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Article

# New Trends in Consumption in Poland as Shown by the Example of a Freeshop Concept

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**Abstract:** According to a number of authors [3,4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, etc.], current social-economic and environmental problems require radical solutions, including the change of our approach to economy and looking for new models of its functioning. In Poland such trends are being recognised as well, having their reflection in the economic life.

An approach described in this article concerns an intermediate sharing model, which may be placed between the most archetypical sharing, which is applied, among other, in family relationships, and sharing platforms that are raising growing controversies, such as UBER and Airbnb. The article uses the analysis of solutions applied in this regard in Poland and a survey carried out among students of the Faculty of Economics, University of Gdańsk, aimed at determining factors that affect changes in consumer behaviour.

**Keywords:** Circular economy; freeshops; sharing economy, consumer behaviours

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## 1. Freeshop and sharing economy, circular economy, social economy, and co-operation economy

A freeshop is a site where one may leave things in a good shape that are not used by a consumer and/or take objects that he/she finds useful (and have been left by other visitors). An active Polish freeshop is Podzielnia in Poznań, which was born out of the concept of giveboxes located in various districts of Poznań, in which local residents could leave unused things to make them available to others. Presently, Podzielnia is not only a place where things are exchanged, but a site for exchanging conservation ideas as well. The essential objective of actions taken by freeshops is to prevent excessive consumption and waste that follows. The idea of a freeshop is complex, and its foundations are to be found in various economic concepts.

The first theory that may be referred to is the sharing economy. This is the name of a social-economic concept based on the idea of shared access to tangible and intangible resources that are available to people [10]. In this model consumption is perceived not as the possession of goods or services, but as the possibility to use them (sharing) [1, 11]. The common use of limited resources is aimed at implementing the idea of sustainability.

The spread of the sharing idea is affected by the all-presence of Internet and social media as well as mobile communication devices, because they facilitate multi-level communication of people [12]. Changes of consumer attitudes matter as well, primarily the criticism of excessive consumption and the growing interest in minimalist lifestyle and focusing on the use of a product function without the necessity to have it [13, 14, 15, 16].

Definitions of sharing economy provoke disagreements among researchers that result, among other, from the fast development and the continuous changes of the scope of this concept. For the first time, the concept appeared in the article by M. Felson and J.L. Spaeth (1978) as 'collaborative consumption', referring to relationships built with a family

and friends in order to solve together problems resulting from the limited access to resources [13]. Such relationships became an inspiration for business models that enable the exchange of resources among customers. The term 'sharing economy' appeared only in 2008. It was proposed by Lawrence Lessig in the book entitled *Remix: Making Art And Commerce in the Hybrid Economy* as a new idea in which social benefits, instead of funds, are offered in the process of exchange.

Sharing economy was analysed for a long time in the context of social entrepreneurs [14]. Its business dimension was revealed with the development of communication technologies. Its contemporary objective scope is broad: it encompasses both providing access to free material resources and exchange within creation, common financing of ideas (crowdfunding), public assistance, and education [10]. In the analysed example, the use of communication technology was affected by restrictions introduced due to the pandemic. *Podzielnia* in Poznań launched the *Virtual Po-Dzielnia*, in which workshops and online webinars were put on.

One may also meet an opinion that sharing is a hybrid of consumption and anti-consumption; it is a form of anti-consumption with regard to possession, but not with regard to use [19].

Advocates of sharing economy praise the fact that it enables the reasonable use of real estate, cars, and free time. On the other hand, there is significant criticism of this phenomenon. Some authors [20, 21, 22] emphasize problems related to rights and duties of persons who use sharing platforms. According to the most critical voices, such platforms are 'packed' in sharing vocabulary, while in fact they represent an extremely liberal economy model [22]. According to Belk [23,24], the sharing activity that requires financial compensation is determined as pseudo-sharing.

Another trend that should be referred to is the theory of circular economy. It is modelled on nature, for which the process of recycling is natural. It assumes that an economic system is capable of using waste as raw materials in the production and consumption cycle. This requires a change of paradigms: waste becomes raw materials at the same time. The original form of economy involved the use of all resources in the course of production and consumption (financial, tangible and natural), without waste. It mattered especially at places where resources were significantly limited. The evolution of production models resulted in the transfer to a linear approach (production – use – disposal), with no option of reusing resources. This approach is characteristic for mass production that is associated with excessive consumption [25, 26].

Circular economy is an approach based on treating individual objects as open systems that are related and create a new whole. It is derived from a sectoral and synergetic approach, creating a system that facilitates generating new values for recipients, the identification of internal sources of growth, eliminating inefficient material use, and improving the flexibility of operations, productivity, and efficiency. Such a systemic approach integrates social, economic, and natural aspects of various management levels [27, 26]:

- micro (e.g. creating eco-products, minimising waste, introducing the system of environmental management),
- meso – (e.g. creating industrial eco-parks), and
- macro – (e.g. creating eco-cities and eco-regions).

The idea of circularity is based on the 3R concept (reduce, reuse, recycle). The Canadian 4RV + OGE S concept was based on the 3R idea (reduce, reuse, recycle rejected + zero emission of greenhouse gases) and Swiss 5R (reduce, repair, reuse, recycle, rethink) [27].

Another important theoretical approach is the idea of social economy. It constitutes a segment of business activity located in the triangle of market economy – civil society – democratic state [28]. It can be analysed as an alternative to market solutions and excessive state control of economy and as a different method of participation in the market [29].

Entities of social economy are aimed at fulfilling needs that cannot be met by other sectors. Their forms include, among other, co-operatives and associations that run a business activity [28]. However, a legal form does not determine belonging to this sector in

relation to a regional context and associated organizational solutions characteristic for various states.

Such entities are controlled by citizens and civil organizations, rather than by administration. As a rule, they offer goods and services that are beneficial for a specific group (usually, the excluded persons) [28]. According to its premises, the social economy results in, among other, the improvement of living standards, creating frameworks for new forms of entrepreneurship, local development and social cohesion [30].

The idea of a freeshop may be inspired by the above-mentioned concepts in various ways. It depends, but is not limited to, the concept of founders of such a 'shop'. However, the idea of circular economy seems to be essential for the idea, as it refers directly to the reuse of things.

Social-economic concept	Reference to a freeshop
	Giving others voluntary and free access to own unused resources on conditions that are more favourable than on the free market.
Sharing economy	An option to use crowdfunding in financing operations of a freeshop.
	A possibility to give access to objects within online networks and virtual social groups.
Circular economy	Reducing the volume of waste through its repeated use.
	Improving living standards by leaving higher income available in households (replacing a part of traditional consumption with exchange and sharing of things).
Social economy	An option to create jobs that are friendly to the excluded and to persons who re-enter the job market.
	Stimulating the regional development and social cohesion, e.g. through the option to organise meetings and events that are related to the business of a freeshop.

The above-mentioned ideas are certainly not a complete list of all possibilities of economic activities based at least partially on altruism (e.g. cooperatives, family care, neighbour care, chores, etc.). Informal sharing forms a common part of our life from the moment of birth. We share in a family and we share with neighbours, friends, and co-workers.

The above-mentioned solutions have enjoyed growing popularity in recent years, which is apparent in the popularity of peer-to-peer services related to accommodation and transport (of which Airbnb and Uber are the most popular examples).

## 2. Freeshop against a background of other solutions

A basic idea of a freeshop is to share with others things that are not used by their owners. Sharing involves trust and relation building; it differs in this respect from an economic exchange in which, despite attempts of marketing specialists, bonds with other people are seldom established [1].

On the Polish market, solutions other than freeshops also apply the concept of sharing within the exchange of unused things. They include social stores and charities. Social stores do not have a uniform definition in Poland. This name is used both by places run by Town Social Assistance Centres (MOPS) (e.g. in Gdańsk and Gdynia), where customers may select goods they need instead of food parcels, and stores where a margin paid by

clients is reduced owing to generated profit (e.g. in Elk); as a consequence, the more customers they have, the more competitive prices they may offer. A completely different example is a social store run by the ESWIP association in Elbląg, which can receive unused things (e.g. furniture) that need restoration. The activity of ESWIP is based both on the reuse of things and social activation (restoring things within workshops that train apprentices).

On the other hand, charities fulfil objectives of non-governmental organizations they are related with, usually in the form of fund raising. Their personnel are usually volunteers, and sold things come from donations. Owing to low operational costs, the sale of goods is possible at attractive prices.

### 3. Research into sharing and the reuse of things

Already in 2014 was the attitude of consumers to the problems of sharing things analysed in numerous aspects in the Prosumer report by Havas Worldwide. The report indicated that buying used things (other than antiques) is recognised as embarrassing, but is slowly losing its stigmatising character. Only 20% respondents definitely declared that they did not like buying used goods. According to buyers, greatest benefits from used things included savings (65% responses). However, in addition to the pragmatic reason, a major percentage (more than 1/3) respondents stressed also the aspect of environmental protection and 20% the support for a seller and the purchase of goods with interesting history. Authors of the report emphasized that a positive attitude to second-hand things will become more popular, because the most favourable attitudes were recorded in the group of prosumers and representatives of the Millennials.

Interestingly, Polish<sup>1</sup> respondents from the age group 45+ are least attracted to the possibility of saving money through purchasing used things. In addition, they constituted the highest percentage of respondents who did not like buying second-hand goods. This may show the association with poverty. Negative connotations with the previous political system are also possible.

Broad studies into the issue of sharing were carried out in Sweden as well. According to the report (Finansdepartementet, 2017) 80% users of sharing economy services perceived their experience as basically positive, and only one-fourth of them encountered problems (mostly only individual problems). Out of persons who did not use sharing, most of them did not realise such an option. On the other hand, 83% respondents who were aware of solutions of sharing economy did not use them, because they did not have such needs. This response may be recognised as peculiar, considering a great number of services in sharing economy available on the market and their broad scope. Out of reasons for not using services of sharing economy, respondents mentioned uncertainty and the lack of security that were related, among other, with negotiating without the participation of a professional agent. In order to popularise sharing, 37% respondents expected the introduction of regulations that would effectively protect users in transactions, one-third wanted the official marking or certification of quality, and 28% indicated the need for a simple and cheap method of dispute resolution [31].

On the other hand, the study carried out by Akbar et al. (2016) divides consumers who use solutions of sharing economy into two categories: (1) those who participate in it due to financial constraints and (2) materialistic consumers. While the motivation of the first category is to pay as little as possible for a desired service, the other is affected by access to or possessing products. Akbar et al. (2016) have discovered that an instinct to possess

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<sup>1</sup> The study was carried out in 29 countries, on a sample of 10,574 consumers aged 16+.

and materialism constitute essential factors that prevent the participation in commercial sharing systems, because they may stop persons who are 'envious' of their property from sharing it with others, unless an offered service or product are of a unique nature, are not easily available for a customer or are characterised as tailor-made. In this case, such persons are more ready to participate (in the sharing economy), in order to gain access to a product [19].

In another study carried out by Möhlmann (2015) it was ascertained that a benefit of a user is a key factor in determining the probability of the repeated use of services of sharing a car or flat (i.e. usefulness, trust, saving of costs and familiarity were more correlated with a repeated use of a service than e.g. the environmental impact or an attitude to the trend) [32].

In another study on motivational variables (economic, environmental and social) of participation in sharing it was found out that they differed depending on a sector of sharing economy, more than between social-demographic groups or between users and suppliers. For example, an economic motivation is relatively high in sharing accommodation, while social motivation is relatively higher in case of sharing meals [33].

There are a number of reasons why people participate in sharing services, and the idea is attractive all over the world: in the study carried out in 2014 by Nielsen it was stated that 68% consumer of global online services were ready for sharing their personal belongings for a fee [34]. Proponents of sharing economy usually argue that this is an economic possibility that makes higher efficiency possible as well as higher ratios of using resources and greater consumption for a facility that would otherwise be idle or used to an insufficient degree. Hence, this is generally a more sustainable form of consumption [e.g. 35]. On the other hand, opponents argue that this implies solicitation rather than democratic indications and does not question capitalism as an organising principle [36], creates unregulated market areas and reinforces a neoliberal paradigm. Moreover, its critics claim that the market has successfully changed the frameworks of sharing economy operation from its original idea to anti-consumerism of economic possibilities [37].

Results of another study carried out on the population of Göteborg show that an attitude to sharing is positive. Common denominators are the belief in economic advantages for individuals and the reduced impact of consumption on the environment. Sharing and shared consumption have the potential to make the name for themselves out of their present niche status, perhaps thanks to imposed top-down regulations. Owing to the assistance in the form of subsidies from the government or municipalities, shared services could create a network of local connections on a small scale, just like in case of city bikes. This is true in particular in case of non-commercial sharing, whose operation cannot be based exclusively on market discussions.

The above-mentioned publications show that the subject of freeshops is slowly appearing in the discourse, although this is still its very early phase, concerning e.g. motivation to use solutions of this type. Interest expressed by examined respondents, changes due to the climatic situation and the pandemic status as well as observed development market trends affect the creation of the broad field for further studies in this area. One of the attempts at defining the familiarity with the phenomenon of freeshops and the attitude to them among Polish youth has been made by the authors hereof.

#### **4. Study results**

The study was carried out in May 2019 among 381 students of full-time and extramural studies at the Faculty of Economics, University of Gdańsk (202 female and 170 male

students; 9 persons did not indicate their gender). An average age of respondents was 20.8. Out of the respondents, 70 persons (18%) had encountered the concept of a freeshop, while 307 persons (81%) did not know that concept before. Only 33 persons (9%) declared that they would not like to use such a solution. On the other hand, 133 persons (35%) would donate their things to a freeshop, 25 (7%) would use it by taking things home, while the largest group of 169 persons (44%) would both give and take things.

The survey consisted of 5 parts that concerned: A – the knowledge of a freeshop concept, B – using the offer of a freeshop (only for persons who were familiar with the concept of a freeshop), C – an attitude to consumption (an assessment of 6 statements in the 5-degree Likert scale), D – an attitude to actions related to the broad concept of circular economy and sharing (an assessment of 15 statements in the 5-degree Likert scale), and M – a matrix (sex, age, an attitude to using freeshops). The selection of the sample was intentional; persons who took examinations on selected dates were requested to fill in a paper questionnaire.

A basket analysis was used to evaluate data. The analysed responses were divided into groups of respondents in order to collect information about differences among those who knew the concept of a freeshop from those who had never come across that term and those who would be ready to use a freeshop in its various dimensions (e.g. donate things, take things or give and take) from those who did not express any interest in that solution.

When examining medians of responses with respect to the attitude to consumption, all respondents gave highest scores (median 5) to two statements, namely that people presently have too many things which they do not use and that co-using/sharing of things will enable to save money. The lowest score (median 3) was given to the statement that co-using/sharing of things is presently necessary for conservation reasons. Therefore, one could conclude that on a declarative level students support the idea of sharing; however, they do not perceive in it any aspects related to environment protection.

When examining attitudes related to circular economy and sharing, for questioned students the following proved very important (median 5): waste segregation, recycling, energy saving, using renewable energy sources, plastic elimination (e.g. replacing it with other materials), the replacement of disposable products with multi-use products (e.g. bags, straws, cotton pads), adapting packaging to products (e.g. a size adequate to content, no redundant elements such as extra foil) and the full use of purchased food products. The least important (median 3) for respondents was the purchase of food products from certified ecological farms.

After the division into those who were familiar with the concept of a freeshop (hereinafter referred to as 'knowing') and those who had not encountered that solution (hereinafter referred to as 'unknowing'), a basic difference occurred in the assessment of the declaration that 'environmental problems result, among other, from excessive consumption'. In the knowing group the median of scores<sup>2</sup> for this response was 4.5, while in the unknowing group it was at 3. In the area of circular and sharing economy, differences occurred in the following statements<sup>3</sup>: energy saving (knowing – 4.5; unknowing – 5), plastic elimination (knowing – 4, unknowing – 5), and buying food products from certified ecological farms (knowing – 3.5, unknowing – 5).

### **Persons familiar with the concept of a freeshop**

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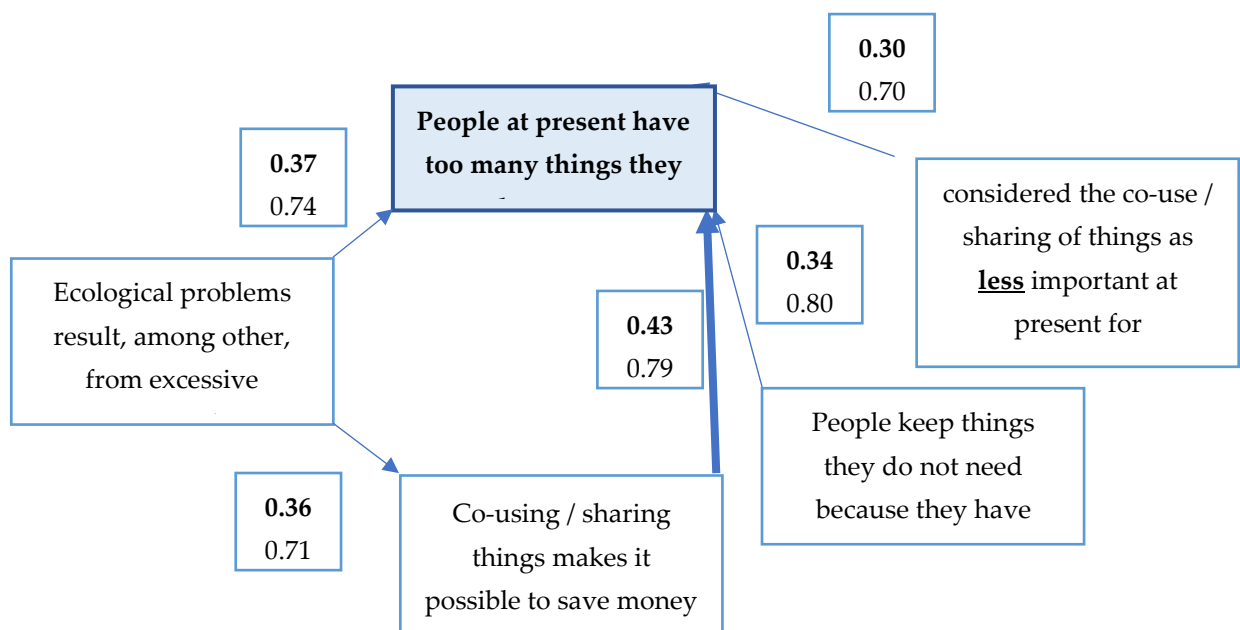
<sup>2</sup> In the scale from 1 – definitely not, to 5 – definitely yes

<sup>3</sup> In the scale from 1 – completely unimportant to 5 – very important

For persons who knew the concept of a freeshop, in the area of consumption patterns the most important factor was related to the excessive number of possessed and simultaneously unused things. In this group, the following findings could be given:

- If a knowing person was positive that presently people possess too many things they do not use (median: 5), he/she also thought that people keep unnecessary things because they have nothing to do with them (4).
- If a knowing person strongly believed that at present people have too many things they do not use (5), he/she was also of the opinion that ecological problems result, among other, from excessive consumption (4.5).
- If a knowing person was positive that nowadays people possess too many things they do not use (median: 5), he/she considered it less important to co-use / share as necessary for ecological reasons (3).
- If a knowing person was certain that at present people possess too many things they do not use (median: 5), he/she also strongly believed that co-using / sharing of things makes it possible to save money (5).
- If a knowing person was of an opinion that environmental problems result, among other, from excessive consumption (4.5), he/she also strongly believed that co-using / sharing things makes it possible to save money (5).

The indicted declarations have been presented in the following diagram with values of support and trust.



Source: own study (a support – upper limit; trust – lower limit)

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As regards measures proposed by the authors of the study that were recognised as important by the knowing, one could observe the following dependencies:

- If a knowing person considered a change of disposable products into multi-use products to be very important (5), he/she also considered as very important recycling (5) (a support level: 0.41, a trust level: 0.74), the use of renewable energy sources (a support level: 0.46, a trust level: 0.82), and the adaptation of packaging to a product (a support level: 0.41, a trust level: 0.73).
- If a knowing person considered the adaptation of packaging to a product as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important recycling (5) (a support level: 0.46, a trust level: 0.76) and the use of renewable energy sources (5) (a support level: 0.44, a trust level: 0.74).
- If a knowing person considered the saving of energy as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important the use of renewable energy sources (5) (a support level: 0.40, a trust level: 0.85) and recycling (5) (a support level: 0.51, a trust level: 0.84).
- If a knowing person considered the use of renewable energy sources as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important recycling (5) (a support level: 0.51, a trust level: 0.82).

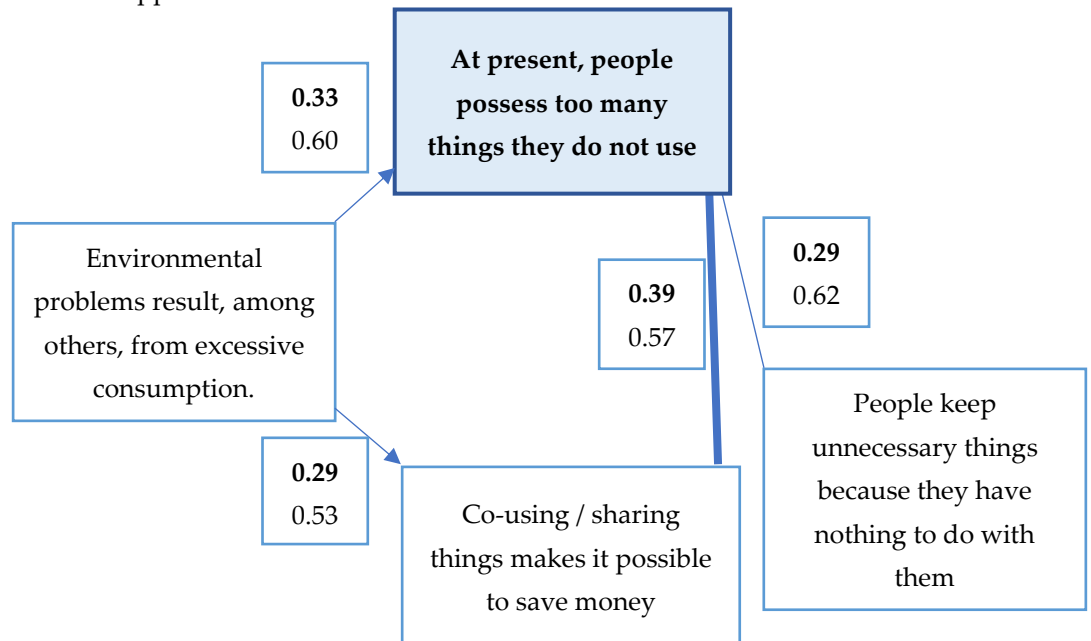
#### **Persons not familiar with the concept of a freeshop**

Persons who had not used a freeshop before were positive that people presently possess too many things they do not use (median: 5), and also that people keep unnecessary things because they have nothing to do with them (4). They also strongly believed (5) that ecological problems (4) resulted, among other, from excessive consumption (5) and that co-using / sharing things enables to save money (5). In other words, the following dependencies could be observed in this group:

- If an unknowing person was positive that co-using / sharing things enables to save money (5), he/she also thought that people at present have too many things they do not use (5).
- If an unknowing person thought that people keep unnecessary things because they have nothing to do with them (4), he/she also strongly believed that people at present possess too many things they do not use (5).
- If an unknowing person was of an opinion that environmental problems result, among other, from excessive consumption (4), he/she also strongly believed that people at present possess too many things they do not use (5) and that co-using / sharing things enables to save money (5).



The above-mentioned statements have been presented in the following diagram together with support and trust values.



Source: own study (a support – an upper limit; trust – a lower limit)

As regards measures which were considered as important by the unknowing, one could observe the following dependencies:

- If an unknowing person considered waste segregation as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important its recycling (5) (a support level: 0.55, a trust level: 0.95), energy saving (5) (a support level: 0.46, a trust level: 0.80), using renewable energy sources (5) (a support level: 0.78, a trust level: 0.58), the exchange of disposable products with multi-use products (5) (a support level: 0.55, a trust level: 0.76), and the adaptation of packaging to a product (a support level: 0.43, a trust level: 0.74).
- If an unknowing person considered plastic elimination as very important (5), he/she also considered its recycling as very important (5) (a support level: 0.45, a trust level: 0.83).
- If an unknowing person considered adapting packaging to a product as very important (5), he/she also considered recycling as very important (5) (a support level: 0.49, a trust level: 0.85).
- If an unknowing person considered the use of purchased food products as very important (5), he/she also considered recycling as very important (5) (a support level: 0.44, a trust level: 0.80).
- If an unknowing person considered energy saving as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important its recycling (5) (a support level: 0.53, a trust level: 0.90), the use of renewable energy sources (5) (a support level: 0.51, a trust level: 0.87), the elimination of plastic (5) (a support level: 0.41, a trust level: 0.75), the exchange of disposable products with multi-use products (5) (a support level: 0.43, a trust level: 0.75), the adaptation of packaging to a product (5) (a support level: 0.43, a trust level: 0.73), and the full use of purchased food products (5) (a support level: 0.41, a trust level: 0.73).
- If an unknowing person considered the use of renewable energy sources as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important recycling (5) (a support level: 0.49, a trust level: 0.85), the elimination of plastic (5) (a support level: 0.43, a trust level: 0.80), the exchange of disposable products with multi-use ones (5) (a support level: 0.46, a trust level: 0.80), the adaptation of packaging to a product (5) (a support level: 0.46, a trust level: 0.80).

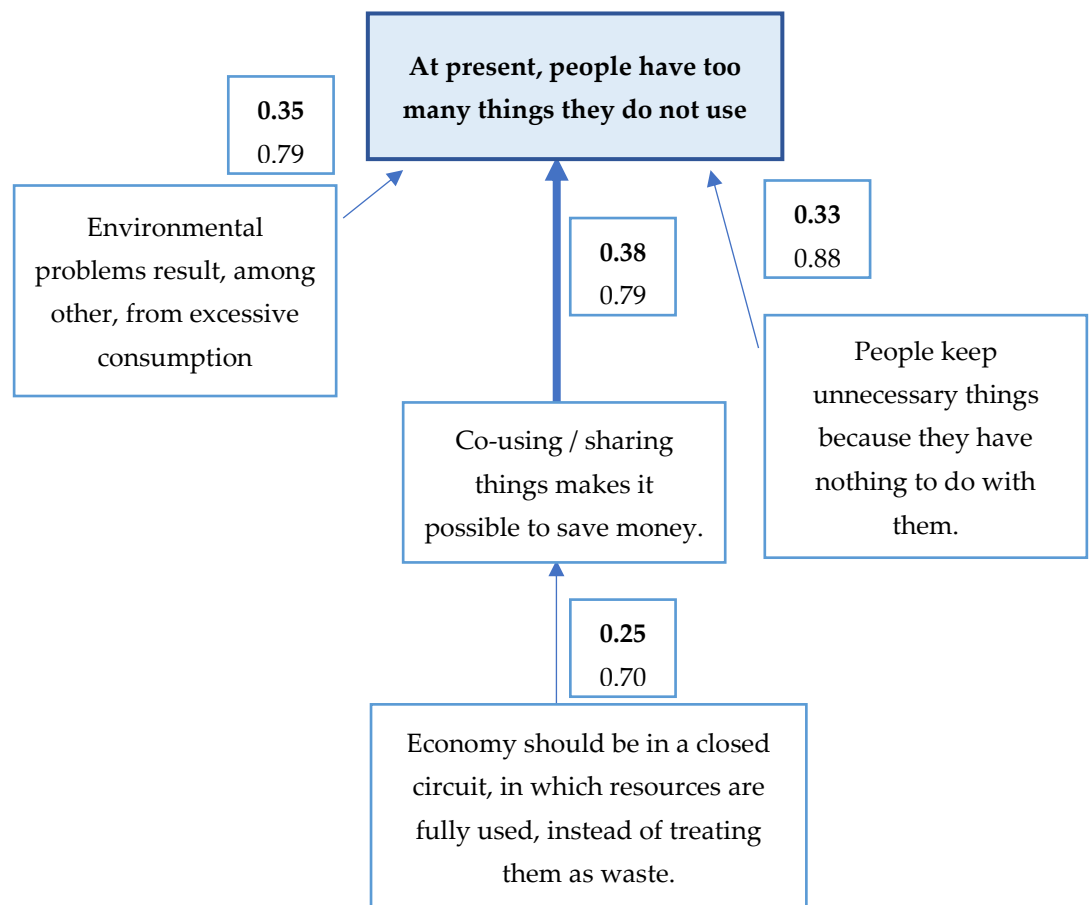
0.78), and the full use of purchased food products (5) (a support level: 0.43, a trust level: 0.79).

- If an unknowing person considered the exchange of disposable products with multi-use ones as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important the elimination of plastic (5) (a support level: 0.44, a trust level: 0.80) and the full use of purchased food products (5) (a support level: 0.44, a trust level: 0.80).
- If an unknowing person considered the adaptation of packaging to a product as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important the elimination of plastic (5) (a support level: 0.40, a trust level: 0.74) and the exchange of disposable products with multi-use ones (5) (a support level: 0.47, a trust level: 0.81).
- If an unknowing person considered the adaptation of packaging to a product as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important the elimination of plastic (5) (a support level: 0.40, a trust level: 0.74), the replacement of disposable products with multi-use ones (5) (a support level: 0.47, a trust level: 0.81), and the full use of purchased food products (5) (a support level: 0.41, a trust level: 0.74).

### **Persons who would donate things to or take things from a freeshop**

The largest group of respondents (133 persons) would be ready to give away things they do not use to a freeshop. Out of such respondents 19% were familiar with the concept of a freeshop and 10 persons had used such a solution (including 9 persons who donate things and one who took things from a freeshop). Out of 10 such persons, 8 visited a Polish freeshop and 2 a foreign one. In total, 60% of the respondents in this category were female. Such persons were not ready to take anything from a freeshop with them. In this group of respondents the following dependencies could be observed:

- If a giving person was positive that economy should be circular, in which resources are fully used instead of treating them as waste (5), he/she also believed strongly that co-using / sharing things enables to save money (5).
- If a giving person was convinced that co-using / sharing things makes it possible to save money (5), he/she was also certain that at present people have too many things they do not use (5).
- If a giving person believed strongly that people keep too many things because they do not know what to do with the (5), he/she was also positive that presently people have too many things they do not use (5).
- If a giving person was certain that environmental problems result, among other, from excessive consumption (5), he/she also believed strongly that nowadays people have too many things they do not use (5).



Source: own study (support – an upper limit; trust – a lower limit)

Among the respondents of this group, the following dependencies could be observed:

- If an unknowing person considered waste segregation as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important its recycling (5) (a support level: 0.77, a trust level: 0.96), the elimination of plastic (5) (a support level: 0.41, a trust level: 0.69), and the adaptation of packaging to a product (a support level: 0.48, a trust level: 0.82).
- If an unknowing person considered the use of renewable energy sources as very important (5), he/she also considered recycling as very important (5) (a support level: 0.57, a trust level: 0.82).
- If an unknowing person considered energy saving as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important the use of renewable energy sources (5) (a support level: 0.90, a trust level: 0.76), the exchange of disposable products with multi-use ones (5) (a support level: 0.43, a trust level: 0.72), the adaptation of packaging to a product (a support level: 0.46, a trust level: 0.77), and recycling (a support level: 0.54, a trust level: 0.91).
- If an unknowing person considered the adaptation of packaging to a product as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important the use of renewable energy sources (5) (a support level: 0.52, a trust level: 0.79) and recycling (a support level: 0.53, a trust level: 0.82).
- If an unknowing person considered plastic elimination as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important the exchange of disposable products with multi-use ones (5) (a support level: 0.45, a trust level: 0.77), the adaptation of packaging to a product (a support level: 0.43, a trust level: 0.73), recycling (a support level: 0.48, a trust level: 0.82), the use of renewable energy sources (5) (a support level: 0.46, a trust level: 0.78), and energy saving (5) (a support level: 0.41, a trust level: 0.71).

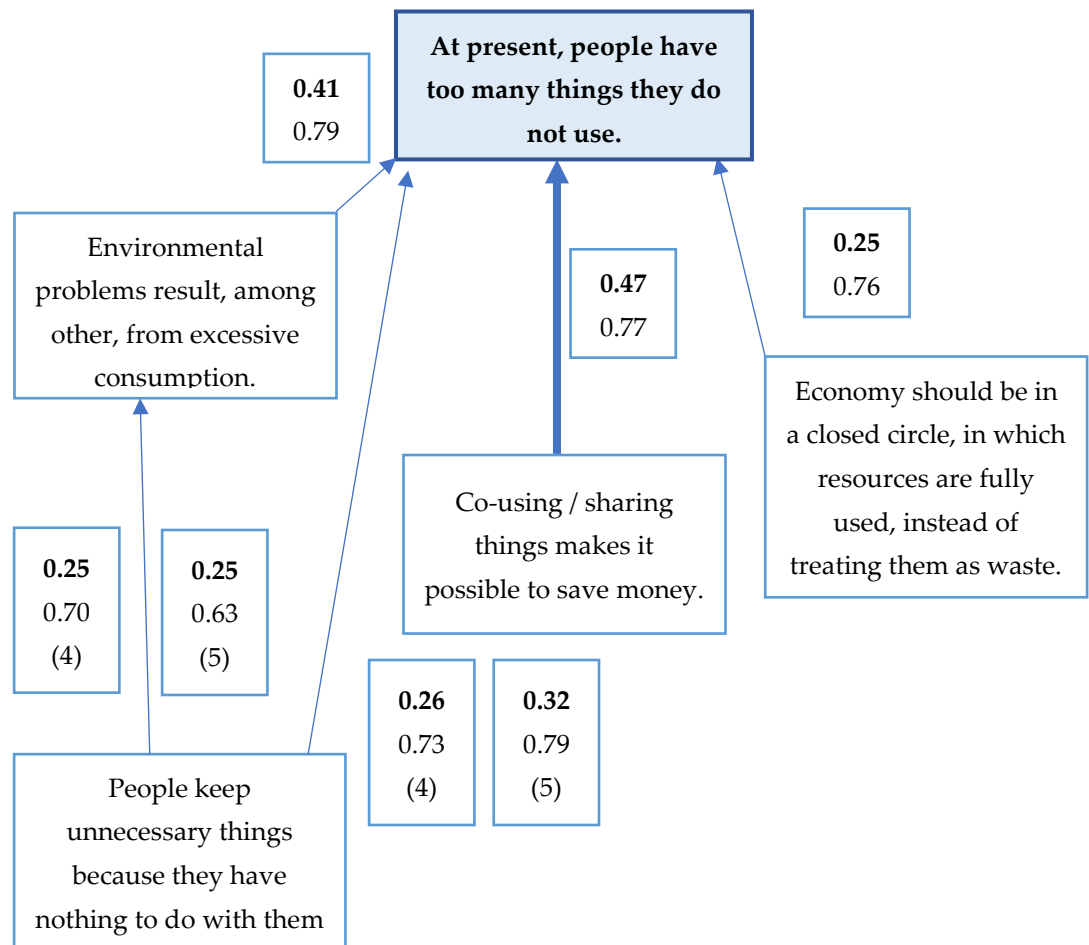
- If an unknowing person considered the exchange of disposable products with multi-use ones as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important the adaptation of packaging to a product (a support level: 0.49, a trust level: 0.82), the use of renewable energy sources (5) (a support level: 0.51, a trust level: 0.86), recycling (a support level: 0.49, a trust level: 0.82), and waste segregation (5) (a support level: 0.42, a trust level: 0.89).
- If an unknowing person considered the full use of purchased food products as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important the adaptation of packaging to a product (a support level: 0.44, a trust level: 0.77), the exchange of disposable products with multi-use ones (5) (a support level: 0.42, a trust level: 0.75), the use of renewable energy sources (a support level: 0.46, a trust level: 0.81), energy saving (a support level: 0.40, a trust level: 0.71), and recycling (a support level: 0.44, a trust level: 0.71).

Only 25 out of all respondents would decide to take things from a freeshop. In this group, 3 persons had met this solution in Poland before and had used it by donating things. In total, 64% respondents in this group were male. Due to a small size of the sample, no further conclusions about this group were drawn.

### **Persons who would take and leave things**

The largest group of respondents, i.e. 169 persons, would decide both to leave unused things and take things they needed. Out of them, 20% were familiar with the concept of a freeshop, and 16 had used that solution (8 persons had given things, 2 taken, and 6 both given and taken; 9 had visited a freeshop in Poland, and 7 abroad). In total, 59% were female. In this group of respondents the following dependencies could be observed:

- If a giving and taking person was positive that economy should be circular, in which resources are fully used instead of treating them as waste (5), he/she also believed strongly that at present people possess too many things they do not use (5).
- If a giving and taking person was convinced that co-using / sharing things makes it possible to save money (5), he/she was also certain that presently people have too many things they do not use (5).
- If a giving and taking person believed strongly that people keep unnecessary things because they have nothing to do with them (5), he/she was also positive that nowadays people have too many things they do not use (5) and that environmental problems result, among other, from excessive consumption (5).
- If a giving and taking person was certain that environmental problems result, among other, from excessive consumption (5), he/she also believed strongly that at present people have too many things they do not use (5).



With regard to actions proposed by authors of the study that were considered as important by knowing respondents, the following dependencies could be observed:

- If an unknowing person considered waste segregation as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important its recycling (5) (a support level: 0.60, a trust level: 0.94) and energy saving (5) (a support level: 0.50, a trust level: 0.77).
- If an unknowing person considered energy saving as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important recycling (5) (a support level: 0.58, a trust level: 0.91), waste segregation (5) (a support level: 0.49, a trust level: 0.77), the use of renewable energy sources (a support level: 0.50, a trust level: 0.79), and the full use of purchased food products (5) (a support level: 0.48, a trust level: 0.75).
- If an unknowing person considered plastic elimination as very important (5), he/she also considered as very important the exchange of disposable products with multi-use ones (5) (a support level: 0.49, a trust level: 0.85), the adaptation of packaging to a product (5) (a support level: 0.44, a trust level: 0.76), the full use of purchased food products (5) (a support level: 0.49, a trust level: 0.77), energy saving (a support level: 0.44, a trust level: 0.76), the use of renewable energy sources (a support level: 0.48, a trust level: 0.83), recycling (a support level: 0.50, a trust level: 0.86), and waste segregation (a support level: 0.44, a trust level: 0.76).
- If an unknowing person considered as very important the exchange of disposable products with multi-use ones (5), he/she also considered as very important the full use of purchased food products (5) (a support level: 0.50, a trust level: 0.79), the adaptation of

packaging to a product (5) (a support level: 0.51, a trust level: 0.80), waste segregation (a support level: 0.50, a trust level: 0.80), recycling (a support level: 0.55, a trust level: 0.87), energy saving (a support level: 0.49, a trust level: 0.78), and the use of renewable energy sources (a support level: 0.50, a trust level: 0.79).

- If an unknowing person considered as very important the adaptation of packaging to a product (5), he/she also considered as very important the adaptation of packaging to a product (a support level: 0.47, a trust level: 0.74).
- If an unknowing person considered as very important the use of renewable energy sources (5), he/she also considered recycling as very important (5) (a support level: 0.60, a trust level: 0.83).
- If an unknowing person considered as very important the adaptation of packaging to a product (5), he/she also considered as very important the waste segregation (5) (a support level: 0.45, a trust level: 0.71), recycling (5) (a support level: 0.53, a trust level: 0.84), energy saving (5) (a support level: 0.47, a trust level: 0.75), and the use of renewable energy sources (a support level: 0.50, a trust level: 0.79).
- If an unknowing person considered as very important the full use of purchased food products (5), he/she also considered as very important the waste segregation (5) (a support level: 0.46, a trust level: 0.76), recycling (5) (a support level: 0.51, a trust level: 0.80), and the use of renewable energy sources (a support level: 0.49, a trust level: 0.77).

## 5. Summary

Both in the group familiar with the concept of a freeshop and among those who had never come across that term, the most important reason for sharing things were economic aspects, i.e. those related to saving money. Interestingly, for respondents who knew the concept of a freeshop, environmental aspects proved less important. This is particularly interesting because the premises of a freeshop include the ideas of zero waste and circular economy, which are closely related to the lower pressure on the natural environment and are often associated with conservation movements. Hence, it would seem logical that among persons who were familiar with solutions such as a freeshop, problems related to ecology would be more popular.

Sharing is unavoidable, whether it refers to space, resources, culture, thoughts, emotions, or ideas. With the development of human society, sharing became more focused on trade centres and co-living.

A question about motivation in case of non-profit sharing is essential for further studies. The authors [2, 10] indicate that motivations of such actions are based on social, environmental, and economic premises. A promising area that has emerged in the course of studies are also definition problems. It seems that in the case of Poland, it is worth creating theoretic frameworks related to the operation of institutions and organizations, in particular in the area of defining social and charity shops.

Due to high interest among respondents, it may prove interesting to implement such solutions at locations available to students. The most intuitive site seems to be dormitories. Another aspect that appears in the case of such a project is the way of managing such units, in which students may be involved.

An interesting course of further research may involve comparative studies on an international scale, which would enable to compare motivations and decision-taking by persons in different countries.

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