

The Sharing Economy: Why People Participate in Collaborative Consumption

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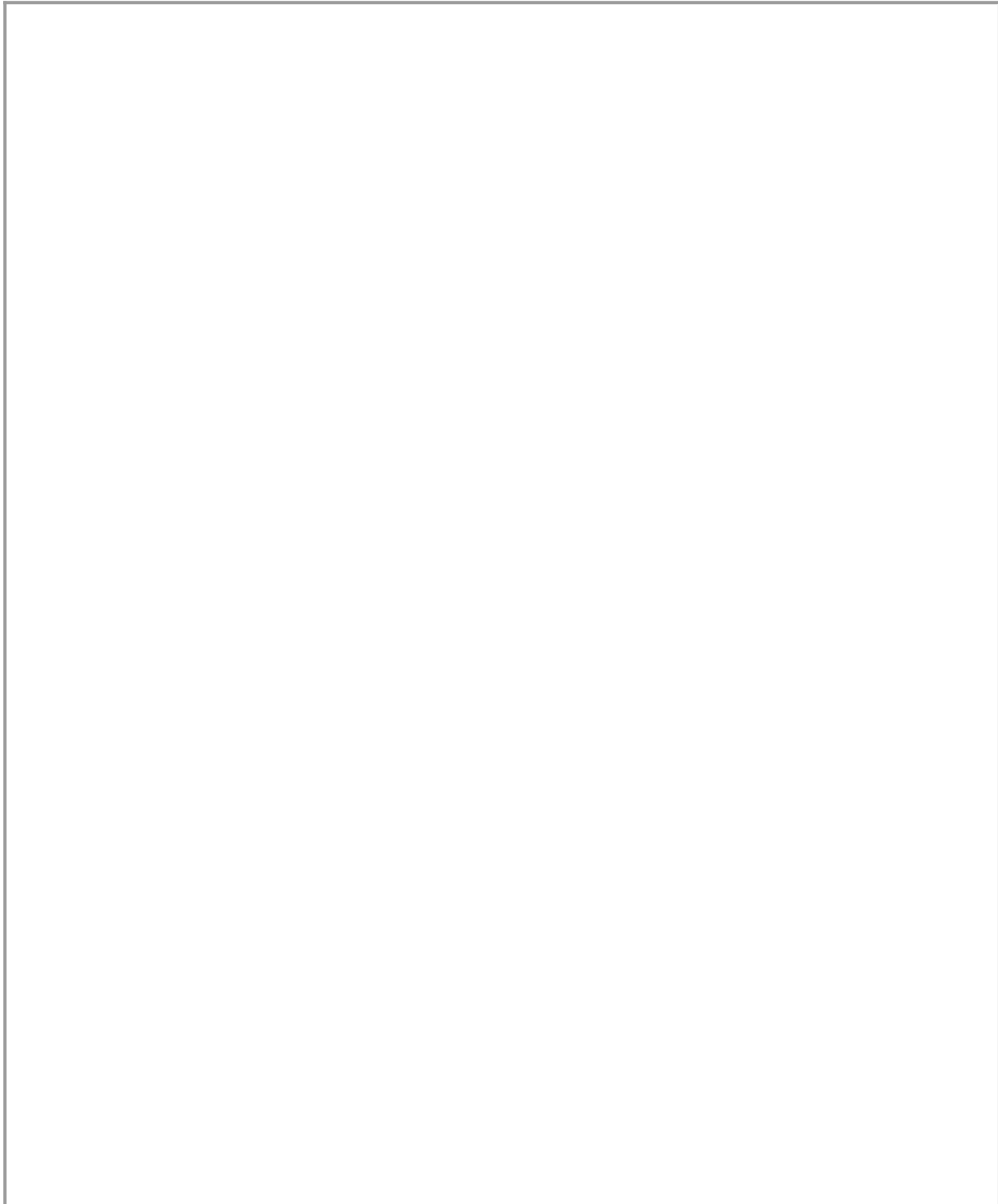
Why did we select this research?

The link between sustainability and collaborative consumption is often used to explain why people participate in the collaborative economy. This study by Hamari, Sjöklint, and Ukkonen tests the widely held assumption that individuals engage in collaborative consumption for the greater good, such as helping the environment or their community.

Society has placed high expectations on collaborative consumption, including on its potential to alleviate complex problems like pollution and poverty “by lowering the cost of economic coordination within communities.” However, as many researchers have pointed out, there remains a lack of evidence on what actually motivates people to participate in these activities as consumers.

Key findings

Through survey data and a mapping exercise of more than 250 platforms, Hamari et al. reveal several motivating factors, including sustainability, enjoyment of the activity, and economic gains. More interestingly the authors find that, although perceived sustainability benefits do contribute to positive attitudes toward collaborative consumption, they play a lesser role when people consider actual participation. On the other hand, economic benefits (saving money and time) seem to have a significant effect on behaviour, but not on attitudes towards CC. In sum, while the idea of sustainability helps shape a positive perception of collaborative consumption, people are more likely to partake for more individualistic reasons.



Reference

Hamari, J., Sjöklint, M., & Ukkonen, A. (2016). The sharing economy: Why people participate in collaborative consumption. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 67(9), 2047-2059. Retrieved from:

https://people.uta.fi/~kljuham/2016-hamari_at_al-the_sharing_economy.pdf
