

# **Exploring commitment in peer-to-peer exchanges: the case of timebanks**

E. Papaoikonomou; C. Valor Martínez

## **Abstract-**

**Despite the growing trend of peer-to-peer (P2P) exchanges, there is a lack of studies that examine the determinants of the relationship between exchanging partners and the role of commitment in particular. This is especially necessary as P2P exchanges enact a different type of reciprocity from that of &lsquo;business-to-consumers&rsquo;. Thus, exploring P2P exchanges allows a better understanding of the drivers of commitment and the relationship of commitment with reciprocity. This qualitative and exploratory study examines the case of timebanks (TBs). Drawing from 40 in-depth interviews with TB managers and users along with participant observation, this study finds that commitment is a complex and multidimensional construct that may vary drastically depending on the distinct foci of commitment, the dual roles that users perform (as providers or as recipients), the type of exchange system and the notion of reciprocity underlying the exchange system.**

**Index Terms- Peer-to-peer exchanges; generalised reciprocity; timebanks; commitment; reciprocity; foci of commitment**

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## **Citation:**

*Papaoikonomou, E.; Valor, C. "Exploring commitment in peer-to-peer exchanges: the case of timebanks", Journal of Marketing Management, vol.32, no.13/14, pp.1333-1358, October, 2016.*