirement of literature

In the first stage, the process of identifying and acquiring relevant literature is conducted. During the “identification” sub-stage, the domain, research questions, source quality, and search method are defined. The domain for this review is the Sharing Economy (SE) behavior of consumers. The three research questions guiding this study are: a) What theoretical frameworks have researchers used in sharing economy studies? b) What methodological approaches have been employed in sharing economy research? c) What are the main contexts of sharing economy research? For this paper, only peer-reviewed journal articles are included. We do not consider other sources such as conference papers, editorials, books, book chapters, or dissertations. We used only Wiley and Google Scholar as search databases due to time constraints and the unavailability of advanced databases such as WOS, Scopus, ScienceDirect, and Emerald. To ensure source quality, we only select journals indexed in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) that focus on marketing and have an impact factor greater than 5.0.

To perform the second sub-stage of literature acquisition, a Boolean search using the keywords "sharing economy" OR "collaborative consumption" is conducted in the title, abstract, and throughout the document to identify relevant literature. This paper focuses on publications from 2018 to 2025 to highlight the most important research of the last 8 years. Additionally, this study utilizes English-language journal articles from the field of business management. A total of 105 journal articles were obtained from the initial search.

3.2. Stage 2: Arranging- organization and purification of literature

For the sub-stage of “organization”, it is important to identify the codes for organizing the literature and frameworks. To ensure the objectivity and systematization of the literature, the TCM framework is employed in this study for research on the sharing economy. We identified twelve codes from my initial research, such as article name, author's name, journal name, number of citations, publication date, theories, contexts, methods, sample, geographical location, key variables, and research gap.

In the “purification” sub-stage, it is essential to establish criteria for including and excluding remaining articles based on the quality of their sources. This study aims to classify the most significant theories, contexts, and methods in the literature. The studies under the domain of the Sharing Economy and Collaborative Consumption are part of this research. Moreover, the journals that have an impact factor of 5 or more are included in this research. Only two journals meet these criteria: "International Journal of Consumer Studies," which has an impact factor of 7.09 and is ranked 42nd out of 155 top business and management journals, and "Journal of Consumer Behaviour," with an impact factor of 5.39, ranked 62nd among these journals (Wiley, 2023). After applying these criteria, 34 journal articles remain. To further refine, only articles with at least 10 citations are included. Ultimately, 20 full-text articles are used in this review, as summarized in Table 2.

Table 2
Selected articles for review

Sr No.	Article Name	Author	Journal Name	Citations	Year of Publication
1.	“Between enthusiasm and refusal: A cluster analysis on consumer types and attitudes towards peer-to-peer sharing”.	(Neunhoeffler & Teubner, 2018)	JCB	67	2018
2.	“To share or not to share? Explaining willingness to share in the context of social distance”.	(Schreiner et al., 2018)	JCB	51	2018
3.	“Construal level and collaborative consumption: An exploratory approach”.	(Sordi et al., 2018)	IJCS	39	2018
4.	“Identity, self-concept and young women’s engagement with collaborative, sustainable fashion consumption models”.	(McNeill & Venter, 2019)	IJCS	333	2019
5.	“Trust and the don't-want-to-complain bias in Peer-to-peer platform markets”.	(Berg et al., 2020)	IJCS	48	2020
6.	“Intrinsic motivators of collaborative consumption: A study of accommodation rental services”.	(Tunçel & Özkan Tektaş, 2020)	IJCS	38	2020
7.	“Why buy new when one can share? Exploring collaborative consumption motivations for consumer goods”.	(Kim & Jin, 2020)	IJCS	140	2020

Sr No.	Article Name	Author	Journal Name	Citations	Year of Publication
8.	“Introducing a three-tier sustainability framework to examine bike-sharing system use: An extension of the technology acceptance model”.	(Jamšek & Culiberg, 2020)	IJCS	53	2020
9.	“Altruism and social utility in consumer sharing behaviour”.	(Say et al., 2021)	JCB	46	2021
10.	“Collaborative consumption: An investigation into the secondary sneaker market”.	(Slaton & Pookulangara, 2022)	IJCS	50	2022
11.	“Combating the fear of COVID-19 through shared accommodations: Create a sense of social connectedness?”	(Dogerlioglu-Demir et al., 2022)	JCB	18	2022
12.	“The relationship between anti-consumption lifestyle and the trust triangle in a ride-sharing platform: A cross-cultural study of U.S. and Indian consumers.”	(Lee & Cha, 2022)	IJCS	34	2022
13.	“Segmentation of collaborative consumption consumers: Social identity theory perspective”.	(Małecka et al., 2022)	IJCS	42	2022
14.	“A shared-transportation mobile app continuance model: The moderating effects of brand awareness”.	(Park & Le, 2023)	JCB	20	2023
15.	“Shared consumption and its determinants: A systematic literature review and future research agenda”.	(Khalek & Chakraborty, 2023)	IJCS	46	2023
16.	“Revisiting antecedents to collaborative consumption in the context of dual role consumers”.	(Małecka et al., 2024)	JCB	12	2024
17.	“Second hand consumption: A systematic literature review and future research agenda”.	(Gilal et al., 2024)	IJCS	16	2024
18.	“Is it fashionable to swap clothes? The moderating role of culture”.	(Armouch et al., 2024)	IJCS	13	2024

Sr No.	Article Name	Author	Journal Name	Citations	Year of Publication
19.	“Circularity Within Service-Dominant Logic: The Role of Perceived Ethics on Co-Creation in Sharing Economy Platforms Ethics on Co-Creation in Sharing Economy Platform”.	(Alimamy & Nadeem, 2025)	IJCS	15	2025
20.	“From Ownership to Access: Resistance Towards Shared Consumption”.	(Khalek & Chakraborty, 2025)	IJCS	16	2025

Research in SE is gaining momentum among researchers, with new studies being published in the SE domain at a continuous rate, as illustrated in Figure 2.

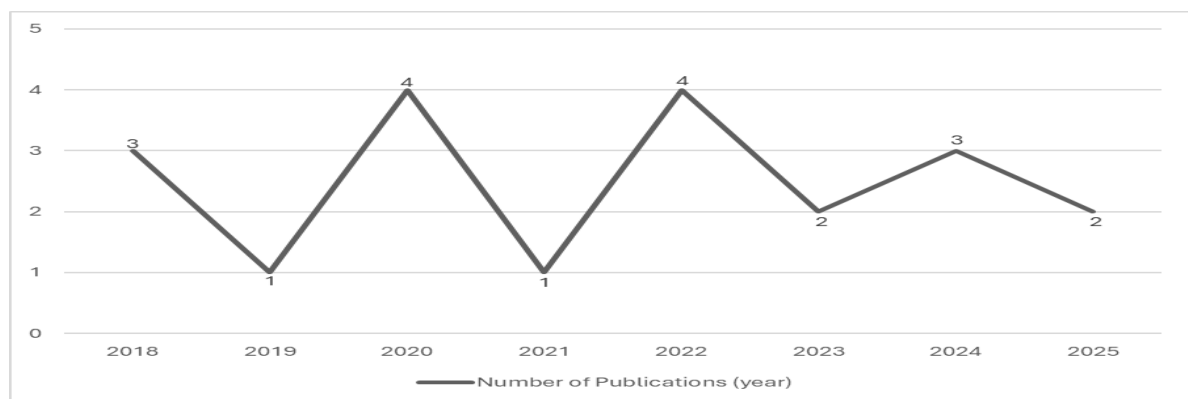


Figure 2: *Publication Per Year in the SE domain*

3.3. Stage 3: Assessing, evaluating, and reporting of literature

In the final stage of assessment, understanding the evaluation and reporting standards established in the literature is essential. This framework-based review is descriptive, primarily focusing on content. It examined journal articles centered on the most popular theories, contexts, and methods (TCM) to thoroughly explore consumer behavior in the sharing economy. This can be achieved by analyzing what is known and what can be accomplished within the TCM framework. A combination of discussions, tables, and figures has been used. Finally, some limitations are identified at the end.

4. Findings from the TCM Framework

In the first section, we start by explaining the theoretical aspects (T) of sharing economy research to identify the key theories used to explain the sharing economy (SE) phenomenon. Then, we review the various contexts (C), including countries, industries, and populations, in which SE research has been conducted. Lastly, we discuss some methodological (M) aspects, such as research approaches, analysis techniques, and tools, to clarify the SE landscape.

4.1. Theories

There are numerous theoretical models that researchers have used to explain consumer behavior in the sharing economy, as summarized in Table 3. The Theory of Planned Behavior that McNeill and Venter (2019) apply describes the functions of emotion, pleasure, social norm, individuality, and social influence in SE situations. The Theory of Reasoned Action, which Slaton and Pookulangara (2022) address, emphasizes the possibility of the positive influence of popular culture and social media on the attitudes and subjective norms of

consumers, which subsequently predetermine their behavioral intentions in SE markets. The Construal Level Theory (CLT) used by Tunçel and Özkan Tektaş (2020) and Sordi et al. 2018 offers an understanding of the intrinsic motivations and cognitive levels of construal that underlie consumer decision-making in the SE environment.

The social aspects of SE participation have been highlighted by researchers who have applied the Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Social Identity Theory (SIT), including Say et al. (2021) and Małecka et al. (2022). Various theoretical perspectives have been used in other studies. An example of this is where Park and Le (2023) combined Expectation Confirmation Theory and the Post-Acceptance Model of Information System Continuance to examine the user satisfaction and further usage of SE platforms. Schreiner et al. (2018), investigated the willingness to share and applied the Field Theory, and Jamšek and Culiberg (2020) applied the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to determine the sustainability and adoption of bike-sharing platforms.

Armouch et al. (2024) have discussed the impact of cultural orientation in SE based on the Cultural Values Theory by Hofstede. Alimamy and Nadeem (2025) used similar approach when they utilized Service-Dominant Logic Theory in addition to Trust Commitment Theory to research ethical perceptions in the context of co-creation activities in SE platforms. Khalek and Chakraborty (2025) used the Innovation Resistance Theory and Status Quo Bias Theory to comprehend the resistance behavior of consumers in the SE participation. Approximately thirty-five percent of the reviewed studies, including those by Gilal et al. (2024), Khalek and Chakraborty (2023), Berg et al. (2020), Dogerlioglu-Demir et al. (2022), Lee and Cha (2022), and Neunhoeffler and Teubner (2018), did not employ any explicit theoretical framework or conceptual model in their examination of SE behavior. The absence of theory in these studies highlights a continuing gap in the literature and emphasizes the need for stronger theoretical integration in future SE research.

Table 3: *Common Theories*

Category	Theoretical Framework	Number of Articles	Model Papers
Behavioral Theories	Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)	2	(McNeill & Venter, 2019)
	Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)	1	(Slaton & Pookulangara, 2022)
	Field Theory	1	(Schreiner et al., 2018)
	Construal Level Theory (CLT)	2	(Sordi et al., 2018; Tunçel & Özkan Tektaş, 2020)
	Expectation Confirmation Theory (ECT) with Post-Acceptance Model	1	(Park & Le, 2023)
	Rational Choice Theory	1	(Małecka et al., 2024)
	Status Quo Bias Theory	1	(Khalek & Chakraborty, 2025)
	Innovation Resistance Theory	1	(Khalek & Chakraborty, 2025)
Social & Relational Theories	Social Exchange Theory (SET)	1	(Say et al., 2021)
	Social Identity Theory (SIT)	1	(Małecka et al., 2022)
	Trust-Commitment Theory	1	(Alimamy & Nadeem, 2025)
	Service-Dominant Logic (SDL)	1	(Alimamy & Nadeem, 2025)
Cultural Theories	Hofstede's Cultural Values Theory	1	(Armouch et al., 2024)

Category	Theoretical Framework	Number of Articles	Model Papers
Technology-Driven Theories	Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)	1	(Jamšek & Culiberg, 2020)
No Explicit Theoretical Use	–	7	(Berg et al., 2020; Dogerlioglu-Demir et al., 2022; Gilal et al., 2024; Khalek & Chakraborty, 2023; Kim & Jin, 2020; Lee & Cha, 2022; Neunhoeffler & Teubner, 2018)

4.2. Context

Context describes the environment of research. Typically, two or three contexts are used in systematic literature review studies (Gilal et al., 2022; Khatri & Duggal, 2022). For this study, we discussed three contexts from our final set of 20 articles.

These are the Industries in which the research is conducted, the Geographical Location of the research, and the Population or Sample involved in the research. Approximately 80% (N = 16) of the articles used in this study are based in the United States, Germany, Brazil, Turkey, Poland, Slovenia, Norway, Canada, and New Zealand. The United States is the leading contributor to research on the SE phenomenon. Approximately 25% (n = 5) of the studies are from the USA, with 18% (n = 2) from Germany, Turkey, Poland, and India. Taiwan, China, Pakistan, and Vietnam are also key contributors to SE research from Southeast Asia, each with one article (n = 1). The results are shown in Figure 3.

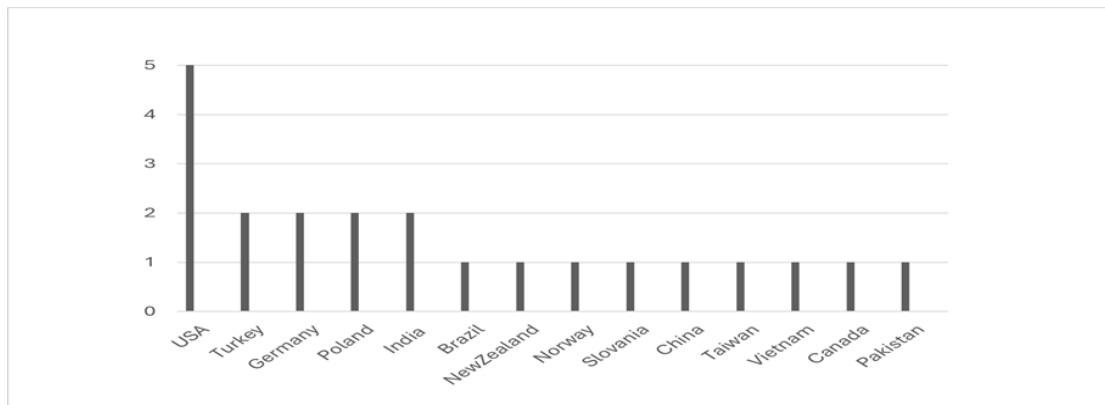


Figure 3: *Distribution of SE studies across countries*

In the industrial context, Accommodation and Transportation are two prominent research areas. About 18 studies have been conducted on SE behavior in Accommodation and Transportation. Fashion is also a significant focus of research, with three studies using fashion as their industry context. Only one study examined the sharing phenomenon through a food-sharing scenario. Tangible goods or product sharing are discussed in six studies. The remaining studies do not specify any particular industry and refer to sharing as a general concept. Results are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Industrial Contexts in Selected Articles

Industries	No of Studies	Exemplary Papers
Transportation	10	(Alimamy & Nadeem, 2025; Berg et al., 2020; Jamšek & Culiberg, 2020; Khalek & Chakraborty, 2025; Lee & Cha, 2022; Małecka et al., 2022; Małecka et al., 2024; Neunhoeffler & Teubner, 2018; Park & Le, 2023; Say et al., 2021)
Accommodation	8	(Alimamy & Nadeem, 2025; Berg et al., 2020; Dogerlioglu-Demir et al., 2022; Khalek & Chakraborty, 2025; Małecka et al., 2022; Małecka et al., 2024; Neunhoeffler & Teubner, 2018; Park & Le, 2023; Tunçel & Özkan Tektaş, 2020)
Tangible Goods or Product Sharing	6	(Alimamy & Nadeem, 2025; Berg et al., 2020; Khalek & Chakraborty, 2025; Kim & Jin, 2020; Małecka et al., 2022; Małecka et al., 2024; Neunhoeffler & Teubner, 2018)
General Sharing Behaviour	4	(Gilal et al., 2024; Khalek & Chakraborty, 2023; Schreiner et al., 2018; Sordi et al., 2018)
Fashion	3	(Armouch et al., 2024; McNeill & Venter, 2019; Slaton & Pookulangara, 2022)
Food Sharing	1	(Berg et al., 2020)

Many similarities are evident in the population or sample context of the identified studies. Approximately 50% (n = 10) of the studies used a sample of young university students. The general population also served as the sampling context for 40% (n = 9) of the studies. Only one study focused solely on a female sample (McNeill & Venter, 2019).

4.3. Methods

The research methods comprised two aspects: research approaches and analysis techniques (Khatri & Duggal, 2022). We reviewed 20 finalized studies to identify the research approaches and analysis techniques they employed. According to the analysis, the Quantitative Survey Technique is the most popular research approach among researchers. Approximately 65% (n = 13) of the studies incorporated the survey method to analyze the SE phenomenon. Two researchers also used a quantitative experimental design to study the SE scenario. Similarly, four studies used the qualitative research approach, while only one study applied the mixed methods technique to explain the SE situation, as shown in Figure 4.

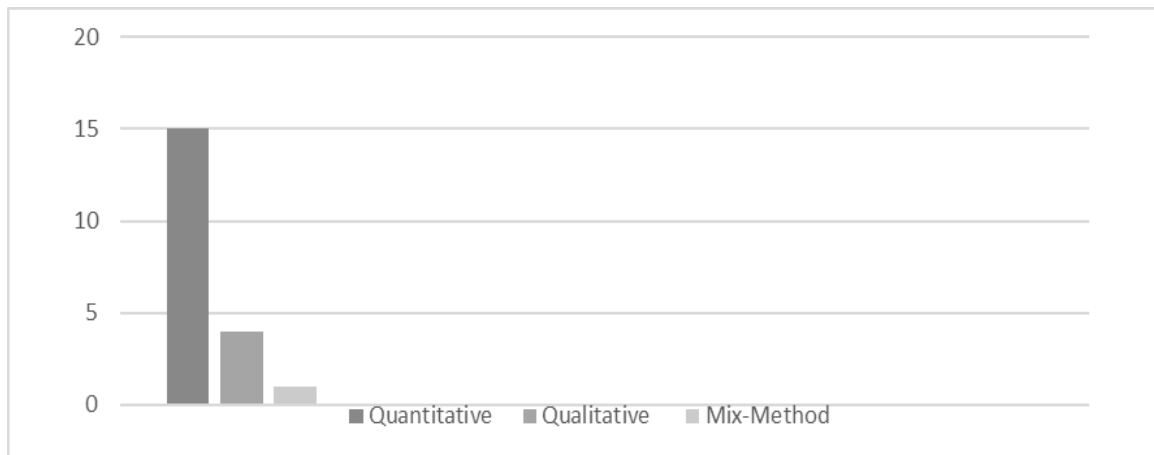


Figure 4: Methodologies used in selected articles

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a commonly used analysis technique among researchers. About 55% (N=11) of studies employed SEM to explain their findings. Some studies, such as those by Małecka et al. (2022) and Neunhoeffler and Teubner (2018), employed cluster analysis to enhance their research. Researchers McNeill and Venter (2019) used thematic analysis to clarify their study, while Sordi et al. (2018) conducted exploratory research in the qualitative field to address their research problem. Similarly, Kim and Jin (2020) relied on interviews and surveys to develop scales for future researchers in the field of the sharing economy. Moreover, systematic literature reviews in SE are also becoming more popular, as two were conducted by Gilal et al. (2024) and Khalek and Chakraborty (2023). See Figure 5

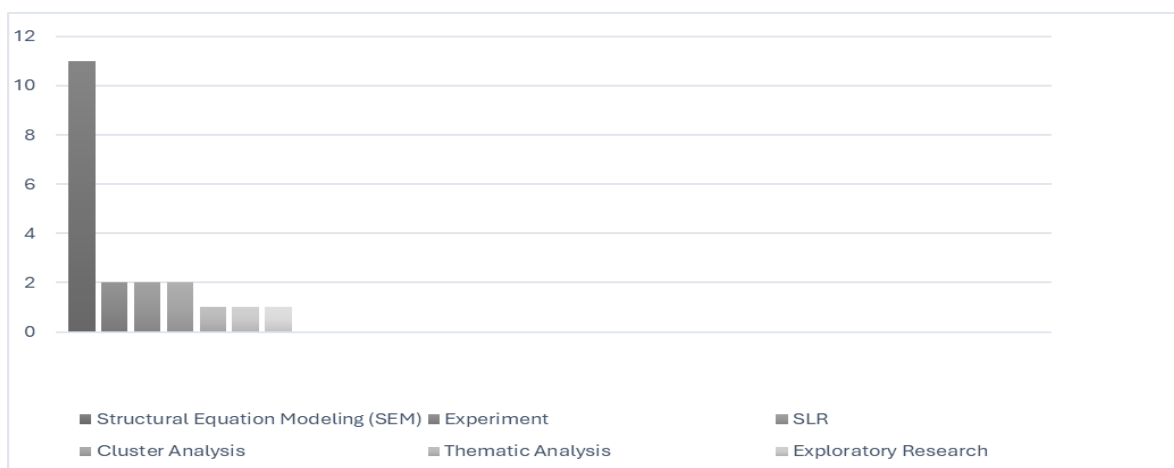


Figure 5: Data Analysis Techniques used in selected articles

5. Future Research Agenda

This section aims to highlight the main research gaps by identifying various TCM approaches for future research agendas. These recommendations are useful for future scholars to expand their research on the SE phenomenon.

5.1. Theory

A diverse range of theoretical frameworks have been applied to consumer behavior in the sharing economy, such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Field Theory, the Construal Level Theory (CLT), the Social Exchange Theory (SET), the Social Identity Theory (SIT), the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the Culture Values Theory by Hofstede, the Service-Dominant Logic Theory, the Trust and commitment Theory, the Innovation Resistance Theory, and the Status Quo Bias Theory (Armouch et al., 2024; Alimamy & Nadeem, 2025; Khalek & Chakraborty, 2025; Jamšek & Culiberg, 2020; Małecka et al., 2022; McNeill & Venter, 2019; Say et al., 2021; Schreiner et al., 2018; Slaton & Pookulangara,

2022; Tunçel & Özkan Tektaş, 2020). It is well known that these theoretical frameworks are capable of predicting, explaining and identifying new consumption patterns in the new digital markets.

The available literature also shows that some of the existing studies are trying to explain SE behavior without basing their analysis on a theory, thus restricting the explanatory and predictive capabilities of their results. It is thus highly suggested that future studies should combine theoretical thinking with methodological studies with an aim of gaining a better insight into sustainable consumption patterns (Gilal et al., 2022). Similarly, it is believed to be extremely resourceful in this area, continuously developing new conceptual and theoretical insights with the help of theory-based systematic reviews with a diverse range of perspectives (Tsiotsou et al., 2022).

The use of various theoretical frameworks has the potential of expanding the interpretation of consumer behavior (CB) in SE markets. Specifically, the Relationship Marketing Theory focuses on the generation of long-term value by means of constant interaction and establishing trust and building it, and is therefore especially applicable to the interpretation of relational interactions in SE platforms (Nadeem et al., 2020). It is also crucial to identify the intrinsic motivation of consumers in order to predict their behavior on sharing. Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT) is one of the theories proposed to explain intrinsic motivations associated with sustainable consumption by concentrating on autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Gilal et al., 2019). This theory can be utilized in terms of SE contexts to predict future participation trends and expose consumers to their novelty-seeking behavior and technology-seeking behavior (Gonzalez-Cutre et al., 2020).

The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) theory also play a significant role in comprehending sustainable sharing behavior, especially in understanding how the emotional response of individuals to environmental stimuli leads to voluntary consumption, anti-consumption, and the adoption of green products (Chi et al., 2020). Moreover, the inclusion of cross-cultural considerations based on the Hofstede Cultural Dimensions Theory may provide useful information on the role of cultural values on SE participation in various areas (Lee et al., 2021).

In order to better clarify the concepts, the upcoming studies need to clearly correlate the theoretical views and the specifics of observable behavioral constructions within SE settings. As an example, SDT and BPNT can be used to explain the mechanisms that explain the role of intrinsic motivations like autonomy, competence, and relatedness in generating sustainable participation in SE platforms. The Relationship Marketing Theory may further explain the development of trust, satisfaction, and commitment based on the continued peer and platform relationships, which result to increased loyalty and positive word-of-mouth. Combining TAM and motivational theory could also be a clear explanation of why the perceived usefulness, together with the psychological gratification, are joint predictors of the continued use of the platform. Likewise, the SET and S-O-R model can be used to relate the structural exchanges, emotional involvement, and behavioral intentions. The theoretical links provided can allow researchers to develop holistic models of consumer behavior that better capture the psychological, relational, and technological nature of the sharing economy, as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: *Theoretical Linkages in Selected Articles*

Theory / Framework	Core Mechanism	Linked Consumer Behavior Constructs	Future Focus
Self-Determination (SDT) & Basic Psychological Needs (BPNT)	Intrinsic motivation; autonomy, competence, relatedness.	Motivation, satisfaction, sustainable participation.	Examine how platform features and community rewards enhance intrinsic motivation.
Relationship Marketing Theory	Long-term relational value via trust and commitment.	Trust, loyalty, engagement, word-of-mouth.	Strengthen peer and platform trust relationships for retention.
Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)	Perceived ease and usefulness of technology.	Adoption intention, perceived value, continued use.	Integrate with motivational theories to explain tech-driven sharing behavior.

Social Exchange (SET)	Reciprocal exchange of value and benefits.	Reciprocity, fairness, trust, satisfaction.	Explore fairness perceptions and reciprocity in peer-to-peer exchanges.
Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R)	External stimuli evoke internal states and behaviors.	Emotional engagement, loyalty, behavioral intention.	Assess how platform cues (reviews, design) shape sharing intention.
Cultural Dimensions (Hofstede)	Cultural values influence decision-making.	Collectivism, norms, uncertainty avoidance, trust.	Compare cultural moderators in SE adoption and usage patterns.

5.2. Contexts

The majority of the studies devoted to the sharing economy (SE) are carried out in the Western world, which is technologically developed and hosts numerous large companies of the SE. Since SE models are based on digital platforms, which demand internet connectivity and technological maturity, researchers find it more convenient to research SE behaviour in these areas. Such a large concentration of research in Western settings has yielded useful results, but restricts the generalizability of results to other parts of the world. A lot of studies are inclined to recreate the work of other researchers, which results in slower theoretical and contextual advancement. The future studies ought to focus on less culturally diverse and technologically advanced environments to gain a wider perspective on SE behavior. Southeast Asia is a country with a large population and developing digital infrastructure, which provides very promising opportunities to derive more generalizable and inclusive findings (Berg et al., 2020; Dogerlioglu-Demir et al., 2022; Jamšek & Culiberg, 2020; Kim & Jin, 2020; Neunhoeffler & Teubner, 2018; Schreiner et al., 2018; Slaton & Pookulangara, 2022).

The dominance of the West in SE scholarship is also an indication of the initial rise and popularization of such platforms as Airbnb, Uber, and Zipcar, which were introduced in highly digitalized economies with strong institutional backgrounds and consumer confidence in e-commerce. This geographic bias has also been historically supported by Western institutions and journals that control the research priorities around the globe. Nevertheless, the experience of individualistic, high-income societies might not be the most effective in revealing the cultural, social, or infrastructural realities of the developing, collectivist areas (Quattrone et al., 2022; Rathnayake, 2024).

It is, therefore, very important to expand the research of SE in the direction of non-Western and emerging economies. The dissimilarity in the digital ecosystem, value in the community, and motivation in consumption can display new behavioral patterns to supplement the previous results. This will be a feasible diversification that will strengthen the theoretical soundness and create a more globally balanced idea for the advancement of the research in the sharing economy.

5.3. Methods

A careful review of 20 research papers identifies that most researchers are from the quantitative field and primarily employ SEM to explain their findings. While these studies provide some initial understandings into data analysis methods, there are other important analyses, such as mediation, multi-factor modeling, and moderated-mediation analysis, that should also be used to understand the sustainable consumption behaviors of different consumers, specifically in the domain of the sharing economy (Gilal et al., 2022; Park & Le, 2023). Interviews and focus groups should be used to understand consumers' sharing behaviours in the qualitative domain. These qualitative studies can become inspirations to future studies for a better understanding of the internal motivations of consumers in sharing activities and the key factors influencing their choice of digital platforms, as suggested by many researchers (Lee & Cha, 2022; Say et al., 2021; Schreiner et al., 2018). Only one of the selected papers used a mixed-methods approach for scale development. It is highly recommended that future researchers include mixed-methods studies related to the sharing economy to deepen their understanding of the field. A summary of the key findings based on TCM can be found in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Key Findings and Future Research Agenda in Selected Articles

Dimension	Key Focus Areas	Identified Gaps	Future Research Suggestions	Representative References
Theoretical	Diverse frameworks applied: TPB, TRA, TAM, SET, SIT, S-O-R, SDT, BPNT, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, Relationship Marketing Theory	Lack of unified theoretical grounding; limited integration of motivation and culture-based theories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate multiple theories (e.g., TAM + SET or BPNT + SDT) for richer behavioral models. • Use cross-theory synthesis to explain intrinsic motivation, sustainability, and trust. • Develop new conceptual models linking digital engagement and consumer well-being. 	(Belk, 2014; Chi et al., 2020; Gilal et al., 2022; González-Cutre et al., 2020; Nadeem et al., 2020)
Contextual	Predominantly Western, tech-advanced environments (U.S., Europe)	Underrepresentation of developing economies; limited cross-cultural insights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct studies in emerging regions (e.g., South & Southeast Asia, Africa). • Explore socio-cultural and infrastructural barriers to SE. 	(Berg et al., 2020; Dogerlioglu-Demir et al., 2022; Kim & Jin, 2020; Schreiner et al., 2018)
Methodological	Quantitative dominance using SEM; limited qualitative or mixed methods	Insufficient depth in motivational and experiential insights; lack of methodological triangulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ mixed-methods. • Include mediation, moderated mediation. • Develop Scales for new and emerging contexts 	(Jamšek & Culiberg, 2020; Lee & Cha, 2022; Park & Le, 2023; Say et al., 2021)

6. Conclusion and Limitations

This study aimed to provide a thorough analysis of the scientific output of the sharing economy (SE), thereby achieving the primary goal of the research. To do this, the paper offers a comprehensive overview of the existing literature and outlines future directions. We examined the theories, contexts (such as industries, populations, and countries), and methods (research approaches) relevant to SE research in detail. After reviewing 20 articles, it is clear that research on the sharing economy is expanding rapidly. Technologically advanced countries are more focused on this area of research compared to other nations, such as many Asian countries. Many researchers rely on very small samples of students to study sharing behaviors, primarily in two sectors: accommodation and transportation. Theory-based research in the SE field is also scarce. Most researchers use simple theories to analyze consumer behavior through quantitative methods. It is strongly recommended that future research concentrate on these areas to improve understanding in the SE field.

This study offers multiple contributions to the current literature. The most notable is the introduction of new scientific procedures and rationales for the systematic literature review (SLR) method, as described in SPAR-4-SLR. This approach provides a detailed and comprehensive overview of the SLR process, especially helpful for beginners. It is gaining popularity among new researchers due to its straightforward guidelines. From an academic standpoint, it provides a clear overview of the sharing economy literature, highlighting its theoretical foundations and key topics. This helps future researchers identify new directions and position their work within the field. Practically, this research can serve as a valuable guide to the growing sharing economy and its link to sustainable consumption. By synthesizing evidence from various sources, including individual consumers, service providers, regulatory agencies, new SE startups, and traditional companies, stakeholders can gain holistic, multi-level insights into their areas and beyond, aiding in the development of effective strategies and policies.

6.1. Limitations

This research paper does not ignore some of the limitations that are related to time and resources. Only twenty academic articles were analyzed, though it serves as a significant base to carry out a more extensive and systematic review in the future (Paul et al., 2021). It would be possible to increase the number of analyzed articles to enhance the credibility and rigor of the results. The current review had concentrated on the studies published in the two reputed journals, namely the *International Journal of Consumer Studies* and the *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, both of which have been published by Wiley. This was beneficial in the sense that it guaranteed the inclusion of credible and peer-reviewed sources, but it might have missed significant information that might be present in the other journals. In order to create a wider picture of the sharing economy (SE), other databases like Web of Science (WOS) and Scopus have to be included in future research.

The review included the last studies published between 2018-2025, which gives a narrow insight into the current tendencies. However, it may be possible to expand this scope and reveal both earlier conceptual progress and more recent empirical discoveries. The only two search words utilized were Sharing Economy and Collaborative Consumption, and similar words like peer-to-peer, gig economy, and sharing behavior were not included, as there was no time. The use of a more varied range of search words in further work may provide more insightful and more up-to-date information. Finally, the present study has only been based on the TCM framework; by incorporating it into other complementary frameworks, like the ADO (Antecedents, Decision, and Outcome) framework, the consumer behavior in the sharing economy may be approached in a more holistic and multidimensional manner.

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