

Garment Sewing as a Leisure Craft

Minna Kaipainen and Sinikka Pöllänen

The aim of this study is to depict the reasons for garment sewing as a leisure craft in the narratives of female textile craft makers and describe the meanings behind the activity. The study was based on the written narratives of 781 crafters aged 19 to 91 years. First-person narratives were collected via a request published in regional newspapers in all 19 provinces in Finland. The assignment was loosely formulated to encourage crafters to write about the meanings of crafting as a leisure activity. The study comprised a two-phase data analysis. The first sample of 100 narratives, which included references to sewing, was selected and analysed using abductive qualitative content analysis. In the second phase, the whole data (N=781) were analysed using Atlas.ti, initially through automatic search and coding features for sewing, clothing and design. Each code was then analysed in more detail to form new categories. The new data from the second phase were also compared with the results of the first phase to provide more in-depth interpretations. During the analysis, three types of reasons for sewing garments were identified: Utility sewing, Process-centred sewing and Product-centred sewing. The results show that meaning-making in sewing as a leisure activity had several properties that enhance the well-being of the active sewers. For the sewers, the garments served as a symbol and a means of achieving self-fulfilment. The results highlight the sustainable way of wearing and making garments and, moreover, the everyday effects of crafting.

Keywords: clothing, craft, leisure, meaning-making, sewing, well-being

Introduction

Previous studies and articles on textile crafts as a leisure activity have primarily focused on knitting, quilting and hand embroidery. Some of them refer to sewing (e.g. Collier, 2011), although the type of sewing is not specified. No single study has thoroughly investigated sewing and garment making in general. Previous studies from the 1960s to the 1990s focused on the reasons for all the various types of home sewing and retrospective studies focused on the impacts and meanings of women's home sewing prior to 1970 (Martindale & McKinney, 2020). Also, the satisfaction of home sewers with the fit of apparel patterns (LaBat, Salusso & Rhee, 2007), the politics of contemporary home sewing in relation to feminism (Bain, 2016), the role of nostalgia in retro sewing (Armstead & McKinney, 2019) and sewing entrepreneurs working at home (Russum, 2019) have been studied. Most related research on sewing has concentrated on the motivational changes in home sewing (e.g. Schofield-Tomschin, 1999) and the motivations for garment making (Martindale, 2017; Martindale & McKinney, 2018a, b, 2020). In this regard, Martindale and McKinney (2020) noted that there is a lack of academic research on the reasons for home sewing in the 21st century. Thus, the aim of this study is to depict the reasons for garment sewing as a leisure craft in the narratives of female textile craft makers and describe the meanings behind the activity.

While the interest of this study lies in garment sewing in Finland, the history of making and designing clothes at home is first clarified and characterized. This is followed by an explanation of the reasons for crafting as a leisure activity from the perspective of previous studies, and then empirical section, which explains the methodology, data collection and analysis. Following the results, a conclusion and summarizing discussion are presented.

Making and Designing Clothes at Home

In earlier times, sewing garments at home was a necessity (e.g. Burman, 1999; Emery, 2014). When living standards increased and the textile industry grew, the origins of clothing and fabrics changed. In Finland, the shift from folk clothing to modern fashionable clothing and from homemade to ready-made clothing took place from the late 19th century to the early 20th century (e.g. Lehtinen & Sihvo, 2005; Mikkola, 2019; Turunen & Niiranen, 2019). These changes in clothing production occurred gradually from home or custom-ordered sewing to mass production and happened earlier in urban than in rural areas (Aikasalo, 2000; Kaipainen, 2008).

In the home, clothes were made with sewing skills learned in the family and at school. The introduction of sewing machines, publications and commercial sewing patterns allowed women without advanced pattern-making skills to make clothing that was more complex (e.g. Emery, 2014; McLean, 2009; Salo-Mattila, 2009). Help for difficult pattern making could also be obtained from school craft books and ready-made patterns from magazines. Finnish women's magazines in the early 20th century started publishing sewing patterns for clothes with instructions for home sewers (Sipilä, 2012). Schools taught girls how to sew clothes using sewing machines and, from the beginning of the century, to create patterns for them (Marjanen, 2012; Marjanen & Kaipainen, 2016).

Skills for making, repairing and modifying clothing were particularly necessary in Finland during the period of scarcity and regulation after World War II (Kaipainen 2008). The textile and clothing industry subsequently recovered, developed and intensified its production, and new companies and clothing stores were established. According to Aikasalo (2000), ready-made clothing became gradually more common the 1960s than custom-made clothing: many customers considered ready-made clothing to be more elegant and fashionable, easier to obtain and the fit of the garment could also be immediately seen. However, serially produced ready-made clothes were not immediately accepted by everyone. In the 1960s, some fashion followers thought that these could be worn casually, but if you were attending a party, you would need a custom-made dress (Ekholm & Frisk, 2019).

Women's clothing, both in working life and in leisure, began to change after World War II when it gradually became acceptable for women to wear trousers in Finland (Turunen, 2011). In the 1960s and 1970s, formal dress habits became less regulated, for example, T-shirts and other knitwear that used to be worn as underwear also started being used as outerwear (Ekholm & Frisk, 2019). The change in clothing was a result of many things: industrial serial production, popular culture, sexual liberation, as well as the supply of running water, central heating and washing machines to households (Turunen & Niiranen, 2019).

In Finland, despite all the changes, many women still sewed garments at home, and during school textile craft classes garment sewing was still a compulsory activity in the 1980s (Kouluhallitus 1985). From the 1960s to 1990s, school craft books included several ready-to-use patterns and sewing instructions for various garments (Marjanen, 2012; Marjanen & Kaipainen, 2016). While the increased availability of ready-made clothing reduced home sewing, ready-made clothing was still quite expensive compared to fabrics, making garment construction profitable (Lampinen & Mäkelä, 1977; Turunen & Niiranen, 2019). Electric sewing machines and overlockers, as well as dressmaking magazines and international ready-made sewing patterns, also made clothes making easier for home sewers (e.g. Burda, 2020; Kaukinen & Vahtera, 1997; Willberg, 1988). In the latter half of the 20th century, a number of Finnish women's magazines also offered home sewers a mail-order service with pre-cut pieces of fashionable garments (Korpela-Ahola, 2010). For the average home dressmaker, sewing pre-cut garment pieces together according to the instructions was a convenient way of obtaining fashionable clothing, when the potentially unsuccessful cutting process was eliminated. However, the sewer needed the skills and knowledge of how the garment had to be made, in what order the parts had to be sewn and how to make the garment fit (Turunen & Niiranen, 2020).

In other Western countries, sewing women's and children's wear at home had also been a necessity and a financially important activity after the war years. However, home sewing declined after the 1960s (Martindale & McKinney, 2020; Schofield-Tomschin, 1999). According to Martindale and McKinney (2018b, 2020), previous studies identified five reasons for home sewing: economics, better quality, improved fit, creativity and leisure, as well as psychological reasons. Over time, the reasons for home sewing shifted away from economic to creative, leisure and psychological reasons. The most significant reason for the reduction in home sewing was the influx of inexpensive clothing produced in Southeast Asia during the 1980s. It gradually became more expensive to make clothing at home, which greatly reduced sewing as a leisure activity. It was not until the 1990s that there was the beginning of a resurgence in home sewing, partially attributable to the DIY movement (Martindale & McKinney, 2018b, 2020).

Also, in Finland, with the globalization of the clothing industry in the 1990s, the idea of sewing as a way to be thrifty diminished: ready-made clothing became much cheaper and fabrics grew more expensive. Clothing production at home declined and the motive for making your own clothing changed from financial to other reasons, such as creating garments with a personal touch. Nowadays, sewing as a hobby appears to be back in fashion. Several online stores that offer printed knit fabrics by Finnish designers and handy commercial sewing patterns as printable pdf files (e.g. Jujuna, 2020; Named, 2020; Nuppuprint, 2020) may inspire and tempt home sewers to purchase and sew even more. A popular Finnish sewing pattern magazine, *Ottobre Design*, is published in eight languages in more than 140 countries (Ottobre, 2020) and several sewing books (e.g. Etula & Valkeapää-Ikola, 2015; Huhta & Huhta, 2019; Isopahkala, 2017) have recently been published to help home sewers with their hobby. Lifestyle TV programmes (e.g. Strömsö, 2020), websites, online classes and sewing blogs with video tutorials (e.g. Kaavakoulu, 2020; Vikatikki, 2020) and Facebook sewing groups (e.g. Ompeluelämä, 2020, with nearly 40,000 members) and other social media, like Pinterest and Instagram, help today's sewers learn new things and share their sewing projects and tips with each other. Apart from digital dressmaking and sewing communities, there are public sewing events such as Sewing Lan parties, where people can come and sew together, bringing their sewing machines with them to the party venue (e.g. Ommel, 2019).

Reasons for Crafting as a Leisure Activity

Leisure activities are considered to be a key domain of life, in which people seek to gain value and meaning in a number of different ways (Iwasaki, Messina, & Hopper, 2018). This kind of meaning-making includes the roles of leisure in promoting tranquillity and peace of mind, active engagement, positive emotions and well-being (Newman, Tay, & Diener, 2014). According to several researchers, creative leisure activities in particular contribute to meaning-making and the well-being of persons of all ages (e.g. Bailey & Fernando, 2012; Burt & Atkinson, 2012; Collier, 2011; Corkhill, Hemmings, Maddock, & Riley, 2014; Kenning, 2015; Pöllänen, 2015a, b; Pöllänen & Voutilainen, 2017; Pöllänen & Weissman-Hanski, 2019).

According to Pöllänen (2015a), the meaning of craft as a leisure activity lies in its positive effects on the crafters' well-being by fostering a sense of self-management and empowerment through artefacts, materials, a sense of achievement, the social and cultural dimensions of craft, thoughts and feelings, the opportunity for personal growth, the development of physical and cognitive skills, and the control of your own body and feelings. Crafts helped women cope with stress, providing recreation, satisfaction, optimism, positive relationships and support, as well as helping participants cope with negative feelings (Pöllänen, 2015b). Pöllänen and Weissmann-Hanski (2019) noted that the focus of crafting was a richer and more purposeful life through self-actualization and excellence in doing, social connectedness in belonging, self-empowerment in becoming, and relief from stress in being. Sjöberg and Porko-Hudd (2019) described four reasons why crafting was a leisure activity that enhanced well-being: social affinity, meditative solitude and the possibility of screening yourself off, creativity and aesthetic experience and crafts as a therapeutic help in time of crisis.

Martindale (2017) studied the motivation for garment sewing in women aged 20–40 years and found some corresponding results in Pöllänen (2015a, b) and Pöllänen and Weissmann-Hanski (2019). According to Martindale (2017), personal fulfilment was the overarching reason for sewing your own clothing, which was achieved through investment, control and empowerment. These themes formed a recurring spiral of activities contributing to the overarching theme of personal fulfilment. Through each of these stages, personal fulfilment was experienced, which provided the reason for these women to sew their clothing. The cycle began at the investment stage, with cognitive investment in learning and advancing sewing skills, monetary investment in sewing-related supplies and equipment, and the use of their time to sew. After each of these investments had been made, in the next stage, the participants used their investments to control their self-presentation: sewing their own clothing gave these women increased control over their appearance, clothing selection and ready-to-wear consumption. Sewing provided empowerment through increased skills and pride in their accomplishments. The women's sewing skills and the way they felt wearing clothing that they had made for themselves had a positive impact on all the women's personal confidence. The encouragement, approval and support that these women received for both their sewing and the garments they made greatly influenced their sewing participation. For the majority, the online sewing communities positively influenced their participation and supported and empowered them. Feedback from other people, along with support from their sewing community, positively influenced their desire to sew more. This included both enhancing their sewing skills in order to try to make more complex garments and make items using methods other than sewing. The experience of sewing provided women with increased sense of independence and self-sufficiency (Martindale, 2017; Martindale & McKinney, 2020).

Apart from describing the various steps of the sewing process or the empowering elements of craft making, sewers can be categorised according to their reason for sewing. Kean and Levin (1989) classified home sewers (N=105) into five groups: utilitarians, practicals, craft-orientated, upscales, and indifferents. The utilitarians, practicals and indifferents were more orientated towards the financial benefits of home sewing, whereas the upscales and craft-orientated individuals were much less concerned about saving money. The upscales were mostly interested in creating unique items that they had made themselves as opposed to purchasing ready-to-wear fashion. Individuals in the practical, craft-orientated and upscale categories displayed characteristics of prosumers – producer-consumers – who want to be independent of mass production and actively involved in producing products to meet their specific requirements and want to have control over all aspects of their production (see Kotler, 1986). In Martindale's (2017) study, the women were found to embody the prosumer logic to a greater degree than the participants in the previous study because of their intentions to replace ready-to-wear garments and to expand the production of their own garments when they chose to sew (Martindale, 2017; Martindale & McKinney, 2020).

Methodology

Method and Data Collection

The aim of this study is to depict the reasons for garment sewing as a leisure craft in the narratives of female textile craft makers and describe the meanings behind the activity. Thus, this qualitative study used the written narratives of Finnish textile crafters in order to understand their reasons for garment sewing at home as a leisure craft. A written narrative was thought to be a suitable method for offering craft makers an opportunity to describe their crafting as a leisure activity (see Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). Since such narratives do not require face-to-face communication, they afford privacy for analysis and reflection (Moen, 2006; Trahar, 2009). In order to take into account the geographical distances in a sparsely populated country, these first-person narratives were collected via a request published in regional newspapers in all 19 provinces in Finland. The request was a loosely formulated assignment to encourage crafters to write about the meanings of crafting as a leisure activity to enhance well-being. They were asked to share their thoughts and experiences of how the activity of making crafts had been

meaningful to their lives. All ideas, thoughts and experiences that meaningfully improved their well-being in different life areas were regarded as relevant. The writers were also asked to share their background information. They were assured that their writings would be treated anonymously and in confidence.

The instruction was as follows:

In your own way, please describe the meanings of craft making in your life. You can write freely. For example, you can describe what kind of crafts you make, where and when you are crafting, as well as why you have chosen such crafts. If this activity has increased your well-being, please describe how and in what circumstances.

The written narratives of 781 crafters were used as data in this study. The ages of the respondents ranged from 19 to 91 years old (mean age 64 years). Apparently, according to the data collection, the most typical respondents were women over 60 years of age. The responses were received from women with multiple voices, perspectives, truths and meanings of sewing (see Bleakley, 2005) from different parts of Finland, from both cities and rural areas. Thus, it was clear that the data formed a relevant and rich basis for analysis.

Data Analysis

The data in this qualitative study were analysed using a hermeneutic approach as a methodological basis (see Mayring, 2014). In this regard, the content analysis of this study was conducted in two phases. First, a sample of 100 narratives that included references to sewing was randomly selected and analysed using abductive qualitative content analysis and Atlas.ti software. The hermeneutic approach and thematic categorization of content analysis were used to increase understanding of the subject (see Braun, Clarke, Hayfield & Terry, 2018): what was written about sewing as a hobby and what sewing and sewn products mean and have meant to the respondents during their life. The data were first analysed according to the themes of the writing request: the kind of sewing work that is involved, when, for whom, where the respondents get ideas and help, how sewing skills have been learned and the kinds of meanings the materials have in sewing. The data were also searched for the meanings of sewing and sewed products in the respondents' lives and whether sewing may have increased their well-being. Despite the coding system being based on the themes of the request, it evolved inductively during the process.

The content analysis of the first phase of this study increased the understanding of sewing as a hobby during the respondent's life. For many respondents, knitting and crocheting had overtaken sewing and garment making as a leisure craft, although those respondents who still sewed clothes associated the positive effects with the craft process and products. For this reason, the second phase of the study concentrated on these aspects of garment design and making. Thus, in the second phase, the whole data (N=781) were analysed using Atlas.ti, initially using automatic search and coding features to help handle the large volume of data (see Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006) and to code, for example, references to sewing, clothing and design. When this study focused on the perspectives of sewing, particularly garment design and making, the analysis ultimately centred on 395 narratives that included these criteria. Thereafter, each code was analysed in detail in order to form new categories and subcategories (see Mayring, 2014). The code "design" included the categories "need to create" and "different sources of inspiration", which included, for example, the subcategories "materials" and "sewing pattern magazines". The new data from the second phase were also compared with the results of the first phase to provide more in-depth interpretations. Already by the first phase of the study, a rough division was made between those who had stopped sewing, to utility sewers, who connected the creation of garments with practicality and economy, and to creative designers, who highlighted creativity and self-expression. In the second phase this division was further analysed using codes related to the sewing process and products. After the second phase of the analysis, three types of sewing were identified that depicted the various reasons for garment design and making at home: *Utility sewing*, *Process-centred sewing* and *Product-centred sewing*. Following this, the abstraction of this typification helped to identify the meanings behind sewing garments as an activity.

Reasons for sewing garments

Utility sewing

The data contained several sewers who had not stopped sewing completely but who now only sewed, mended and altered garments when necessary. These *Utility sewers* no longer created garments. Some of them said that this was because of the availability of inexpensive ready-to-wear garments or a lack of cutting and sewing space. Mending was carried out for friends and family and altering garments included both their own existing garments and those which had been bought in shops, sales and jumble sales. Among them there were also a couple of *detesters*, who did not enjoy sewing at all but practiced it anyway. One of the respondents analysed this dilemma with a 14-item list of her reasons for crafting. The reasons for mending and altering garments were purely practical and financial with no passion for sewing: the need for a certain product and getting it less expensively by making it yourself.

For some *Utility sewers*, a negative attitude towards sewing also emerged early during their school years. As one of the respondents wrote, she no longer made garments herself anymore because she had been forced to attend textile craft classes at school and this had resulted in unsuccessful and unwearable items. In fact, it appears that her self-esteem had decreased due to a lack of sewing skills and also as a result of dissatisfaction with her body, which was concretely evidenced by her description of mending trousers with a worn-out crotch area.

What I hate most is sewing the worn-out crotch seams of trousers because the fabric is thick, the sewing machine won't sew properly, and the torn seams remind me of swollen thighs. (N260, 48 years)

Process-centred sewing

It was found that the process of garment designing and making gave pleasure in several ways, either in the design phase and the construction phase, or both. Those respondents who had the most satisfaction and sense of empowerment from the design and construction process can be called *Process-centred sewers* (see Figure 4). During the process, the sewer learns new things, solves problems and overcomes various challenges. While problem solving during the process may be frustrating, overcoming the challenges brings great pleasure, satisfaction and personal growth at the end of the process. The need to feel a sense of control over your own making led some respondents to design and do everything their own way – exactly as they wanted to, not following any given instructions or according to other people's wishes.

For me, the materials, design and making are more important than the finished product. The end result is a garment, but it's not as important as making. (N112, 47 years)

I don't charge anything to make crafts because then my creativity is lost. I have sometimes agreed to make some garments for money for a co-worker. But I don't want to follow other people's ideas or make unattractive clothes. (N577, 64 years)

I think I make crafts because of self-creation and no one telling me how it has to be done; I can do it exactly how I want, use the colours I feel like using in any way I want, either sewing, knitting, embroidering, weaving, making willow balls or crocheting. I'm easily excited about new subjects, new pillow covers or slippers, or a dog's coat. but I immediately notice that the crafts become work if someone else tells me what I have to do and what materials and colours I should use. I think I cope and get a sense of well-being from what I design and I make my crafts according to my own schedule and enjoy the finished work. ...Craft making is my own world in which I dictate and take responsibility for the result. I don't care whether other people like it. (N118, 51 years)

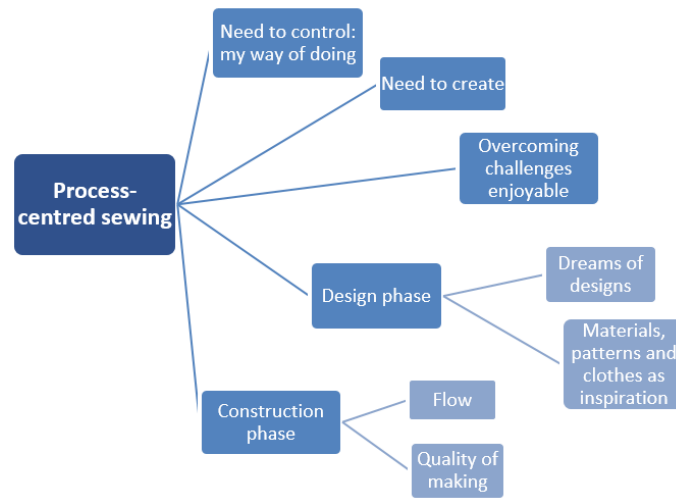


Figure 1. Process-centred sewing: Elements of Enjoyment in Garment Design and the Construction Process

The analysis showed that the garment making process satisfies the need to create. It is described as a journey from design to finished product or as the transformation of ideas and materials into a garment. Garment design is particularly perceived as being important. For some of the respondents, designing was even more important and satisfying than the constructing phase: sewing was user-centred and an indication of creativity, individuality, personality and your own style. Even just dreaming about future designs or of being a fashion designer gave pleasure.

Satisfaction comes from seeing how a fabric is transformed into a garment and how I have succeeded in the selection of fabric – whether the garment will be the way I thought and how well the fabric is suited to the purpose. (N112, 47 years)

I enjoy designing and thinking, I can do it while cleaning or at night when I wake up and try to get back to sleep (although designing causes insomnia...). (N548, 73 years)

Textile materials in particular, as well as magazines containing sewing patterns or clothes, were used as a source of inspiration for garment design: ready-made clothes were used as a useful example or new designs were combined with existing garments. Some respondents were excited about designing inventively and advantageously while creating fine new products from inexpensive or reused materials, or clothes.

It's also fun to design clothes out of different fabrics. For example, in Eurokangas, [a Finnish chain store that sells fabrics] even when you go to buy a zipper, you can see all the fabric tables. As you walk around Eurokangas, you're already thinking about designing. And when you look around, the design is already in full swing. That fabric will become a fine skirt and that fabric will make a compatible blouse for it. And the song is ready, these fabrics go with me. The fabrics are just so great. I also use a lot of library magazines to help me, particularly when I'm looking for patterns and models for my eldest grandchild, who is 10. They are at an age when they can tell you what clothes should be like. The materials evoke dreams and new creativity in me. (N394, 60 years)

Today everyone is talking about tuning, however, this has always been done. There is plenty of old and new material. You can get a bagful of materials from a jumble sale for a couple of euros. I am better in re-making than in creating new clothes. I've seen some incredibly cool clothing made from recycled material (an evening dress made from neckties) that it seems quite ridiculous to always buy new. (N53, 61 years)

While self-creation is important, only a few respondents stated that they created their designs and their cutting patterns from scratch or made their patterns from basic blocks. This type of holistic craft process containing own design was primarily seen in respondents who had received training in dressmaking in vocational education or at craft and design colleges. Most often, sewing patterns from magazines (Burda, Suuri Käsityö, Ottobre Design) and sewing and pattern making books were described as sources of patterns that could be altered according to their own design and body measurements.

During the sewing process, control of the making, accuracy and neatness in making and producing a high-quality garment was important and gave satisfaction and self-confidence for some sewers. Some sewers were extremely dedicated to the sewing process. Thus, the passage of time was forgotten, and the sewer was completely immersed in the flow and the activity for its own sake.

For me, making crafts really means a lot. Only now I'm in my sixties do I realize this. It's as important to me as sleeping or eating. I must admit, when I'm excited about sewing clothes, I sometimes forget to eat or visit the bathroom. (N577, 64 years)

Product-centred sewing

The reason for garment creation for some of the respondents could be described as *Product-centred*. They mainly sewed product-based or utilizing existing materials (see Figure 2). These materials were, for example, self-woven or printed fabrics for some special purpose, left-over fabrics which had to be used, not wasted, or it could be clothes that were so valued that they needed to be repaired and used for something else. *Product-centred sewing*, however, differed from utility-based sewing due to the positive aspects of the sewing process; they were still making garments and they enjoyed sewing.

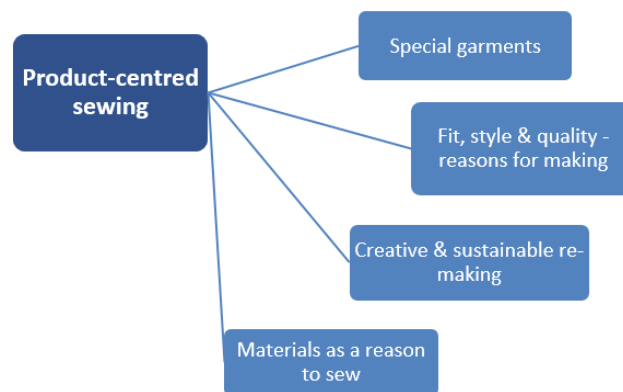


Figure 2. The elements of Product-centred sewing

Sewing garments especially for loved ones gave the sewer satisfaction both in making and in donating. When a garment was made and donated to another person, this gift was made as a journey to the self and the object of the donation. Donating crafts to charity was common among knitters and other crafters. However, some sewers also stated that they made doll's clothes for charity. In these creations, the inventive re-use of materials was combined with the warm feelings engendered by charity work. Some sewers even wrote that because garment making and the end products gave them pleasure, they wanted to transfer these feelings of well-being to others through their self-made products. Two respondents described this transfer effect as follows:

I appreciate handmade products, particularly if I receive them from my family or friends. It shows that they have made a very special effort, spent their precious time on me and, in doing so, have been thinking about me: it makes me feel important. I think about the craft gifts I have given and received. It's like a hug in a concrete form, full of warm thoughts and love. No insignificant person has ever given me or received a craft gift from me. (N24, 35 years)

When I have created a painting, I can praise myself – I got that done and I also want others to experience the same wonderful feelings when viewing the painting. Similarly, I want to use my craft products to give others the same sense of well-being that I experience myself. (N93, 52 years)

Making garments for others was also because of needing or wanting a special garment. When everyday clothes can now be easily bought ready-made, the data revealed that special clothes are still being self-made. These clothes can be special in terms of their garment design or use: they could be wedding gowns, outfits or costumes for special events, or a hobby, like cosplay. These kinds of product-based making processes can also carry and transfer the values and skills of making. These special clothes could also be for animals, for example, clothes for dogs.

These days, I don't make clothes, except if some fabric or occasion happens to inspire me. In which case, I might sew a straight skirt or a dress. My daughter enjoys cosplay, which is why we make some imaginative role-playing costumes for Anime/Manga events every year. The rule of this hobby is that the dress should not be bought ready-made, but everything should be made by yourself, including masks. A wolf's head is currently being made. ... At the same time, I hope that through crafting together, my daughter will learn the skills of making and have a hobby that can enhance the experience of beauty for herself and her loved ones through her own craft. (N596, 53 years)

Underlying meanings of garment sewing

The purpose of this study was to understand the reasons for garment sewing at home as a leisure craft. It attempted to depict the meanings behind the activity. The data from this study revealed three types of sewers that depict the reasons for sewing garments. However, currently, only two of these types comprise actively designing and sewing garments at home. The *Utility sewer* only mended and altered garments when necessary. However, for the active sewers, there were two specific underlying meanings why they still designed and sewed garments. The analysis revealed that garments served as a symbol and an indication of self-fulfilment for *Process-centred sewing* and *Product-centred sewing* as a leisure craft.

Garments as a Symbol

The fit, style and quality of garments were important reasons for *Process-centred sewing* and *Product-centred sewing* as a leisure activity. This was better achieved by making garments themselves than buying poor quality and excessively young-looking, ready-to-wear garments that didn't fit. Producing special and stylish clothes, as well as the transmission of love by hand made products, were linked to the various symbolic meanings and values of the garment that the sewer wanted to convey.

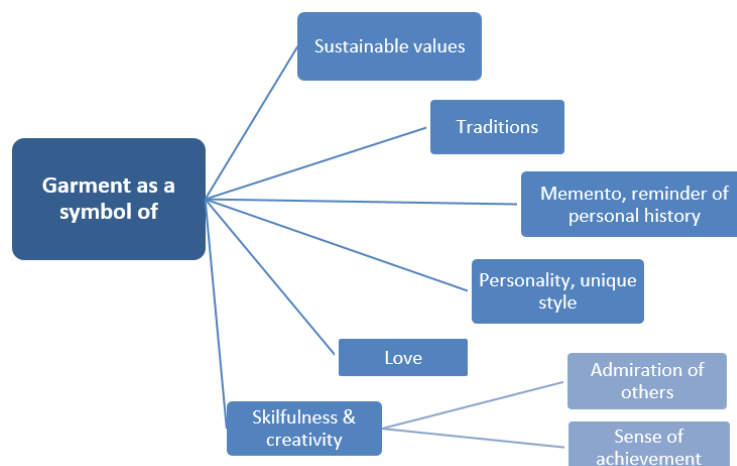


Figure 3. Garment as a Symbol

As the previous figure shows, the created garment can be much more than an ordinary garment for the maker. It can convey different meanings as a memento, a reminder and a symbol of personal history, or

as a symbol of own learning, skilfulness, creativity, personality and unique style, as well as a symbol of empathy and love. It can demonstrate the maker's sustainability and other values, such as an appreciation and respect for traditions, when making and wearing a national costume. A symbolic garment gives pride and pleasure in different ways. When a garment has been successfully completed, it gives a great sense of achievement. There is pleasure in wearing a well-fitting and elegant garment, giving a sense of control of your own body and appearance. It also indicates your skilfulness, creativity and other symbolic aspects to others, and leads to admiration and compliments from others.

When the garment is finished, I feel great pleasure and a sense of success. ... Thus, I rejoiced aloud in the sewing room. (N123, 68 years)

Finally, I'll tell you about the stages of my life that led me to design the most demanding but valuable clothes of my life. ...When designing my wedding dress, I thought that a 54-year-old bride doesn't dress like a young woman, but there has to be something SPECIAL.

The result was the gown of [name removed], in which I included memories of many important things in my life. (N238, 73 years)

The sewers' values of sustainability were described both in the making process and in the descriptions of the created garments but were often not clearly stated in the data. For many of the elderly respondents, repairing and upcycling old garments and ready-made garments appeared to be an obvious way of crafting. Useful materials and old clothes were not thrown away and were picked up from flea markets for creating new products and being used inventively, which was very satisfying for the maker. One respondent talked about sustainability in a broader context: the big fast fashion stores have made clothing so affordable that it has led to the overconsumption of unsustainable clothing, the production processes of which are unethical and polluting.

I'm particularly interested in the current state of the global textile industry and have read some books (Saramäki: Hyvän mielen vaatekaappi [wardrobe of good conscience] and Elizabeth L. Cline: *Overdressed: The shockingly high cost of cheap fashion*). In the future, sewing clothes and self-making will be more valued when the current overconsumption stops. I am also interested in Globe Hope-type re-making and recycling, but I still shop at H&M, although many items stay on the shelves when I know something about their background. (N588, 45 years)

Sewing garments for self-fulfilment

The analysis revealed that sewing garments acted as a way of self-fulfilment for both *Process-centred sewing* and *Product-centred sewing*. These sewers valued both the garment design and construction process, as well as the created products. Garment making gave them a deep sense of well-being, enhancing their pleasure and satisfaction.

My hobby is sewing. Sewing is a way of life for me. When I sew I almost meditate. You must completely focus on it, otherwise it will go wrong. All my worries and troubles are forgotten when there is a piece of cloth in front of me, from which I conjure what I think I need at the time. I can express myself and satisfy my need for creativity. I am a skilled dressmaker...I have also created custom-made clothes, but I mostly make my own clothes, from overcoats to jeans and party dresses. If one day I was no longer able to sew, it would probably be a disaster for me. (N62, age unknown)

I derive great satisfaction from crafts, while the results of my work as a teacher have never been tangible or even necessarily visible. However, a beautifully fitting and distinctive garment is visible; it looks and feels good. I have always enjoyed teaching but making things by hand has been a counterweight for me. On the other hand, while sewing I'm also able to plan my teaching. In addition, I've saved lots of money when making garments myself, so that my family has been able to enjoy traveling. (N303, 60 years)

For both of the active sewers, self-made garments were unique, high-quality, functional and aesthetically-pleasing symbols of skilfulness and self-expression with added emotional value, indicating the fulfilment of the user's personal preferences of style and ease. For some of them it constituted mind-

healing meditation and self-expression; for others it was a lifestyle. Thus, the sewer was also afraid of being prevented from sewing. The positive thoughts and feelings that arose during making indicated that sewing was perceived as a self-fulfilment-based leisure activity and as meaning-making.

Discussion

The aim of this study is to depict the reasons for garment sewing as a leisure craft in the narratives of female textile craft makers and describe the meanings behind the activity. Several active sewers derived the most satisfaction from the design and construction process of garments. However, as noted by Martindale and McKinney (2018b; 2020), the difficulty and expense of home sewing meant that some sewers only mended and altered garments when necessary. For them, sewing as a leisure craft is mainly based on the need to repair a product. These sewers preferred to get a sense of success and joy from crafting that was quicker to finish than designing and making garments.

The results of this study show that meaning-making in sewing as a leisure activity had several properties that enhanced the well-being of the active sewers (see Iwasaki, Messina, Hopper, 2018). For the sewers, the garments served as a symbol and acted as a way of achieving self-fulfilment. Self-made garments acted as concrete personalized reminders of both of these meanings. In garment making, during the design and construction process, various skills, for example, problem solving, were learnt and developed (see Martindale, 2017). The sense of achievement increased during the complicated design and sewing process, ranging from “difficulty to victory” to an enjoyable and successful result. The results showed how sewing can empower the crafters, strengthen the maker’s self-efficacy and self-confidence and lead to personal growth (see Bailey & Fernando, 2012; Burt & Atkinson, 2012; Collier, 2011; Pöllänen, 2015a). It appears that the sense of control of your own actions and choices can be gained when the process is totally self-dictated and controlled (see Martindale, 2017; Pöllänen, 2015a). When examining the results of this study in relation to previous studies of the positive effects on crafting, all the elements that enhance well-being (e.g. Corkhill, Hemmings, Maddock, & Riley, 2014; Kenning, 2015; Pöllänen, 2015a; Pöllänen & Weissman-Hanski, 2019; Sjöberg & Porko-Hudd, 2019) are found to be intertwined and include both the process and product related reasons of garment design and making. In the beginning of the garment making process, the materials for garments are sources of dreams, inspiration and innovations, and the choice and use of these define the results in the same way that Pöllänen (2015a) has described.

Garments as symbols, as mementos and proof of your own talent are like the maker’s fingerprints, as Pöllänen and Voutilainen (2017) described in their study. Hand-made items convey meanings, memories and thoughts, as well as something unique about their creator. Compared to Martindale’s (2017) study, personal self-fulfilment was also an important reason for sewing your own clothing. Better quality and improved fit (see Martindale & McKinney, 2018b; 2020) reinforced the sense of success. Sewing your own clothes provides increased control over your appearance, clothing selection and ready-to-wear consumption (see Martindale & McKinney, 2020; Fletcher, 2016). Sewing provides empowerment through increased skills and pride in your accomplishments. Sewing skills and the way that you feel wearing self-made clothes has a positive impact on personal confidence. The encouragement, approval and support received for the garments that were made greatly influenced a respondent’s sewing participation; empowerment from the process and the product positively influences the desire to make more and then makes the sewer resume the sewing cycle all over again (see Martindale, 2017). Many of these respondents appear to be *multi-crafters* who are very eager to make various crafts. Some of these active garment sewers could also be called *sewists* (sewist = sew + artist, see e.g. Grammarphobia, 2016; Threads, 2012).

The results of this study show how garment sewing offered opportunities for transferring values and skills and sustainable development through processes and products. Sustainability could be achieved by repairing and recycling. Upcycling, downcycling and using old garments and ready-made garments was cost effective but, more importantly, *Product-centred sewers* showed responsibility in their action of

resisting over-consumption and the production of short-lived garments (see Fletcher, 2016; Kean & Levin, 1989; Pöllänen & Voutilainen, 2017). In the same way as noted by Pöllänen and Weissman-Hanski (2019), in this study, the way the materials were used appeared to be endogenous, particularly for many of the older sewers.

Although the findings of this study revealed much the same results as previous studies, they are not transferable to other contexts. However, as Blom and Nygren (2010) have noted, the conclusions of a qualitative study may be more general than the results found. It must take into account that experiences and contexts may differ from country to country, as well as the reasons for taking up sewing as a leisure activity. Because the narratives in this study were collected via an announcement, the respondents were not generally representative of crafters who engage in sewing. The results clearly describe crafting conducted as an individual project at home by textile crafters over 60 years of age, not in social communities (see Martindale, 2017). However, the results may provide useful information of the application of the findings in order to understand the meaning-making in home-based sewing that has silently taken place over the years. The results highlight the sustainable way of wearing and making garments and, moreover, the everyday effects of crafting during the current global fashion-related challenges (see Fletcher, 2016).

In the data, descriptions of garment design and construction were sometimes indistinguishable from other crafting descriptions. The processes of different craft techniques were often described collectively and universally. When the respondents wrote about sewing, quilt making was often described in more detail than garment making. Quilts were not included in this study, although these descriptions of artistic quilt making could provide interesting data for further studies. In this study, a sense of community in sewing did not appear in the data, influencing the respondents' participation in sewing (see Martindale, 2017). Thus, this aspect could also be studied as the digital dressmaking and sewing communities have a clear role, particularly among younger crafters. While crafts have always been a popular leisure activity in Finland, in spring 2020, the Corona pandemic resulted in people being stuck at home, making crafts even more popular. Newspapers told us that crafting would sooth our minds during the corona crisis and at the start of the pandemic, sales in yarn shops dramatically increased (HS, 2020; Kauppalehti, 2020; Kirjavainen, 2020; Statistics Finland, 2020). Thus, there is need for further research on the meanings and value of craft-based leisure activities to establish whether new trends, as well as rapidly changing living conditions, have changed the nature of leisure-based craft making.

References

- Aikasalo, P. (2000). *Seuratkaamme järkevää ja terveellistä muotia – naisten pukeutumisihanteet ja vaatevalinnat 1920-luvulta 1960-luvun lopulle*. [Let's follow the sensible and healthy fashion – women's clothing ideals and clothing choice in the 1920s–1960s.] (Doctoral dissertation). Helsinki: Suomen muinaismuistoyhdistys.
- Armstead, C. S. & McKinney, E. (2019). The role of nostalgia in retro sewing. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, December 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540519893102>
- Bailey, A. W. & Fernando, I. K. (2012). Routine and project-based leisure, happiness, and meaning of life. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 44(2), 139–154.
- Bain, J. (2016). “Darn right I'm a feminist...Sew what?” the politics of contemporary home dressmaking: Sewing, slow fashion and feminism. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 54, January-February 2016, 57–66. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2015.11.001>.
- Bleakley, A. (2005). Stories as data, data as stories: making sense of narrative inquiry in clinical education. *Medical Education*, 39(5), 534–540.
- Blom, B. & Nygren, L. (2010). Analysing written narratives: considerations on the ‘code-totality problems’. *Nordic Journal of Social Research*, 1. Retrieved from <https://boap.uib.no/index.php/njsr/article/viewFile/66/45>
- Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (2006). *Qualitative research for education. An introduction to theories and methods* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

- Braun, V., Clarke, V., Hayfield, N., & Terry, G. (2018). Thematic analysis. In P. Liamputtong (Ed.). *Handbook of Research Methods in Health Social Sciences*. (pp. 843–860). Singapore: Springer.
- Burda. (2020). *Burda Style*. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burda_Style
- Burman, B. (1999). Made at home by clever fingers: Home dressmaking in Edwardian England. In B. Burman (Ed.). *The culture of sewing: Gender, consumption and home dressmaking*. (pp. 33–53). Oxford: Berg.
- Burt, E. L. & Atkinson, J. (2012). The relationship between quilting and wellbeing. *Journal of Public Health*, 34(1), 54–59.
- Collier, A. F. (2011). The well-being of women who create with textiles: Implications for art therapy. *Journal of the American Art Therapy*, 28(3), 104–112.
- Corkhill, B., Hemmings, J., Maddock, A., & Riley, J. (2014). Knitting and well-being. Textile. *Journal of Cloth and Culture*, 12(1), 34–57.
- Ekholm, L. K. & Frisk, L. M. (2019). Kuinka trikoosta tuli päällysvaate? Trikoovaatteet 1960-luvun murroksena. [How did a tricot top become an outer garment? Knitwear as a revolution of the 1960s] In A. Niiranen, & A. Turunen (Eds.), *Säädyllyistä ja säädyttöntä: pukeutumisen historiaa renessansista 2000-luvulle*. [Decent and indecent: The history of dress from the Renaissance to the 21st century]. (pp. 341–369). Historiallinen arkisto 150. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
- Emery, J. S. (2014). *A history of the paper pattern industry: The home dressmaking fashion revolution*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury.
- Etula, K. & Valkeapää-Ikola, S. (2015). *Mekkotehdas aikuisille*. [Dressfactory for adults.] Helsinki: WSOY.
- Fereday, J. & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1), 1–11.
- Fletcher, K. (2016). *Craft of use. Post-growth fashion*. New York: Routledge.
- Grammarphobia. (2016). *Needlework: sewer or sewist?* Retrieved from <https://www.grammarphobia.com/blog/2016/10/sew-sewer-sewist.html>
- HS. (2020). *Koronan takia lomautettu mies astui sisään kauppaan ja sanoi että nyt on pakko keksiä jotain tekemistä: Oulunkylän lankakauppa takoo hurjaa myyntiä*. [A man laid off by Corona stepped into the shop and said that now he must come up with something to do: the Oulunkylä yarn store makes great sales]. Published 19.3.2020. Retrieved from <https://www.hs.fi/kaupunki/helsinki/art-2000006445920.html>.
- Huhta, L. & Huhta, S. (2019). *Uuden kaavan mukaan*. [According the new pattern.] Helsinki: WSOY.
- Isopahkala, P. (2017). *PaaPiin kaavakirja lapsille*. [PaaPii's pattern book for children.] Helsinki: Tammi.
- Iwasaki, Y., Messina, E. S., & Hopper, T. (2018.) The role of leisure in meaning-making and engagement with life. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 13(1), 29–35.
- Jujuna. (2020). *Jujuna – Ompelukaavat ja tarvikkeet ompeluun*. [Jujuna – sewing patterns and notions for sewing] Retrieved from <https://jujuna.fi/>
- Kaavakoulu. (2020). *Kaavakoulu*. [Patternschool.] Retrieved from <https://kaavakoulu.fi/>
- Kaipainen, M. (2008). *"Ken tilauspukua käyttää, hän herrasmieheltä näyttää"*. *Eteläkarjalainen maalaisvaatturi ja vaatturitoiminta Suomessa 1920–1960 -luvulla*. [“He who wears a bespoke suit, does look like a gentleman”. A South Carelian Country Tailor and the Tailoring Practice in 1920–1960's Finland] (Doctoral dissertation). Joensuu: University of Joensuu. Retrieved from https://epublications.uef.fi/pub/urn_isbn_978-952-219-113-7/urn_isbn_978-952-219-113-7.pdf
- Kaukinen, L. K. & Vahtera, P. (1997). *Opi saumurin salaisuudet. Saumurin ompeluteknologia*. [Learns the secrets of the overlocker. The sewing technology of the overlocker]. Helsinki: WSOY.
- Kauppalehti. (2020). *Korona sulki lankakaupan ovet, mutta sitten tapahtui yllättävä käänne – ”Näyttää uskomattoman hyvältä”* [Corona closed the yarn store's doors, but then there was a surprising turn - "Looks incredibly good"] Published on 24 March, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.kauppalehti.fi/uutiset/korona-sulki-lankakaupan-ovet-mutta-sitten-tapahtui-yllattava-kaanne-nayttaa-uskomattoman-hyvalta/ec2403d6-c4a1-4d51-8d9e-80a0350fe1e6>.
- Kean, R. C. & Levin, C. O. (1989). Orientations toward home sewing. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 8(1), 28–34. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887302X8900800104>
- Kenning, G. (2015). ‘Fiddling with threads’: Craft-based textile activities and positive well-being. *Textile, Journal of Cloth and Culture*, 13(1), 50–65.
- Kirjavainen, J. (2020). *Käsityön tilanne Suomessa*. [The situation of crafts in Finland]. Q-tutkimus. Retrieved from <https://www.epressi.com/media/userfiles/143847/1581606972/yhteenvedo-kasityokyselyn-tuloksista-q-tutkimus-2020.pdf>

- Kouluhallitus. (1985). *Peruskoulun opetussuunnitelman perusteet 1985*. [National core curriculum of basic education 1985]. Helsinki: Valtion painatuskeskus.
- Kotler, P. (1986). Prosumers: A new type of consumer. *The Futurist*, 20, 24–28.
- Korpela-Ahola, A. (2010). *Kaarikeskuksen synty*. [The birth of the Kaarikeskus]. Retrieved from <https://www.kaarikeskus.fi/tietoa-meista/kaarikeskuksen-synty/>
- LaBat, K., Salusso, C., & Rhee, J. (2007). Home sewers' satisfaction with fit of apparel patterns. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 11(3), 429–440. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13612020710763155>
- Lampinen, L. & Mäkelä, T. (1977). *Vaatteita ompelemaan. Pukuompelun oppikirja harrastajille*. [Sew clothing. A sewing textbook for hobbyists]. Helsinki: Weilin+Göös.
- Lehtinen, I. & Sihvo, P. (2005). *Rahwaan puku*. [Folk Costume]. Helsinki: Museovirasto.
- Marjanen, P. (2012). *Koulukäsityö vuosina 1866–2003. Kodin hyvinvointiin kasvattavista tavoitteista kohti elämönhallinnan taitoja*. [School crafts in 1866–2003. From educational goals of home well-being to life management skills]. (Doctoral dissertation). Turku: University of Turku. Retrieved from <https://www.utupub.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/83445/AnnalesC344Marjanen.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Marjanen, P. & Kaipainen, M. (2016). Kaavoituksen opettaminen osana koulun käsityön opetuksen muutosta 1900-luvulla. [Teaching of pattern making as part of the change in school craft teaching in the 20th century.] *Kasvatus & Aika*, 10(3). Retrieved from <https://journal.fi/kasvatusjajaika/article/view/68655>
- Martindale, A. (2017). *Women's motivations to sew clothing for themselves*. (Doctoral dissertation). Iowa: Iowa State University. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/1d8f/f9b322b8bdefbae517e671cdb37121f862b8.pdf>
- Martindale, A. & McKinney, E. (2018a). Self-sewn identity: How female home sewers use garment sewing to control self-presentation. *Journal of Consumer Culture*. March 16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540518764238>
- Martindale, A. & McKinney, E. (2018b). Sew or purchase? Home sewer consumer decision process. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 22(2), 176–188. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-07-2017-0066>
- Martindale, A. & McKinney, E. (2020). Why do they sew? Women's motivations to sew clothing for themselves. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 38(1), 32–48. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887302X19872552>
- Mayring, P. (2014). *Qualitative content analysis: Theoretical foundation, basic procedures and software solution*. Klagenfurt. Retrieved from <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-395173>
- McLean, M. (2009). "I dearly loved that machine": Women and the objects of home sewing in the 1940s. In M. D. Goggin & F. Tobin (Eds.) *Women and the material culture of needlework and textiles, 1750–1950*. (pp. 69–89). Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing.
- Mikkola, K. (2019). Uskonnolliset, yhteiskunnalliset ja moraaliset uhkakuvat. Säädynmukaisen pukeutumisen murtuminen 1800- ja 1900-luvun taitteen Suomessa. [Religious, social, and moral threats. The break of caste clothing in 19th and 20th century in Finland]. In A. Niiranen & A. Turunen (Eds.), *Säädyllystä ja säädöntöntä: pukeutumisen historiaa renessanssista 2000-luvulle*. [Decent and indecent: The history of dress from the Renaissance to the 21st century]. (pp. 147–178). Historiallinen Arkisto 150. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
- Moen, T. (2006). Reflections on the narrative research approach. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(4), 56–69.
- Named. (2020). *Finnish clothing patterns*. Retrieved from <https://www.namedclothing.com/>
- Newman, D. B., Tay, L., & Diener, E. (2014). Leisure and subjective well-being: A model of psychological mechanisms as mediating factors. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 15(3), 555–578.
- Nuppuprint. (2020). *Fabrics, books, stationery and accessories*. Retrieved from <https://www.nuppuprintco.com/>
- Ommel. (2019). [Stitch.] Published 11.1.2019. Retrieved from <https://www.ommel.fi/2019/01/11/ommellaan-yhdessa-ommel-laneissa/>
- Ompeluelämää. (2020). *Ompeluelämää*. [Sewinglife.] Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/groups/277095472307251/>
- Ottobre. (2020). *Story of Ottobre Design-magazines*. Retrieved from <https://www.ottobredesign.com/en/about-us/story-of-ottobre/>
- Pöllänen, S. (2015a). Elements of crafts that enhance well-being. Textile craft makers' descriptions of their leisure activity. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 47(1), 58–78.
- Pöllänen, S. (2015b). Crafts as leisure-based coping: Craft makers' descriptions of their stress-reducing activity. *Occupational Therapy in Mental Health*, 31(2), 83–100.

- Pöllänen, S. & Voutilainen, L. (2017). Crafting well-being: Meanings and intentions of stay-at-home mothers' craft-based leisure activity. *Leisure Sciences*, 40(6), 617–633. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2017.1325801>
- Pöllänen, S. & Weissmann-Hanski, M. (2019). Hand-made well-being: Textile crafts as a source of eudaimonic well-being. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 51(3), 348–365. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2019.1688738>
- Russum, J. (2019). Sewing entrepreneurs and the myth of the spheres: How the “work at home mom” complicates the public-private divide. *Frontiers*, 40(3), 117–138. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/2343130175/>
- Salo-Mattila, K. (2009). *Ruumiin ja muodin välissä: tutkimus vaatteiden kaavoituksen kehityksestä*. [Between body and fashion: A study of the development of garment patterns]. Kotitalous- ja käsityötieteiden laitos. Helsinki: Helsingin yliopisto.
- Schofield-Tomschin, S. (1999). Home sewing: Motivational changes in the twentieth century. In B. Burman (Ed.) *The culture of sewing: Gender, consumption and home dressmaking*. (pp. 97–110). Oxford: Berg.
- Sipilä, O. (2012). *Esiliina aikansa kehyksissä – moniaikaista tekstiilikulttuuria ja representaatioita kodista, perheestä, puhtaudesta ja käsityöstä 1900-luvun alkupuolen Suomessa*. [Apron in temporal frames – Multitemporal textile culture and representations of home, family, cleanliness and crafts in Finland in the first half of the 20th century.] (Doctoral dissertation). Joensuu: University of Eastern Finland. Retrieved from https://epublications.uef.fi/pub/urn_isbn_978-952-61-0985-5/
- Sjöberg, B. & Porko-Hudd, M. (2019). A life tangled in yarns – Leisure knitting for well-being. *Techne Series A*, 26(2), 49–66.
- Statistics Finland. (2020). *Kädentaitojen harrastaminen, 15 vuotta täyttäneet (2017)*. [Crafts as a hobby, 15-years-olds and beyond]. Helsinki: Tilastokeskus. Retrieved from <http://pxnet2.stat.fi/PXWeb/sq/5b51e0e1-f1fd-455d-8650-da13ed159566>
- Strömsö. (2020). *Strömsö*. Retrieved from <https://yle.fi/aihe/stromso/askartelu-ja-kasityot>
- Threads. (2012). *Sewer vs. sewist*. Retrieved from <https://www.threadsmagazine.com/2012/10/11/sewer-vs-sewist>
- Trahar, S. (2009). Beyond the story itself: Narrative inquiry and autoethnography in intercultural research in higher education. *FQS Forum: Qualitative social research*, 10(1). Retrieved from <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1218/2653>
- Turunen, A. (2011). *“Hame, housut, hamehousut! Vai mikä on tulevaisuutemme?” Naisten päällyshousujen käyttöä koskevat pukeutumisohjeet ja niissä rakentuvat naiseuden ihanteet suomalaisissa naistenlehdissä 1889-1945*. [Skirt, trousers, divided skirt! Or what is our future?] How the ideals of womanhood were negotiated in the discussion of female trouser-wearing in Finnish women's magazines, 1889–1945]. Kansatieteellinen Arkisto 53. Helsinki: Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistys.
- Turunen, A. & Niiranen, A. (2019). Pukeutumisen muuttuvat merkitykset. Pukeutumisen historia ja sen tutkimus. [The changing meanings of dress. The history of dressing and its research]. In A. Niiranen & A. Turunen (Eds.), *Säädyllystä ja säädyllyntä: pukeutumisen historiaa renessanssista 2000-luvulle*. [Decent and indecent: The history of dress from the Renaissance to the 21st century]. (pp. 11–49). Historiallinen Arkisto 150. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
- Turunen, A. & Niiranen, A. (2020). Vaatekaapin historia on täynnä näkymätöntä työtä. [The history of wardrobe is full of invisible work]. *Perhe ja koti*, 29.4.2020. Retrieved from <https://antroblogi.fi/2020/04/vaatteet-vaatekaapin-historia-on-taynna-nakymatonta-tyota/>
- Vikatikki. (2020). *Nakkisormisen miehen ompelublogi. [Sewing blog of a man with unwieldy fingers]*. Retrieved from <https://www.vikatikki.net/>
- Willberg, L. (1988). *Ompelukone – Ensimmäinen kodinkone*. [Sewing machine - The first home appliance]. Tampereen kaupunki: Pirkanmaan maakuntamuseo.

Ph.D. Minna Kaipainen is a University Lecturer in Craft Teacher Education programme at the University of Eastern Finland. She teaches sewing technology, pattern making and garment design and construction. Her research interests focus mainly on dress and garment construction from past to present.

Ph.D. Sinikka Pöllänen is a Professor of craft science in Craft Teacher Education programme at the University of Eastern Finland. Her major research interests include, but are not limited to, crafts and wellbeing, pedagogical models, and learning in authentic contexts. She has published several articles relating to meanings of crafts as an occupation and leisure activity, as well as craft pedagogy and sustainable crafts.