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University of Southampton

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**Understanding the Cultural Antecedents of the Anti-Consumption Phenomenon – the
Case of Tampons in China**

by

Hong Lin

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 2022

University of Southampton

Abstract

Faculty of Social Sciences

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Doctor of Philosophy

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Despite efforts over the last 30 years to make tampons more appealing to Chinese consumers, Procter & Gamble and Johnson & Johnson only reach 2.5% of eligible users compared with 70% of consumers in the USA. Besides China, in Italy, most of Eastern Europe and South America, where tampons usage share is also very low. This discrepancy is due, in main, to cultural barriers.

Drawing on Behavioural Reasoning Theory and an emic approach, taking the case of tampons in China as example, this study explores the reasons against consuming a specific product category, the cognitive process of reasons, and cultural antecedents underlying these reasons, leading to a 'reason against' model, to accomplish the central aim of this research which is to better understand the under-researched national level phenomenon of anti-consumption towards a specific product category which finally categorized as 'cultural sensitive product' in this research.

This research utilizing semi-structured interview qualitative research method to achieve the research aim and answer the research questions. Randomly sampled 37 Chinese females who are tampons eligible users, 10 in the UK and 27 in China. Of those, 5 of 10 in the UK did follow-up interviews 6-to-9 months after their first interview. Interviewers' age ranged from 21-50, 21-30 years represented 59% of the samples. 95% is Han Chinese, the main ethnic group in China which accounts for more than 90% of the population and constitutes the world's single largest racial cultural group. The included native geographic places covered 77% provinces of Han Chinese habitation in mainland of China. Out of 37 participants, just one regularly consumed tampons (2.7%), which is very close the average usage in China at 2.5%.

37 semi-structured interviews result in three key findings: three 'reasons against', a set of emic cultural values and a model of 'reasons against' which together provide a more accurate insight into antecedents of anti-consumption. The first key finding, three 'reasons against' are risk aversion, undesired 'Ren' in relationships and situations, the lack of emic cultural recognised symbolic value added on tampons. These reasons are cohesively related to emic culture which confirms the main premise of Behavioural Reasoning Theory. These reasons are important linkages between cultural values and behaviours. The second key finding, a set of emic cultural values suggest that Chinese culture is oriented around 'Personalism', 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational Ren'. This supports the views of Chinese indigenous researchers which counters Western scholars' view of Chinese collectivism culture. From a total of twenty-five identified emic values, fourteen have not been captured in the literature which updates the list of

Chinese cultural values and offers an invaluable resource for future (anti)consumption research. The third key finding, the model of 'reasons against' offers a cognitive processing model base to explore and evaluate the relationships of cultural values, product features and categories, along with product (de)benefits and 'reasons against and for' (anti)consumption of a specific product category, which theoretically guides further researchers on the intentional and meaningful rejection of the consumption of a specific product category in a specific cultural context. The findings fill the gap with insufficient non-individual level antecedent/predictors, and the national level phenomenon of anti-consumption, to explore anti consumption from multiple perspectives, taking a more comprehensive approach to the various phenomena of consumption.

The findings challenge marketing activities of tampons which overlook emic culture elements and are mainly concerned with providing the functional benefits or utilitarian values of tampons to consumers. Instead, the findings suggest emic cultural values-based symbolic added value interventions. This suggestion also serves as a proposal for other culturally sensitive products' marketing strategy.

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Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

Print name: HONG LIN

Title of thesis: Understanding the Cultural Antecedents of the Anti-Consumption Phenomenon – the Case of Tampons in China

I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission

Signature:

Date:

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Last, to our God, "for you are with me, your rod and your staff, they comfort me." (Psalms 23:4).

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Background - The Business of International Business Is Culture

With increasing globalisation, multinational corporations are becoming more aware that operating in multiple markets is crucial for business survival and growth. Success in foreign markets requires an understanding not only of the needs of consumers in these markets, but also of how they think, behave, (anti)consume, and (non)purchase (Maheswaran and Shavitt, 2000a; Lillis and Tian, 2010; Schmid and Kotulla, 2011; Lee, 2011, 2020). Also crucial is an understanding of the culture, which 'is generally accepted by marketing researchers as one of the most important underlying determinants of consumer behaviour' (De Mooij, 2010a, p. 25).

The popular press is laden with many stories of firms failing to enter foreign markets, with several of these being major players in their domestic markets, and some being multinational conglomerates. Despite their domestic dominance, such success in different emerging markets has often proved to be elusive, with Marks and Spencer serving as a clear example of this having closed all its stores in China (Financial Times, 2017). However, these challenges are not exclusive to the Chinese context or emerging markets and can often arise even when such a business expands to countries that have similar cultural backgrounds, as was the case, for example, with Best Buy, the No. 1 USA electronics mega-store/retailer, which stopped trading in the UK (Reuters, 2011, 2018). Although many reasons exist for the lacklustre performance of many foreign companies in other cultural markets, a major reason for such failure is the lack of insight by these foreign investors into the cultural differences in consumer behaviour (Reuters, 2011; Financial Times, 2017).

Scholars have supported the presses' analysis and come to the definitive conclusion that the success or failure of a business in international terms hinges on a better understanding of cultural influences (Hofstede, 1994; Leung *et al.*, 2005). According to Dowling *et al.*, (2008, p. 57), cultural awareness can lead to greater success in international business ventures or, just as equally, consequent failure due to a lack of it.

1.2 Research Stimulus: Research Problem - Most Chinese Women Reject Consuming Tampons

This research focuses on the case of tampons in China, one of the fruitless commercial cases caused by cultural barriers. This section will outline the impetus for the research and the development of the preliminary research.

At the outset, it is important to put a research project into context by introducing its impetus. The catalyst for this research was a recurring discrepancy noted during the author's business travels abroad, namely, that western countries' markets offer various tampons in shops whilst, in contrast, in the Chinese market (Mainland, People's Republic of China), there is very little choice of tampons, only one brand's non-applicator tampon is on the lower shelves, in the corner – so visually almost hidden from view but a wide selection of sanitary pads are available in shops in China, all well displayed, and visually attractive. Some statistics support this discrepancy. For instance, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (2014) statistics indicate that more than 70% of eligible North American users have utilised tampons since the 1930s. Furthermore, Mintel market research, a world-leading market intelligence agency, reported that the annual sales of tampons were only \$136 million in China, which equalled just 2.5% of the \$4.9 billion sanitary pads market in 2017 (The New York Times, 2018). Besides the Chinese market, and according to Euromonitor (2015), in Italy and most of eastern Europe and South America, tampon usage is very low; for example, in Mexico it is less than 10%. In the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Morocco, Nigeria and Kenya, and most African countries, no tampons are bought by women (Euromonitor, 2015).

In the market historic profile of Chinese menstrual products, tampons have been supplied since 1989 and there has been no lack of tampon supply in China. Tampax is an American tampon brand and is the best-selling tampon brand in the world (WSJ, 2000). It was launched in China in 1989, simultaneously with the expansion of its global markets. The product existed on the Chinese market for ten years before being withdrawn by Procter & Gamble (P&G) in 1999 due to Chinese females not consuming tampons (WSJ, 2000); they re-entered the market in 2017. Tampon 'o.b.' (a brand name) has been supplied by Johnson & Johnson (J&J) in China since 1993; it is still sold in stores, and has also been sold via online distribution channels for over a decade. However, its market share has remained at 1% for the last 25 years (o.b. China, 2019) because Chinese women' anti-buying. Furthermore, other leading players in the global tampons market, such as Playtex Products LLC and Kimberly-Clark, have ceased creating new tampon markets in China as it is 'not worth the investment' (WSJ, 2000, p.1). The market profile shows that the discrepancy in the

Chapter 1

tampon market between the US and China is mainly caused by Chinese females who do not consume tampons, rather than short supply.

At this point, a question to be posed is 'Why do Chinese females not buy tampons?' There is very little written documentation to enable the researcher to gain an insight into this question. What evidence there is, exists in the form of Wall Street Journal articles, written a few years apart (1997, 2000). In short, culture was assumed to be the main barrier to those for whom (including the Chinese) tampons were an entirely new product. According to the Wall Street Journal articles (1997, 2000), Tampax (the best-selling tampon brand in the world) claimed that '[t]he greatest challenge in the global expansion of tampons is to address the religious and cultural mores that suggest that vaginal insertion is fundamentally prohibited by culture' (WSJ, 2000, p.3); in addition, marketers tracked the assumed 'virginity concerns' of potential users through market programmes (e.g. TV advertisements) to reassure them that 'of course, you will not lose your virginity by using a tampon' (WSJ, 1997, p.5).

Here, two important considerations must be addressed. First, does a Chinese cultural taboo really exist in relation to the insertion of tampons? The second, does the concern about virginity being the prime determining reason really affect consumers' buying behaviour in respect to tampons? In answer to the two questions, it may be prudent to err towards the negative.

1.3 The Finding of the Preliminary Study

There is very little academic, empirical or commercial written documentation to enable the researcher to gain an insight into the above questions in section 1.2, and little amount of academic literature to review in terms of viable and realistic explanations. Therefore, the preliminary study of the present research was designed mainly to answer these questions. The preliminary study is part of the author's MBA dissertation (Lin, 2014) at the University of Southampton (ERGO No.11041); the preliminary study included a quantitative survey, which consisted of 1,000 questionnaires, with a view to answering three preliminary research questions, which are:

PQ1: Is culture the main barrier to Chinese tampon consumption?

PQ2: Is cultural 'concerns about the loss of virginity' driven by 'the breaking of the hymen on insertion' the main reasons for Chinese women's anti-consumption of tampons?

PQ3: What, if any, other cultural influences inform the reasons for Chinese women's tampon anti-consumption behaviour?

The findings of this preliminary research phase do, indeed, appear to support that culture is the main barrier to Chinese females purchasing tampons; however, the concern about the loss of virginity may not be the main reason for Chinese females' rejection of tampon use. In fact, it seems the least significant single reason. The main reasons for the Chinese rejection of tampons appear to be those factors that have been thematically categorised under the headings 'conceptually and psychologically unacceptable due to a range of Chinese cultural influences and 'risk/uncertainty about/avoidance of the product'. Given the nature of these results, and its deviation from the cultural barriers proposed by existing empirical evidence, there is a strong implication that further investigation may be fruitful.

There is very little empirical and academic evidence associated with tampon consumption as a viable and realistic explanation for Chinese women's rejection of this product; to the best of the author's knowledge, the preliminary research conducted by the author's MBA dissertation seems to be the first to be cited as a reference document and referred to as the most junior research of the topic. Culture, the reasons against consuming tampons, and performing tampon anti-consumption behaviour in a given cultural context have, however, remained the primary targets for research. Therefore, this research will focus on cultural elements and their influence on females' reasons against consuming tampons in the specific locality of mainland China. The aim of which will be to identify the reasons against consuming tampons and determine the most significant and influential underlying cultural elements to better understand the under-researched national level phenomenon of tampon anti-consumption in China.

By drawing attention to the national level phenomenon regarding the most eligible Chinese women's rejection of tampons, and the lack of understanding of females' buying behaviour regarding tampons in a Chinese cultural context, the researcher established two research questions, which will facilitate a deeper understanding of the problem:

Research Question 1. What are the reasons against consuming tampons in China and how are these reasons are cognitively processed?

Research Question 2. What are the Chinese cultural elements underlying these reasons?

1.4 The Scope of Research

1.4.1 Product Scope: Applicator Tampons and Non-Applicator Tampons

The aim of the research is understanding the cultural influences that have created a climate in which the majority of Chinese females reject the use of tampons, which, to them, is a new type of foreign menstrual product. They prefer, instead, to use sanitary pads. We need to understand what a tampon is.

Tampons are a plug of soft material inserted into the vagina to absorb menstrual blood; a string is usually attached to the plug to facilitate its withdrawal (oxforddictionaries.com, 2018). During menstruation, women need to use them continuously for approximately 72–120 hours (the average period lasting 3–5 days). Tampons are only used for the collection of menstrual blood through absorption; they are not used for any other reasons, such as medical procedures.

There are two types of commercial tampons – the applicator tampon and the non-applicator tampon – both of which are included in the present research. Tampax, an applicator tampon, was the first modern commercial tampon and was launched on the US market in 1936 (Tampax.com, 2018). As with other applicator tampons, a plug of cotton is inserted by means of a tube-within-a-tube applicator (consisting of an outer tube, made of plastic or cardboard, which is inserted into the vagina, and a ‘plunger’, which deposits the tampon into the vagina). The string aids the retrieval of the product, which is then disposed of (Tampax.com, 2018). The non-applicator tampon, which is inserted by the user’s finger, was launched in Europe in 1936 and was mass-produced throughout the middle of the 20th century. It was later bought commercially, by J&J in 1974 (Kohen, 200; Weissfeld, 2010).

1.4.2 Anti-consumption Scope: Rejecting a Specific Product Category Intentionally and Meaningfully

“Anti-consumption literally means ‘against consumption’” (Zavestoski, 2002) and has been classified into ‘three nonexclusive phenomena: reject, restrict and reclaim’ (Lee *et al.* 2009, p.145). In the processes of rejection, individuals intentionally and meaningfully exclude or cut general/a particular good or a product category from their consumption cycle, for example rejecting Nike for ‘functional, symbolic, or ethical reasons’ (Lee *et al.* 2011, p.1681). Restriction includes cutting, reducing or limiting consumption, such as restricting fast fashion consumption to reduce fast fashion waste, or restricting water consumption to help save the planet and lower bills. Rejection refers to avoiding consumption and restriction refers to reducing it. ‘Reclaim

represents an ideological shift' (Lee *et al.* 2011, p.1681) in terms of the whole process of acquitting, using and even disposing of goods. For instance, parents making a toy from a reclaimed waste carton box for a child, or a designer reclaiming second-hand clothes to redesign a piece of ecological art.

'Anti-consumption focuses on phenomena that are against the acquisition, use and dispossession of certain goods' (Lee *et al.* 2011, p.1681). This research will build on these concepts defined by Lee *et al.* (2009, 2011) to study the phenomenon of Chinese women rejecting consuming tampons. The anti-consumption described in the present research is the intentional and meaningful rejection of the consumption of particular products without the goal of reducing overall consumption; here, consumption is defined as a process in which, and by which, a consumer or consumers are interested in or involved in acquiring, using or disposing of 'commodified goods (including ideas, services, products, brands and experiences)' (Lee *et al.* 2011, p.1682). From this perspective, the phenomenon of rejecting the consumption of particular products is not driven by intentional and voluntary reasons, such as the unavailability or inaccessibility of some goods. Neither is it driven by the cost of the product or lack of financial support to buy such luxuries. Furthermore, non-consumption of products such as pork for Muslims and milk for people with allergies to dairy products will not be considered anti-consumption.

1.4.3 Cultural Emic Elements and Emic Approach

'Culture has both universal (i.e. etic) and distinctive (i.e. emic) elements' (Triandis, 1994, p.20), respectively, they obtained through the etic or emic approaches. The terms etic and emic derive from linguistic concepts of phonetics and phonemics (Pike, 1967; Berry, 1990;). Phonetics is associated with universal laws of language; hence, the etic approach, the outsider perspective, is mainly concerned with finding common dimensions (i.e. etic elements) across cultures. In contrast, phonemics focuses on the meaning and context of words; therefore, the emic approach, the insider perspective, is to find the unique characteristics (i.e. emic elements) of differing cultures (Berry, 1990; Bond and Smith, 1996; De Mooij, 2010a; Phillip Kottak and Arcal, 2006; Triandis, 1994).

The etic approach and etic elements assume that it is possible to compare every culture in relation to hypothesis-able phenomena. Contrastingly, the emic approach seeks to recognise aspects of behaviour and concepts that are culture specific, which are not comparable across every culture, which cannot be compared across all cultures. According to emic researchers, the most appropriate way forward is to understand that a culture is part of an integrated system, and

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from the 'native's point of view' – which is the main foundation of the emic approach (Morris et al., 1999, p.6). In the cultural research area, the emic approach requires the examination of each culture individually to assess how insiders, or those taking part, perceive a phenomenon. It investigates and explores the way local people perceive and classify aspects of the world, their behaviour rules, what is significant to them, and how they conceptualise and illustrate proceedings (Phillip, Kottak and Arcal, 2006).

“Emic elements are local adaptations of etic elements” (Triandis, 1994, p. 20), the emic approach provides the foundation and the source of etic research and development. For example (Triandis, 1994, p. 20),

“the concept all humans experience social distance from out-groups is an etic element; that is, they feel closer to their family and kin and to those whom they consider similar to them than they do towards those whom they consider to be different. However, the basis of social distance is often an emic attribute. In some cultures, it is based only on tribe or race; in others, it is based on combinations of religion, social class, and nationality. In India, caste is important. In sum, social distance is etic, caste as a basis of social distance is emic” (Triandis, 1994, p. 20).

Likewise, in the case of Tampax, there appears to be a cultural barrier across nations in the global expansion of tampons (WSJ, 2000), which concerns the cultural prohibition of vaginal insertion. The prohibition of vaginal insertion across nations is a common and unifying (i.e. etic) cultural barrier but the cultural schemata underpinning this prohibition may be radically different in each of those discrete national/cultural settings. Thus, Chinese local adaptations of etic 'vaginal insertion' elements in the case of tampons, i.e. Chinese emic elements, need to be explored and interpreted using an emic approach.

It is, therefore, the purpose of this research to explore and interpret the specific, unique and highly localised cultural influences of mainland China on Chinese females' rejection on purchasing and using tampons; here, the role of culture is 'not as a series of miscellaneous parts, but as a working whole' (Berry, 1999, p. 167; Berry, 1999, p.167, cit. Pike, 1967, p.41). In other words, this investigation will adopt a Chinese cultural emic approach to this phenomenon (i.e. most Chinese females do not buy tampons), solely and specifically within the Chinese cultural context to investigate what Chinese females think about tampons, what tampons mean for them, why they do not buy them, and how they feel about and explain these concerns in their own words. In particular, this exploration will focus on the cultural interpretation of tampons by anti-consumers (or eligible tampons users), and how these impact their purchasing behaviour.

1.5 Justification for the Research Questions

1.5.1 The Research Questions

There is very little empirical and academic evidence associated with tampon anti-consumption as a viable and realistic explanation for the rejection of tampon products in the context of China. Supporting the findings of preliminary research in section 1.3, the research questions are:

Research Question 1. What are the reasons against consuming tampons in China and how are these reasons cognitively processed?

Research Question 2. What are Chinese cultural elements underlying these reasons?

1.5.2 The Aim of the Research

The central aim of this research (what the researcher wants to do) is to better understand the cultural antecedents of a national-level anti-consumption phenomenon towards a specific product category – ‘cultural sensitive product’, leading to a ‘reasons against’ model. The tampons case in China will be taken as an example to accomplish this central aim, in which an emic approach will be utilised to investigate and identify the reasons against the purchase and use of tampons and the most significant underlying emic cultural elements that cause this rejection in a Chinese context.

1.5.3 The Research Objective and Research Methodology

The objectives (how to achieve the aims step-by-step) of the thesis are:

To answer the ‘what’ question of RQ1: review the literature to identify the fundamental reasons that motivate rejecting the consumption of a specific product category that the author believes is most relevant to tampons, testing them and exploring the ‘reasons against’ to identify the differences between tampons and sanitary pads or other feminine hygiene products. This will inform the interpretation of customer preferences in relation to product alternatives to determine the reason for Chinese women’s rejection of tampons. Semi-structured, individual, face-to-face interviews, data collection and analysis within the context of China regarding the case of tampons will be utilised, to answer the ‘what’ question of RQ1. That is, this exploration will shed light on why most Chinese females reject tampons (the reasons against).

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To answer RQ2: review culture and Chinese indigenous literature to map an alternative cultural approach, by which the researcher will discover the underlying cultural elements of the 'reasons against' the consumption of tampons. Through semi-structured, individual, face-to-face interviews, data collection and analysis within the context of China, RQ2 will be answered and a more accurate and deeper cultural interpretation will be provided to better understand this under-researched, national-level, anti-consumption phenomena towards a specific product category – a 'culturally sensitive product'.

To answer the 'how' question of RQ1: review and draw upon the theoretical basis of anti-consumption, the fundamental 'reasons against' literature, and the alternative cultural approach to conduct a conceptual framework of the research to offer a cognitive outline to the research and lead a 'reasons against' model. Through semi-structured, individual, face-to-face interviews, data collection and analysis within the context of China a 'reasons against' model will be generated, which will reflect the (re)action between culture, reasons and anti-consumption behaviour in relation to tampons in the context of China. The 'reasons against' model will answer the 'how' question of RQ1 and provide model guidance for further research on the anti-consumption of a specific product category.

1.5.4 The Research Gaps and Significance of the Research

Success in foreign markets requires multinational corporations to understand consumer behaviour and culture, which are 'the most important underlying determinants of consumer behaviour' (De Mooij, 2010a, p.25).

The case of tampons in China, is an unsuccessful one to run in a foreign market. Despite efforts over the last 30 years to make tampons more appealing to Chinese consumers, Procter & Gamble and Johnson & Johnson only reach 2.5% of eligible users compared with 70% of consumers in the USA. Besides China, in Italy, and most of eastern Europe and South America, tampon usage is also very low. This discrepancy is mainly due to cultural barriers.

Consumer behaviour research mainly deals with reasons for consumption; comparatively, anti-consumption research mainly focuses on the reasons against consumption, that is, 'against the acquisition, use and dispossession of certain goods' (Lee *et al.* 2011, p.1681). The Association for Consumer Research has given anti-consumption its own discrete scholarly topic. This is due to it being "a worthy field of investigation because it pertains to a particular set of reasons against consumption, which are more than and different from their conceptual opposites – reasons for consumption" (Chatzidakis and Lee, 2013, p.194).

Firstly, regarding the tampons case in China, a lack of understanding about the reasons against consuming tampons in China is a significant empirical and academic gap (Gap 1). Three fundamental reasons are classified through the review of anti-consumption literature: risk aversion, innovation resistance, and undesired self (Lee et al., 2010). These reasons are most relevant to the fast-moving consumer goods industry in which tampons are grouped but have not been investigated within the context of China. Examining these three reasons, and the exploration of further reasons, will fill Gap 1 and provide insights into why some consumers perform anti-consumption practice.

Secondly, anti-consumption has burgeoned and has developed into an array within the field, its topics are predominantly concerned with the antecedents of individual-level, anti-consumption behaviour. The non-individual level (e.g. national-level culture) antecedent of anti-consumption phenomena have been mostly overlooked in the previous research (Lee *et al.*, 2020). Thus, there remains a significant research gap (Gap 2). To the best of our knowledge, this study is the first research to be conducted on cultural antecedents on a national-level and investigates the anti-consumption phenomenon towards a certain product category. This study will, theoretically, fill Gap 2 with non-individual-level antecedent predictors of anti-consumption. Further research might base on the present research to explore the issue from multiple perspectives to take a more complete approach to the various anti-consumption phenomena.

Thirdly, scholars have come to a definitive conclusion that the business of international business is culture (Hofstede, 1994; Leung *et al.*, 2005). Cultural awareness can lead to successful international business ventures, but a lack of cultural awareness can lead to their failure (Dowling, 2008, p.57). Culture possesses both universal (etic) and distinctive (emic) elements (Triandis, 1994, p.20) and understanding both etic (universal) and emic (unique) culture elements is crucial for multinational enterprises. Understanding national etic culture is helpful in developing its commercial expansion. However, not all etic elements are as valid as emic elements within a particular culture; only focusing on the etic element is not enough for multinational firms to build up a whole picture of the targeted culture. In the tampons case in China, the use of etic elements, such as the two etic dimensions of culture – collectivism and power distance – to conduct analysis leads to a significant negative relationship between the acceptance, diffusion, and innovation of products (e.g. tampons). However, in relation to the other etic dimension – uncertainty avoidance – it has a more positive relationship and product innovation is accepted. Drawing on etic cultural values is a contradictory and insufficient way to interpret the phenomenon of why most Chinese females reject tampons (Gap 3).

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Given the inconsistency of the etic values perspective in the research, and the preliminary research finding, which discovered that the second most significant reason for the rejection of tampons in China is 'risk/uncertainty about, and avoidance of, the product', it is necessary to conduct more accurate research into the case of tampons in China.

An awareness of the emic elements of a culture will provide a more accurate insight into the complex factors underlying the buying behaviours of consumers in that particular cultural site. Emic approaches and qualitative methods can generate new conceptualisations and interpretations of the complex contextual factors (Buckley *et al.*, 2014).

The adoption of the cultural emic approach in this research will generate new cultural concepts and interpretations within the anti-consumption field. These new concepts will not only fill the Gap 3, theoretically contribute invaluable cultural element pools for future anti-consumption study, but will also, theoretically, provide a timely update on the Chinese emic cultural system, and provide a foundation and new resources for further etic research.

Fourthly, despite the growing focus on the anti-consumption topic, the lack of an anti-consumption theoretical model is preventing this topic from reaching its full potential (Makri *et al.*, 2020) (Gap 4), especially relates to a specific product category that is little explored. Meanwhile, although there is growing interest in the cultural influence of emic elements on consumer behaviour, focused and systematic consumer research on the topic is still in its infancy (Gap 5) (Maheswaran and Shavitt, 2000a; Bala *et al.*, 2012; Lituchy and Punnett, 2014; Punnett, 2017). Maheswaran and Shavitt (2000a) summarise three reasons for this lack of inquiry into cultural emic element variables in a consumer behavioural context. Firstly, there is a lack of indigenous studies from various cultures, which could methodically explore and competently describe culturally exclusive findings. The second is methodological issues; most cultural studies and related disciplines are based on theoretical frameworks developed in a western cultural context, with scholars recognising that theories in general studies reflect the cultural values of western culture (Sampson, 1977; Shweder, 1991). This means that a large number of theoretical frameworks have not yet been validated for use with other cultures. The dearth of emic theories or frameworks that present robust studies of culture and associated disciplines has extremely limited the advancement of empirical work based on theory. Finally, the continuing discussion about the etic versus emic orientation of investigating cultures has disrupted cultural findings. Emic advocates indicate that cultural research ought to be indigenous and should be carried out using frameworks that are culture specific. Contrastingly, etic researchers encourage the benefits of investigating disparities through the use of benchmarks in the form of pre-endorsed universal

frameworks. The lack of indigenous studies and emic frameworks or theories, especially in Chinese culture, are challenges in the present research.

Anti-consumption is drawn on Behavioural Reasoning Theory (BRT), in which the premise is the important link between cultural values and behaviour (Westaby 2005); its applicability has not yet been tested in a Chinese cultural context (Gap 6). Regarding a specific product category, the way the process relates to the product category is little explored (Gap 7). A 'reasons against' model is necessary for the anti-consumption of a specific product category to test BRT in relation to the product category. The cognitive process of reasons also needs to be explored in a cultural context. This research will lead a 'reasons against' model, which will fill the Gap 4-7, validate the premise of the BRT, extend the knowledge about the cultural influence of emic elements on consumer behaviour, more importantly, provide model guidance for further research on the anti-consumption of a specific product category – a culturally sensitive product. This model could be used to evaluate the relationships between emic cultural values, product, 'reasons for and against' and anti-consumption', especially in relation to the intentional and meaningful rejection of the consumption of a specific product category.

Fifthly, in the real world, the present study will empirically provide multinational firms with a reframed and more accurate insight into practical problems. This will be combined with complementary etic cultural elements, which will enable P&G, J&J and other international tampon corporations to build a more holistic and 'richer' perspective on the cultural underpinnings of the problem this paper is seeking to address. The result will be a valid rethinking of certain marketing approaches and strategies towards these and other internal-use menstrual products in China, and ultimately, for receptive, international corporations, a possible avenue for marketing success.

Finally, the increasing trend toward the globalisation of business activities provides a compelling reason to understand the cultural context and indigenous study of consumer behaviour. An awareness of the unique (i.e. emic/indigenous) elements of culture, and their study in empirical research, will provide a more accurate insight into the complex factors underlying the buying behaviours of consumers in a particular cultural context; further insight will also be obtained through the interpretations of the complex contextual factors that are involved in international business research and practice, especially in emerging economies such as China (Buckley *et al.*, 2014).

1.6 The Content of the Chapters

In Chapter 1 – the Introduction – the research background, the research problem, research questions and precise scope of the research have been clearly delineated.

Chapter 2 comprehensively reviews the literature on culture, anti-consumption, and Behaviour Reasoning Theory, and discusses the dearth of empirical and academic anti-consumption research that focuses on a specific product category. The utilisation of Chinese cultural emic value elements and the Behaviour Reasoning Theory in the tampons case will fill the gaps.

Chapter 3 – the Methodology – explains and critically evaluates the research philosophy, research approach, research strategy, research methodological choice, data collection and analysis techniques to develop a clear method through which to answer the research questions.

Chapter 4 includes research data analysis and the research findings.

Chapter 5 offers a discussion of the findings of the present research, the theoretical contributions of the 'reasons against' model, and Chinese emic cultural elements in both anti-consumption and culture research, as well as empirical contributions for multinational firms' current marketing approaches and market (re)entry strategies. The chapter concludes with the limitations of the research, and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 6 offers a synthesis of key points of the research.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

According to Dowling *et al.* (2008, p. 57), cultural awareness can lead to more successful international business ventures; however, a lack of cultural awareness can result in failure. A recognition of cultural influences is only superficial, however, because it is not sufficient to explain how cultural differences actually influence consumer behaviour. In order to answer the research questions, we need to better understand many aspects related to culture, such as developing a clearer knowledge of what culture is, why it is important in terms of behaviour and how to unpack and operationalise it from different perspectives to understand the underlying dimensions of a culture's influence. Additionally, an understanding of both the antecedent forces giving rise to them as well as the behavioural consequences of them could well prove to be insightful. It would also be useful to identify the widely accepted cultural approaches on consumer behaviour in marketing academia and their applications in the real world, and identify any limitations and gaps, suggesting solutions for how to fill these gaps in the present research. Therefore, Chapter 2 reviews these aspects in turn to provide a literature guideline for this research.

2.2 Culture, Behaviour and Values

2.2.1 The Definition of Culture

'Culture, an ever-present force of concern to all social sciences' (McCort and Malhotra, 1993, p. 92). It is 'the man-made part of the human environment' (Herskovits, 1949, p. 18). Various sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, political scientists, and behavioural scientists have all attempted to define culture, Kroeber and Kluckhohn critically reviewed concepts and definitions of culture and compiled a list of 164 different definitions in 1952. However, there is no agreement regarding its definition (Apte, 1994; Kagawa-Singer *et al.*, 2013) (Table 1).

Hofstede's definition (1994, p. 5) is one of the most widely cited definitions of culture in the modern management field, especially for cross-cultural management research, which focuses on the comparison of one culture with another. The concepts of Kroeber and Parsons (1958), and Matsumoto *et al.* (1996) encompass the ideas of values, attitudes, and behaviours. They consider that culture is the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviours shared by a group of people, but which are different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next.

More concisely Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2012, p. 3) also argue that culture affects behaviour and interpretations of members' behaviour (including buying behaviour of course), Linton's (Linton, 1945, p. 28) culture concept extends the relationship between behaviour and culture. His wider definition claims that the concept of culture is a way of life of any given society (Linton, 1945, p. 30). This is similar to a proposed latter definition (CCCS 2013). The authors of the Fifth Report of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies identify three distinctive aspects of culture so defined (CCCS 2013, p. 883): *'first, it interprets culture as 'the whole pattern or configuration of values and meanings in a society'; second, it includes all forms of culture, whether 'high', 'popular' or 'low'; and third, it views these expressive forms as an integral part of social life.'*

Doole and Lowe (2003) directly and specifically related cultural concepts to consumer behaviour in their definitions; *'Culture is the sum total of learned beliefs, values and customs that serve to direct consumer behaviour in a particular country market'* (Doole and Lowe, 2003, p. 92).

Although the pervasive nature of culture makes such a definition difficult to derive, it certainly consists of some key characteristics that are generally accepted (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2012, pp. 3-12) by scholars, these being:

"Culture is manifested at different layers of depth;

Culture affects behaviour and interpretations of behaviour;

Culture can be differentiated from both universal human nature and unique individual personality;

Culture influences biological processes;

Culture is shared and associated with social groups;

Culture is both an individual construct and a social construct;

Culture is always both socially and psychologically distributed in a group, and so the delineation of a culture's features will always be fuzzy;

Culture has both universal (etic) and distinctive (emic) elements;

Culture is learned;

Culture is subject to gradual change;

The various parts of a culture are all, to some degree, interrelated;

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Culture is a descriptive not an evaluative concept". (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2012, pp. 3–12).

This present research builds on the understanding by Doole and Lowe (2003, p. 92) and these key characteristics (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2012, pp. 3–12) and to conduct the research, and these key characteristics will be respectively reviewed in other sections of this chapter in accordance with the content of the section.

Table 1 The Definitions of Culture

	Culture definitions	Sources	Notes
1	<i>'Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditional elements of future action.'</i>	Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952, p. 181)	Critically reviewed concepts and definitions of culture and compiled a list of 164 different definitions in 1952
2	<i>'Culture is the collective programming of the mind (software of the mind) which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.' 'It is learned, not inherited. It derives from one's social environment, not from one's genes.'</i>	Hofstede's definition (1994, p. 5)	One of the most widely cited definitions of culture in the modern management field, especially for cross-cultural management research, which focuses on the comparison of one culture with another:
3	<i>'Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour.'</i>	More concisely Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2012, p. 3)	Culture affects behaviour and interpretations of members' behaviour (including buying behaviour of course)
4	<i>'Culture is the configuration of learned behaviour and results of behaviour whose component elements are shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society'. 'Culture refers to the total way of life of any society, not simply to those parts of this way which the society regards as higher or more desirable'.</i>	Linton (1945, p. 28) Linton (1945, p. 30)	Culture concept extends the relationship between behaviour and culture. His wider definition claims that the concept of culture is a way of life of any given society.
5	<i>'first, it interprets culture as 'the whole pattern or configuration of values and meanings in a society'; second, it includes all forms of culture, whether 'high', 'popular' or 'low'; and third, it views these expressive forms as an integral part of social life.'</i>	CCCS (2013, p. 883):	The authors of the Fifth Report of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies identify three distinctive aspects of culture.
6	<i>'Culture is the sum total of learned beliefs, values and customs that serve to direct consumer behaviour in a particular country market'</i>	Doole and Lowe (2003, p. 92)	Directly and specifically related cultural concepts to consumer behaviour in their definitions

2.2.2 The Nature of Cultural Influence

The nature of cultural influence will be primarily highlighted in order to explore 'why' and 'how' culture impacts individuals and, thus, affects individual behaviour.

The nature of cultural influence can be considered as a circular process from which meaning is created, maintained, and transmitted within a society (Figure 1) (adapted from McCort and Malhotra, 1993).

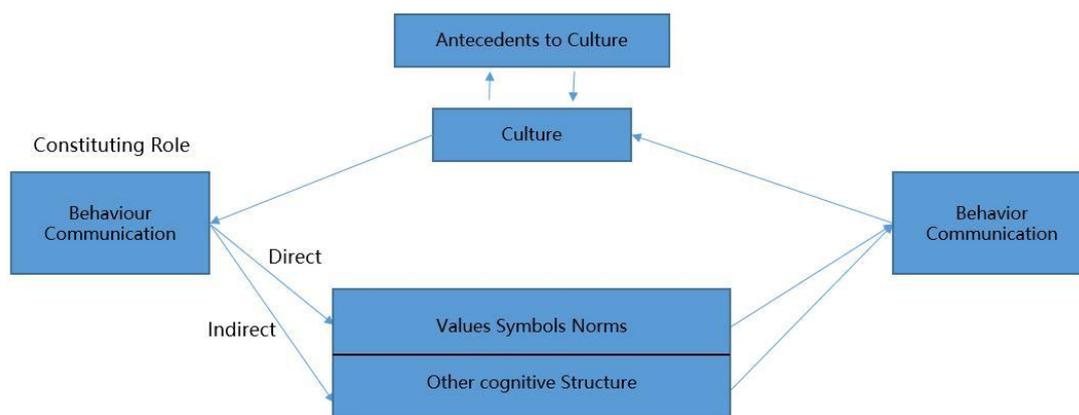


Figure 1 The influence of culture on an individual (adapted from McCort and Malhotra, 1993)

First, culture is human-made and shared across society (Avruch, 1998; Hofstede, 1991a; Lustig and Koester, 1999). Cultural phenomenon is distinguished from individual phenomenon by the shared nature of culture, a basic orderliness underlies culture that is relatively persistent both within its members and across generations. Yet, it is constantly adapting to changes in the environment (Avruch, 1998; Hofstede, 1991a; Lustig and Koester, 1999) although scholars hold different views as to what aspects of culture can change and how quickly; section 2.5 will review this.

Second, culture is primarily a learned phenomenon, acquired from socialisation (Ward and Searle, 1991). Cultural meaning is transmitted through communication, behaviour and learning to form individual meaning systems (i.e. implicit / invisible / subjective culture) (McCracken, 1986). Although biological differences can lead to differences in cognitive functioning across cultures, their impact on cultural systems and behaviour is minor (Altman and Chemers, 1980).

Third, cultural forces may be direct, as in a normative pressure to conform (Strauss, 1992), or indirect in terms of motivational tendencies common to a group (Hofstede, 1980). As such, the impact of culture on individuals may be either direct or indirect (McCracken, 1986). It is widely held that culture directly impacts the values systems, normative forces, and symbols of a society

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(McCort and Malhotra, 1993). Yet, antecedent forces linked to culture also impact cognitive structure (Bond, 1988; Triandis, 1989). Cultural influence on these factors is more abstract than it is with direct normative influence, with indirect influence tending to be rule based rather than symbolic. Therefore, culture impacts on what its members consider to be common elements, logical, normal, or expected (d'Andrade, 1995) not only by direct normative means nor in a symbolic sense, but also in the perception and interpretation of common, non-cultural stimuli. The meaning systems are cultural in that they represent the model cognitive and behavioural tendencies of the population (Romney *et al.*, 1986). Individuals interpret experience through this shared cognitive structure and, subsequently, via their behaviour and communication, they either reinforce the culture or are catalysts for change (Furbee and Benfer, 1983; Rohner, 1984).

Hence, "culture is both determined by its members and the determinant of the characteristics of its members. It is an ever-evolving force, simultaneously emanating from and acting upon its members" (McCort and Malhotra, 1993, p. 93).

The all-encompassing and pervasive nature of culture is common to all definitions and key characteristics. Scholars conclude that culture is the fundamental determinant of the individuals' wants and behaviours (Kotler and Gertner, 2004), and that culture has an impact on almost all constructs that marketers are concerned about (McCort and Malhotra, 1993). Right from the start of one's existence, an individual experiences the advantages and disadvantages of a certain culture and these can be a significant influence on the purchasing decisions of consumers (De Mooij, 2010a); culture is acknowledged by researchers as a crucial consideration for the behaviour of customers (De Mooij, 2010a) and as a key concept that has been successfully used in cross-cultural marketing research (Bond *et al.*, 2004).

This interpretation is made more complicated by difficulties in distinguishing purely cultural factors from influences at macro level. It is suggested that culture is essentially unlike other macro-environmental aspects: behaviours that are culturally patterned stand out from "the political, economic, religious, legal, educational, linguistic, industrial and technological environment" (Sekaran, 1983, p. 68). However, separating influences that are strictly cultural from various macro-environmental influences may not be feasible because definite boundaries amidst these integral influences do not exist. Normed cultural behaviour, in terms of socialisation and behaviour patterns can initiate from a combination of political and economic exigencies, religious beliefs, etc. Categorising these clearly would be challenging and could be an "impossible" task (Sekaran, 1983, p. 68).

The difficulty in deriving a generally accepted definition of culture has hampered research into the influence of culture on consumer behaviour (Clark, 1990; Nasif *et al.*, 1991; McCort and Malhotra, 1993; Dawar *et al.*, 1996; Manrai and Manrai, 1996a; Lenartowicz and Roth, 1999; Kagawa-Singer *et al.*, 2013), and has been used to criticise cultural and cross-cultural consumer behaviour research (Sekaran, 1983). This has led to the call to unpackage culture (Poortinga and Van de Vijver, 1987; Leung and Bond, 1989) in order to understand the underlying dimensions of its influence and the two antecedents giving rise to them, as well as their behavioural consequences (Triandis, 1994). Consequently, a number of approaches have been adopted to identify culture and to subsequently use such identifications as an independent variable that allows its inclusion in empirical research (Hofstede, 2011; Lenartowicz and Roth, 1999). Unpackaged culture methods are reviewed in section 2.3.

2.2.3 Unpackaged Culture

2.2.3.1 The Different Layers of Culture and Behaviours Definition

As a concept, culture can be explained through various layers ranging (No.1 key characteristic) from surface level facets, like everyday behaviour, to deeper levels which are not visible, and scholars offer a variety of models to explore this. Examples of this include the culture iceberg model (Hall, 2008, 1976), the culture onion model (Trompenaars and Woolliams, 2004), the Nautilus shell model (Schelwald-van der Kley and Reijerkerk, 2009) and the three fundamental levels model (Schein, 2010, 1990a). I will first take Schein's (Schein, 2010, 1990a) three fundamental levels model as an example to review the different layers of culture.

In Schein's (2010, p. 111) 'three fundamental levels' model (Figure. 2), the highest level relates to creations and artefacts. It comprises more obvious aspects of culture, for instance, language and social organisations. Ideologies and values are depicted at the middle level; these represent a favoured approach. They determine what is positive, negative or acceptable. The lowest level comprises fundamental premises and assumptions, which have often been pre-considered and accepted. Schein's (2010, p.111) study divides the values domain into two groups: 'ultimate, non-debatable, taken for-granted values, for which the term "assumptions" is more appropriate, and debatable, overt, espoused values, for which the term "values" is more applicable.'

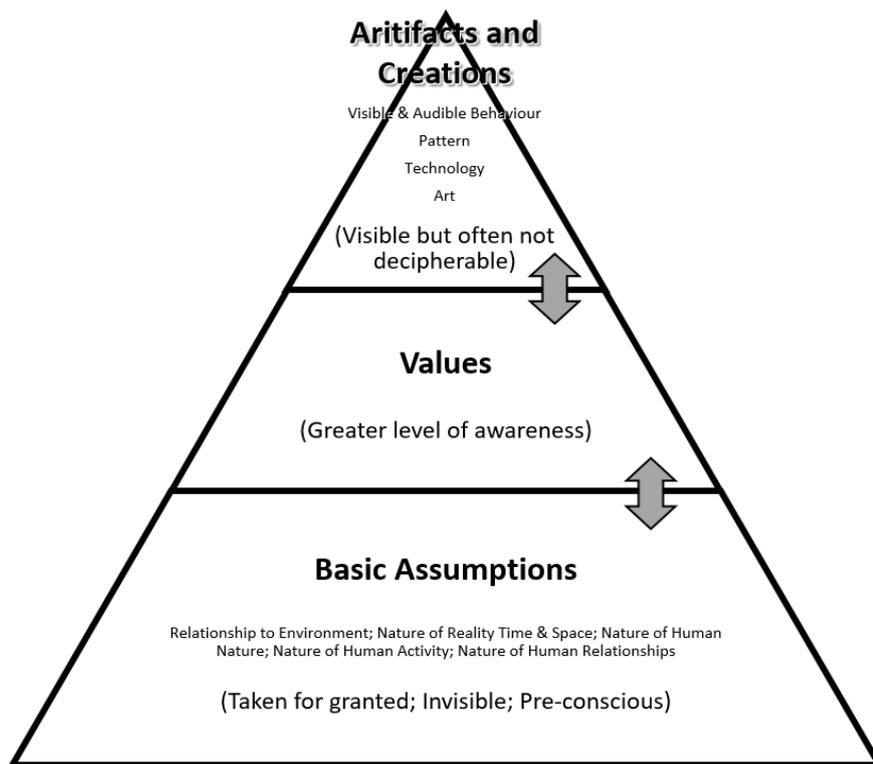


Figure 2 The levels of culture and their interaction (adapted from Schein, 2010)

Our review of culture definitions, the nature of cultural influence and analysis of the literature suggests that behaviours are not only the composition of the culture but are also the explicit cultural expressions determined by culture at its deepest level. Behaviours can be conceptualised as the cultural outcome and influences of a values system because a values system affects behaviour and interpretations of it. Simultaneously, culture or a cultural values system is not an external factor whose effects on the individual must be examined, but rather an integral part of human behaviour.

There are several different and complicated academic definitions of the deepest level of culture, these include beliefs, values or basic assumptions or others. Thus, the definition of values will be reviewed in the following section to discuss scholars' general view on the deepest level of culture, followed by its measurement models and theories.

2.2.3.2 The Deepest Layer of Culture: Values

Scholars (Hofstede, 1991a, 1980) (Schwartz, 1997) state that values are at the heart of culture in which people judge whether something is good or bad; act – do or do not; and evaluate desire – desirable or undesirable (Zavalloni, 1980) (Rokeach, 1973) (Schwartz, 1994). How people prioritise these evaluations can reveal the nature of culture, and these evaluations can be presented as basic human values (Schwartz and Bardi, 1997). Values, as the core of culture, have been

considered as a central concept in the social sciences (Schwartz, 1992) as a way of explaining social and personal behaviour and their changes. It is also considered conceptually important in psychology (Rokeach, 1973) and anthropology (Kluckhohn, 1951) along with related disciplines for characterising societies and individuals, and interpreting the motivational bases of attitudes and behaviour (Schwartz, 2013, 1992). Consequently, it has been a focus for these disciplines from a variety of perspectives.

This section will review these studies (especially in the area of social psychology) in terms of the concept development of values and their content categories to outline the development of the academic research into values.

2.2.3.3 Values

The first common view on the concept of values was held by scholars in the 1950s as presented by Kluckhohn (1951, p. 395), who defines values as: ‘a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action.’ In Kluckhohn’s concept, ‘the desirable’ view is based on a universal and organised construct system named ‘values orientation’. This concept of ‘values orientation’ refers to a view in which people evaluate what is desirable in order to deal with the relationships between humans, and between humans and nature.

The utilisation of two different concepts of ‘values’ and ‘values orientation’ has made the concept of values clearer as a conceptual structure. These two concepts have driven scholars to suggest that values are constructs that affect people’s selection rather than restricting their research into only understanding values as mere selective orientations, for example, interests, hobbies, ethics, antipathies, and needs noting that values are the guidance on human beings’ actions (Williams Jr, 1979).

Following this progress, further work on the concept of values was routinely carried out. In the 1970s, Rokeach pushed the study of values to a new level. He provided workable and testable measures of values (1973, p. 5), which he defines as:

‘an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence. Moreover, a values system is an enduring organization of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct or end-states of existence along a continuum of relative importance.’

He claims that values are people’s beliefs which possess the function of motivation, and that they are not only evaluable, normative, and prohibitive, but they also guide people’s attitudes and

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actions; they are a personal and social phenomenon. He posits two types of values: terminal values and instrumental values. The first is an ideal and end state, the second is a functional and daily decision. He also contributes a significant values-list approach method called Rokeach Values Survey (RVS) (Rokeach, 1973), but his study does not explore the inner structure of values.

Rokeach's studies have inspired subsequent values researchers, such as Feather and Schwartz. Feather (1975) posits values are abstract structures which are created by experience, and that they are always changing.

Schwartz (2013, p.3-4) summarises six main features of the conception of values from extensive various pieces of research:

"Values are beliefs linked inextricably to affect.

Values refer to desirable goals that motivate action.

Values transcend specific actions and situations.

Values serve as standards or criteria.

Values are ordered by importance relative to one another.

The relative importance of multiple values guides action" (Schwartz, 2013, p.3-4).

While Schwartz (1992) argued that these features present nothing about the difference of the substantive content of values, there was or is a lack of an agreed-upon conception of human basic values or of the content and structure of relations among these values. Thus, there is an absence of reliable empirical methods to measure their relations. Schwartz (1992) believes that to identify 'a limited set of basic values that various human groups recognise and use to form priorities would have significant theoretical and practical advantages. Therefore, he identifies a comprehensive set of basic human values (Theory of Basic Human Values; Schwartz Values Survey, SVS) (Schwartz, 1992) that can be recognised in all societies, studying the whole system of values related to other variables, rather than focusing on single values. In his theory, Schwartz (2013, 2006, 1992) defines values as desirable, trans-situational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in people's lives.

Values, as the core of culture, have been considered as a central concept for determining, guiding, and explaining social and personal behaviour. Unpackaged culture study centres on values' research through various values models and measurement methods to explore behaviours in people's lives.

2.3 Different Lenses for Research in Culture: Etic and Emic

2.3.1 Definitions: Etic and Emic

‘Culture has both universal (i.e. *etic*) and distinctive (i.e. *emic*) elements’ (Triandis, 1994, p. 20), so etic and emic approaches are two different yet complementary perspectives from which to view the operationalisation of the culture concept (House *et al.*, 2004). The cultural concepts, elements, and characteristics obtained through etic and emic approaches are, respectively, named universal (i.e. *etic*) and distinctive (i.e. *emic*) elements, concepts, and characteristics.

The words ‘etic’ and ‘emic’ derive from phonetic and phonemic language concepts (Berry, 1990; Pike, 1967). The phonetic concept is linked to universal language rules (the *etic* approach). The main concern of the outsider perspective is finding similar dimensions across various cultures. Contrastingly, the focus of phonemics is the meaning of words and their context. Thus, the *emic* approach (the insider perspective) is to identify the unique characteristics among different cultures (Berry, 1990; Bond and Smith, 1996; De Mooij, 2010a; Phillip Kottak and Arcal, 2006; Triandis, 1994).

The *etic* and *emic* approaches to cultural research are primarily seen as incommensurable paradigms with differing perspectives and methodologies extending from the differing aims and objectives of the research paradigm (See Table 2).

Firstly, these two approaches have different assumptions about cultural research and its aims and goals. The *etic* approach tends to segregate common components of culture, testing hypotheses and attempting to identify universal aspects of human behaviour whilst also seeking to find universal processes that transcend cultural differences or to produce new theories that can be utilised across cultures (Fukuyama, 1990; Ridley *et al.*, 1994). In other words, this approach assumes that all cultures are comparable in relation to phenomena that are generalisable. Contrastingly, the *emic* approach identifies culture-specific features of behaviour and concepts that are incomparable across cultures. *Emic* researchers (indigenous researchers) assume that the most effective way is to consider a culture to be an integrated system from ‘the native’s point of view’, the fundamental basis of the *emic* approach (Morris *et al.*, 1999). In cultural research, the *emic* approach requires the examination of each culture separately, to determine how participants or insiders understand and explain a phenomenon. It investigates the thinking of local people, the way they view and categorise the world, their behaviour, what they feel has meaning, and the way they imagine things and explain them (Phillip Kottak and Arcal, 2006). In *emic* research the method of investigation tends towards the emergent: through interaction with the

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target culture, the nature and structure of the research formulated as *a posteriori*. On the other hand, the etic approach involves comparing different cultures. Behaviour is studied from the perspective of an outsider, and the criterion for evaluating behaviours is viewed as 'universal'; the structure is often created by the researchers *a priori*.

Secondly, the etic and emic approaches are also at odds with the methodology to be used in the cultural field. The etic approach is concerned with identifying universal dimensions that underlie cultural difference and tends to be quantitative and based on large-scale surveys, from which it is possible to look for generalisations of multiple cultures, to cover many societies' cultures (Morris *et al.*, 1999). The emic approach focuses on the intrinsic cultural distinctions that are meaningful to the members of a given society. It is often considered to be an insider's perspective (Chan and Rossiter, 2003), and tends to be qualitative in nature. Such studies are often based on a series of case studies, interviews, and observations, with which it is possible to go into in-depth cultural analysis and provide descriptive reports constituting rich data. These demonstrate how the insiders of a culture understand their culture and behaviour which may have been ignored or not considered to be especially relevant by the etic approach (Fig.7) (Morris *et al.*, 1999).

Table 2 Assumptions and goals of emic and etic approaches and associated methods (partly adapted from Morris et al., 1999.)

Features	Etic Approach/Outside View	Emic Approach/Inside View
Defining assumptions and goals	Behaviour defined from a viewpoint that is extrinsic to the culture, in theories that can be equally applied to different cultures. Explain how cultural variables fit into the causal models in relation to a certain behaviour.	Behaviour described from the viewpoint of cultural insiders, in theories that are taken from their own understanding. Discuss the cultural system as a functioning entirety .
Typical features of methods associated with this view	Focus on measurable, external characteristics that it is possible to evaluate through comparable processes at various cultural locations. Brief and narrow inspection of more than one setting, and sometimes many settings.	Interviews and focus groups that are documented in a rich, qualitative format, which avoids the intrusion of researchers' designs. A wide-ranging and long-standing, inspection of one setting or a small number of settings.
Examples of typical study types	Multi-setting questionnaire: cross-sectional investigation to compare the responses to the instruments used to measure women's viewpoints on tampons and comparison of responses to instruments measuring perceptions of tampons and their associated variables. Comparative experiment that treats culture as a quasi-experimental manipulation in order to evaluate whether the effect of certain factors varies in different cultures.	Ethnographic fieldwork: participant interviews, observations along with focus groups. Content analysis of texts providing a window into indigenous approaches thinking about tampons.

Based on the factors outlined above, it could be argued that the selection of a particular research paradigm – that is, the selection of an emic or etic approach – is, to some extent, dependent on the objectives of the research and the stage the researcher has reached in their investigation. The emic approach may be best employed in exploratory research, especially at discrete cultural sites; yet when we compare cultures it seems reasonable to argue that the etic approach is best for hypothesis testing (Triandis, 1994; Greenfield, 2000).

2.3.2 Relationship Between Etic and Emic

The etic and emic approaches are complementary (Morris *et al.*, 1999) in three major aspects.

First of all, 'culture has both universal (i.e. *etic*) and distinctive (Berry, 1990; Matsumoto *et al.*, 1996; Punnett, 2017; Segall *et al.*, 1999; Leung *et al.*, 2005; Lu and Yang, 2006) (i.e. *emic*)

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elements' (Triandis, 1994, p. 20), and combining etic and emic approaches will provide a more holistic explanation of culture than any single approach (Berry, 1990; Matsumoto *et al.*, 1996; Segall *et al.*, 1999; Leung *et al.*, 2005; Lu and Yang, 2006; Punnett, 2017). For example, Matsumoto (1996, p. 21) proposed 'an etic-emic polarity' which may be more productive than any single approach in understanding culture and cultural influences on human behaviour, so it is important to ask how cultural research can be approached simultaneously from both etic and emic perspectives. When the two viewpoints are combined, it is possible to understand the 'richest' perception of a culture or society. It would be difficult for an emic approach to independently apply overarching values to one culture. The etic approach can enable researchers to consider several aspects of a culture and allows them to apply observations to other cultures across the globe (Matsumoto *et al.*, 1996; Engelen *et al.*, 2022). Similar views are proposed by scholars (Punnett, 2017; Ivanova-Gongne *et al.*, 2022; Çekirdekci, 2022; Hu and Wang 2022), who claim that when the two approaches are used in conjunction, they can be more holistic compared to when used independently, particular for areas that have been under researched.

Next, emic elements are locally adapted etic elements. 'All humans experience social distance from out-groups' is an example of an etic element. Individuals feel more intimate towards their family and those they think are similar to than they do towards those they feel are different. However, the *basis* of social distance can be an emic attribute: it is only based only on tribe or race in some cultures, but in others it is formed through a combination of social class, nationality, and religion. Caste is significant in India. To summarise, social distance is etic but caste, even though it is based on social distance, is emic.' (Triandis, 1994, p. 20). Meanwhile, the etic approach, which investigates the common aspects of cultures and provides hypotheses, could be helpful when conducting comparative analyses; however, this require may be useful for comparative analysis, but needs confirmation from fieldwork. It must also be open to the collection of new elements through an emic approach (Bhimani, 1999).

Thirdly, the complementary nature of the etic and emic approaches is reflected in the fact that the emic approach supplies the source and foundation of etic development and research. Buckley *et al.*, (2014) noted that qualitative methods and emic approaches can create new perceptions and conceptualisations of the intricate contextual factors that are part of international business practice and research, particularly within emerging economies. Furthermore, the emic approach is prioritised as the first stage in most of the etic-emic combined approach methodologies which are mainly designed for etic (cross-cultural and cultural differences) research. Two examples will be given to illustrate this point.

The first example is Berry's (Berry, 1990) three-stage methodology: the first stage of which constitutes *imposed etic* (i.e. an emic approach, which aims to develop a conceptual framework in one's own culture, A). The second stage is *emic* (to enrich the *imposed etic* framework with unique aspects of the second culture, B). Thirdly, *derived etic* (i.e. an etic approach which aims to examine findings in A and B, if they are comparable, then identify thematic commonalities, termed *derived etic*, which will form the basis of a unified etic framework). This process has its own set of limitations (Bala *et al.*, 2012). The first issue relates to the validity of the research as a result of Berry's 'Pseudo etic' labelling; this is because the emic approach directs the research during its initial stage, but this is not retained when the outcome is reached (Morris *et al.*, 1999). So, from an emic viewpoint, not every etic construct is valid when considering a specific culture. The enforced etic approach depends on the debatable expectation that the instrument used for the research, the exploratory or experimental or analysis context, along with the test framework, mean the same to current participants as to those who were from the original culture (normally it is Western culture because most of the research is conducted by Western scholars) (Niblo and Jackson, 2004). Viewed from a different perspective, ontology poses the same problem due to the lack of an observer's autonomous view of the world. In scenarios such as this, observation objectivity is debatable (DeJordy, 2005). There is a continuing tension between indigenous and universalist approaches.

The second example from Punnett *et al.*, (2017) suggested an emic-etic-emic cycle for cross-cultural research which also used emic approaches to develop etic approaches and to explore etic results through further emic research. It is notable that the emic-etic combined methodology is not only time-consuming, but also costly. For instance, the second example mentioned above, the emic-etic-emic cycle (Punnett, 2017) is utilised in the LEAD project (Leadership and Effectiveness in Africa and the African Diaspora). Although the LEAD project has been underway more than seven years, it is still in a relatively early stage, has an extensive project team and is funded by more than four social foundations and universities' foundations (Punnett, 2017) (Lituchy and Punnett, 2014).

To conclude, it is important for researchers to understand and consider etic and emic and their origins and fundamental meanings when selecting a particular element or approach based on the research requirements. It is important to note that they should not be viewed as opposites. On the contrary, they are symbiotic and complementary elements or approaches (Morris *et al.*, 1999), used to describe behaviour from two different standpoints, and may lead to results which blur into each other (Berry, 1990; Punnett, 2017). Scholars concluded that culture is the foundation of international business (Hofstede, 1994) (Leung *et al.*, 2005). An awareness of

culture can bring about a more successful international business venture but the lack of awareness can prompt failure (Dowling, 2008, p. 57). Culture has universal (etic) and distinctive (emic) elements (Triandis, 1994, p. 20) and understanding both of these elements is crucial for international managers doing business in multinational enterprises. When they are operating multinational enterprises around the world, understanding the universals of national cultures supports the development of commercial expansion. Not all etic elements or constructs are valid from an emic one within a particular culture, and only focusing on the etic (universal) element is not enough for international managers to build up a full picture of the culture that is being focused on. Being aware of the unique (emic) elements of culture gives an accurate insight into complex aspects at the root of consumers' buying behaviours within a specific cultural area. Emic approaches and qualitative methods can generate new conceptualisations and interpretations of the complex contextual factors involved in international business research and practice, particularly in emerging economies (Buckley *et al.*, 2014).

2.4 Need an Emic Approach of Cultural Values Research

According to etic and emic definitions, the definition of culture (section 2.2.1) equates to 'the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another' (Hofstede, 1997, p. 5) is an etic definition. It has been customary for culture researchers to use Hofstede's (1980) culture definition, with its focus on the comparison of one culture with another. Researchers that follow an etic approach in Chinese consumer research generally look for universal or culture-free theories, concepts, and cultural elements (i.e. etic elements). They seek variables and constructs that prevail in all cultures so they can be compared directly to discover how similar or different they are. This is a conventional approach to cross-cultural psychology and various other similar social sciences.

It is clear that both universal and indigenous elements and concepts give explanation to cultural evaluation (Bala *et al.*, 2012), and both of them are valid and contribute to our understanding of consumer behaviour in a global context (Maheswaran and Shavitt, 2000a). Although not without criticism, (McSweeney, 2002; Oyserman *et al.*, 2002) (Ailon, 2008; Baskerville, 2003; Taras *et al.*, 2010), most non-western (including China) cultural and cross-cultural consumer behaviour research has used etic cultural concepts or elements, especially focusing on Hofstede's values dimensions' model, when exploring the contrast between 'Eastern-collectivist-interdependent societies' and 'Western-individualist-independent societies' (Maheswaran and Shavitt, 2000b, p. 61).

2.4.1 Etic - Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory and the Gaps of the Research

Hofstede's (1984) cultural theory started with IBM employees' value preferences, which carried out a questionnaire survey in more than 70 countries asking for four dimension factors and two more that were complementary. 'The cultural dimensions represent independent preferences for one state of affairs over another that distinguish countries (rather than individuals) from each other' (Hofstede, 1984, p.51). As humans are all unique, the country scores on the dimensions are relative. This means, 'culture can be only used meaningfully by comparison' (Hofstede, 1984, p.5).

"Power Distance Index (PDI)

Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV)

Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS)

Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)

Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Normative Orientation (LTO or PRA)

Indulgence versus Restraint (IND)" (Hofstede, 1984, p.5).

Triandis (1988, 2018) developed the Individualism-Collectivism (I-C) Scale to analyse the cultural difference of values. In his study, individualism refers to personal goals over the goals of the collective group. In contrast, collectivism presents the priority of the collective group goals.

To explore the Chinese etic cultural-values through Hofstede's (Hofstede centre, 2014) the lens of the six dimensions, an overview (Figure 3) of Chinese culture relative to other world cultures will be given as a form of comparison. Chinese culture is more of a power distance, collectivism culture and less of uncertainty avoidance culture compared with the United Kingdom and the United States. The information below is directly taken from the Hofstede Centre.

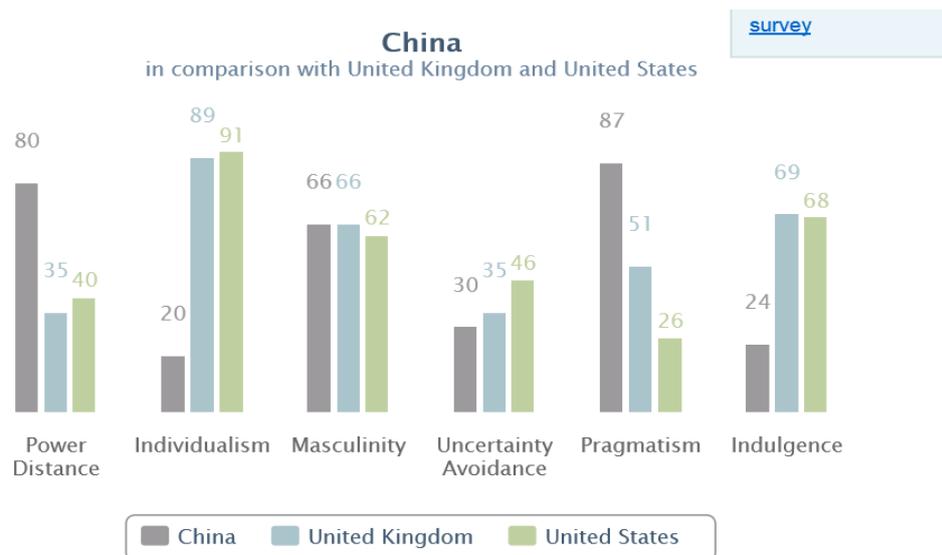


Figure 3 Exploring the Chinese culture through the lens of the six dimensions. Source: The Hofstede centre (2014)

Scholars demonstrate that culture explains the extent to which a new product is accepted in different countries. By using Hofstede's cultural etic values dimensions model (1984) (2001), Steenkamp *et al.*, (1999) and Takada and Jain (1991) find a strong relationship between the penetration rates and cultural dimensions of newly manufactured products in 56 countries. In their research, individualism plays a significantly positive role and, alternatively, uncertainty avoidance plays a significantly negative role when it comes to the diffusion rates of new products and innovation. Consistently, Yenyurt's and Townsend's study results (2003) that the avoidance of uncertainty and power distance can impede new product acceptance. Also determined was that individualism can have a positive impact, but the masculinity aspect does not affect the wide distribution of these new products. Tellis, Stremersch and Yin (2003) also illustrate that culture partially explains inter-country differences in the duration of the introductory stage of new products, and that economic determinants are not robust or explanatory across various European countries (e.g. Scandinavian versus Mediterranean countries).

Given the analysis in Figure 3, Chinese culture, when compared to that of the United Kingdom and the United States, is more collectivist, has more power distance and less uncertainty avoidance, but has a similar masculinity index. According to the above findings, tampons are a new kind of product to Chinese women, and from the two dimensions of collectivism and power distance, Chinese etic values have a significant negative relationship with the acceptance, diffusion, and innovation of new products. However, in terms of the dimension of uncertainty avoidance, Chinese etic values have a more positive relationship with the acceptance of new

products. Drawing on etic cultural values, it is contradictory and insufficient to interpret the phenomenon of why most Chinese females reject tampons.

Given the inconsistency of etic values views in the research and the preliminary research finding (Chapter 1.2), which discovered that the second most significant reason for the rejection of tampons in China is 'risk / uncertainty about, and avoidance of, the product', it is necessary to conduct more accurate research into the case of tampons in China.

2.4.2 Emic – Need an Emic Approach of Cultural Values Research to Fill the Gap

An alternative approach is emic, which focuses upon understanding issues from the viewpoint of the subjects being studied. From an emic perspective, culture is defined (McCracken, 1986, p.73) as

“the ‘lens’ through which all phenomena are seen. It determines how these phenomena are apprehended and assimilated. Second, culture is the ‘blueprint’ of human activity. It determines the coordinates of social action and productive activity, specifying the behaviours and objects that issue from both” (McCracken, 1986, p. 73).

In terms of culture, emic approaches do not aim to make a direct comparison of two or more disparate cultures, but rather intend to encourage a thorough understanding of culture study by way of 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973, p. 3). The approach utilised in carrying out emic research lacks 'culture-free' criteria that are directly comparable. Instead, such emic approaches provide 'culture-rich' indigenous research information. Kim and Berry (1993) define indigenous study as 'the scientific study of human behaviour or mind that is native, that is not transported from other regions, and that is designed for its people' (p. 2). Similarly, Sefa Dei *et al.* (2002) defined indigenous knowledge as being exclusive to a particular society or culture, characterised by common-sense notions, attitudes, and values that people form due to the continuous interaction between nature, culture and society. India's caste system (De Zwart, 2000; Bayly, 2001); China's concept of 'guanxi' (relationship or relationism) (Hwang, 2000, 1995) and situationalism (Hsu, 1971a; Ho, 1998); Korea's concept of 'jung' (deep affection and attachment, (K. Kim *et al.*, 2006) and Japan's 'amae' (Yamaguchi, 2004) are examples of cultural emic values system concepts / elements obtained through an emic approach.

Scholars highly value indigenous cultural studies (Enriquez, 1979; Sinha, 1997; U. Kim *et al.*, 2006). In culture study and related disciplines (e.g. cultural psychology), Kim *et al.*, (U. Kim *et al.*, 2006) suggest that 'although the objective third person point of view is necessary it is not sufficient. We need to supplement it with the first-person perspective (e.g. meaning and intention, Bandura, 1997) and the second person analysis (e.g. communication, dialogue, and discourse analysis,

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Harré and Gillet, 1994)'. Indigenous information is considered to be a primary source of first-person perspective knowledge (Enriquez, 1979). Existing theories in cognitive, developmental, social, and organisational culture study and related disciplines have been modified and extended by indigenous research (Sinha, 1997). U. Kim et al. (2006, p. 4) have listed worldwide calls for indigenous culture study and related disciplines (e.g. cultural psychology) including China.

The increasing trend toward the globalisation of business activities provides a compelling reason for understanding the cultural context and indigenous study of consumer behaviour. An awareness of the unique (i.e. emic / indigenous) elements of culture and its study in empirical research will provide a more accurate insight into the complex factors underlying the buying behaviours of consumers in that particular cultural context, and the interpretations of these complex factors of context that are involved in international business research and practice, especially in emerging economies (including China) (Buckley *et al.*, 2014).

Although there is growing interest in the cultural influence of emic elements on consumer behaviour, focused and systematic consumer research on the topic is still in its infancy (Maheswaran and Shavitt, 2000a; Bala *et al.*, 2012; Lituchy and Punnett, 2014; Punnett, 2017). Maheswaran and Shavitt (2000a) summarise three reasons for this lack of inquiry into cultural emic element variables in a consumer behavioural context. Firstly, there is a lack of indigenous studies from various cultures, which could methodically investigate and competently describe culturally exclusive findings. The second is methodological issues; most cultural study and related disciplines are based on theoretical frameworks developed in the western cultural-context, with scholars recognising that theories in general studies reflect the cultural values of western culture (Sampson, 1977; Shweder, 1991). This means that a large number of theoretical frameworks have not yet been validated for use with other cultures. The dearth of emic theories or frameworks that present robust studies of culture and associated disciplines has seriously limited the advancement of empirical work based on theory. Finally, the continuing discussion about the etic versus emic orientation of investigating cultures has disrupted cultural findings. Emic advocates indicate that cultural research ought to be indigenous and should be carried out using frameworks that are culture specific. Contrastingly, etic researchers encourage the benefits of investigating disparities through the use of benchmarks in the form of pre-endorsed universal frameworks. The lack of indigenous studies and emic frameworks or theories, especially in the Chinese culture, are the challenges of the present research.

2.5 Chinese Emic Research Review

Hofstede's (1991c) (1981, 1991) and Triandis' (1991) research claim that Chinese culture is a highly collectivist culture (e.g. China and Japan). In collectivist culture, people are interdependent within their in-group (e.g. family, tribe, nation), give priority to the goals of their in-groups with a sharp focus on their behaviour primarily based on the in-group norms and behave in a communal way (Mills and Clark, 1982). Chinese behaviours are considered collective oriented, which highlights 'we' rather than 'I'.

Counter to the western scholars' consideration of Chinese collective oriented behaviours, the Chinese indigenous researchers describe themselves as lacking collectivistic values, lacking public spirit and spirit of cooperation with everyone going his own way (Liang, 1989; Fei *et. al.*, 1992; Jin, 1992; Sun, 2004). Chinese indigenous psychologists criticise the idea that although Chinese culture is not individualistic, it does not necessarily mean that non-individualism is, by default, collectivism; the concept of collectivism is an expression of the methodological individualism (Fang, 2012) (Yang, 2008).

As discussed in Chapter 2.4, drawing on Hofstede's theory, an etic approach or an etic element is contradictory and insufficient to interpret the phenomenon of why most Chinese females reject tampons. It is considered that this point and the recognition of the limitations of western epistemology and western centralism, especially the limitation of western scholars' etic theories and etic cultural elements (e.g. values) studies, have been unable to account for Chinese behaviours in the real world. Thus, the goal of this subchapter is to explore an emic approach values pattern/system which named the deep structure of Chinese culture, and its emic elements (including values) of Chinese culture, mainly on the basis of previous Chinese indigenous scholars' research. To date, although no clear delimitation exists in this field of research, various indigenous attempts have been made and have not applied in the anti-consumption field. Chinese indigenous scholars defined the deep structure of Chinese culture as egoism (self-centeredness) or personalism, situation-centeredness or Psychosocial Homeostasis, relational orientation, and Confucian Ethical System instead of collectivism. Most indigenous research is in Chinese, so there is not always a consistent one to one match between Chinese indigenous words and concepts and each English word and concept. Thus, the key concepts are noted in Chinese to interpret their original meanings.

2.5.1 An Emic Concept of Cultural Values System - The Deep Structure of Chinese Culture

Chinese indigenous scholars develop the notion of 'the deep structure of culture' (Hwang, 2001; Sun, 2004; Hus, 1977), which does not emphasise the culture of single values or national characters, but on the unifying values patterns (or values system) underlying the behaviours in specific society. Quoting Hsu's (Hsu, 1977) explanation, the deep structure of Chinese culture can be characterised as 'a grammar of Chinese culture', which is considered as a synchronic cultural structure, which will not be changed by the time. Chinese culture is similar to English sentence-making. For example, most English sentences conform to the SVO word order, this means that the Subject comes before the Verb, which comes before the Object. SVO is the grammar and by using different words and conforming to the SVO, an enormous number of English sentences can be made. Each Chinese single values, equals to an English word, conforming to the grammar, can present the tremendous sentences, i.e. Chinese cultural behaviour or Chinese cultural phenomena.

As words can be modern, antique, or contextual, the corresponding sentences, too, are modern, antique or contextual while the grammar is not changed by the time. Similarly, Chinese values can be contemporary, traditional, contextual, or situational, or as a result of particular circumstances, and as a function of the time period under consideration, there is a tendency for certain cultural values to become more predominant while for others to become suspended or latent until such time when they are 'primed' (Hong *et al.*, 2000).

Therefore, culture can either be contemporary or traditional. It can even be impossible to consider culture without considering the time period, situation, and the context of each cultural dynamic, while the deep structure of culture is synchronic. From this point of view, Chinese culture is holistic, dynamic, and dialectical (Peng and Nisbett, 1999; Chen, 2002; Li, 2014). This view is consistent with an emic approach to culture study in which the role of culture is 'not as a series of miscellaneous parts, but as a working whole' (Berry, 1999, p. 167) (discussed in Chapter 2.3 and 2.4). In the next sections, egoism (self-centredness) (in Chinese: *ziwo zhuyin* 自我主义) or personalism (in Chinese: *geren zhuyin* 个人主义), situation-centeredness, relational orientation, and Confucian Ethical System, the four emic concepts of the deep structure of Chinese culture, will be reviewed.

2.5.2 Egoism (Self-centeredness), Differential Pattern and Group Pattern, and Personalism

Fei *et al.*, (1992) were the first social scientist to depict features of the deep structure of Chinese with the concepts of egoism and Group Pattern and Differential Pattern (or The Pattern of Difference Sequence), as illustrated by the concentric circles in Figure 4.

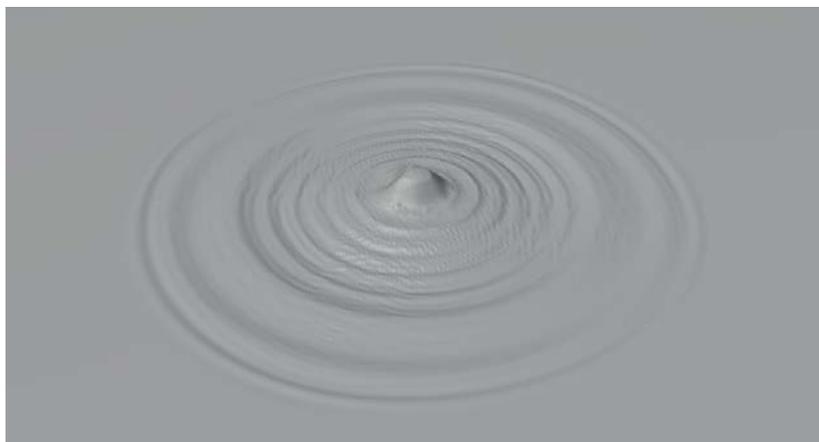


Figure 4 Fei *et al.*, 's differential pattern (adapted from Fei *et al.*, 1992)

Fei *et al.*, (1992) created the example to explain two patterns: western society is individual centred, individual like a firewood (wooden sticks), the relationship between people, like a bundle of firewood, a few into a few, a few are tied into a bundle. Although they are bound together by their social organisation in a bundle, a stick is clearly still a stick.

In China, local society, the patriarchal clan group as the standard (Group Pattern), the relationship between people, is to relatives as the main network, is a kind of pattern of difference sequence. In the pattern of difference sequence, everyone can centre himself/herself in a network. This is like a stone thrown into the lake, to the stone (individual) as the centre, forming a circle around the corrugated, corrugated social relations that can mark the distance. Through this parable, Fei *et al.*, (1992) represents egoism and diversity pattern concept.

'In this scalable network, there is a 'self' at the centre at all times. This is not individualism, but egoism (in Chinese: *ziwo zhuyi* 自我主义). The individual speaks to the group, the molecule to the whole. Under individualism there is, on the one hand, the notion of equality, the idea that all members of the same group are equal, and that the individual cannot infringe on the rights of all; on the other hand, the notion of constitutionality suggests that the group does not overrule the individual and can only control the individual in so far as he or she has surrendered one of his or her rights. These concepts must first assume the existence of a group. This is not the case in our

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traditional Chinese thought, because all we have is egoism, the doctrine that all values are centred on the 'self' (Fei *et al.*, 1992, p.46).

Similarly, Yu (1987) defined the deep structure of Chinese culture as personalism rather than collectivism. In his research, the Chinese are very individualistic and selfish in that all are treated differently based on their individual and personal needs. He explained 'the rituals, although they have an orderly aspect, are based on the individual/personal one (in Chinese: geren 个人) and take into account the particular situation of the individual/personal one (in Chinese: geren 个人). From this point of view, we might call it personalism (in Chinese: geren zhuyi 个人主义). The term used here is not individualism but personalism; I believe 'individualism' should be translated into Chinese as 'geti zhuyi' 个体主义 The 'ritual' or human order requires further care for a specific individual/personal one. This type of personalism prevented the Chinese from adapting to the control of strict discipline and from being accustomed to collective life. The implementation of this spirit is inevitably both good and bad. On the plus side, the Chinese love freedom and freeness, but the downside is that they are 'loose sand' (in Chinese: sansha 散沙, or translated as scattered) and 'a tray of loose sand' (in Chinese: yipan sansha 一盘散沙 which can also be translated as 'lacking spirit of cooperation' or 'in a state of disunity'). The freeness and scattered (in Chinese: ziyou sanman 自由散漫 or translated as 'follow one's inclination') are almost the entire Chinese character or values pattern. A culture with a free-spirited character can never be a collectivist one (Yu, 1987, p. 23).

2.5.3 Situation-centeredness and Psychosociogram of Man

As an innovative and distinguished psychological anthropologist, Hsu is generally well known within the international community of social scientists. Hsu is especially recognised for proposing a number of approaches related to the deep structure of Chinese culture. In 1953 Hsu correlated Chinese national culture with a concept of the deep structure of culture which is situation-centeredness, that is, the Chinese determining their behaviour in a situation according to their relationships with others, their status, and the norms of their social nature.

Subsequently, Hsu expanded his approaches based on the 'father-son axis' as the dominant kinship relationships in interpreting and analysing the features of Chinese (Hsu, 1963, 1971b). He argued that 'the concept of personality is an expression of the Western ideal of individualism', but that 'the meaning of being human is found in interpersonal relationships' (Hsu, 1971b). Hsu went

on to introduce a psycho-sociogram to portray the socio-psychological concept of Chinese culture and its people (Hsu, 1971b). His psychosociogram (Hsu, 1971b, p.25) 'consists of seven irregular, concentric layers: unconscious, pre-conscious, unexpressed conscious, expressible conscious, intimate society and culture, operative society and culture, wider society and culture, and outer world' (see Figure 5).

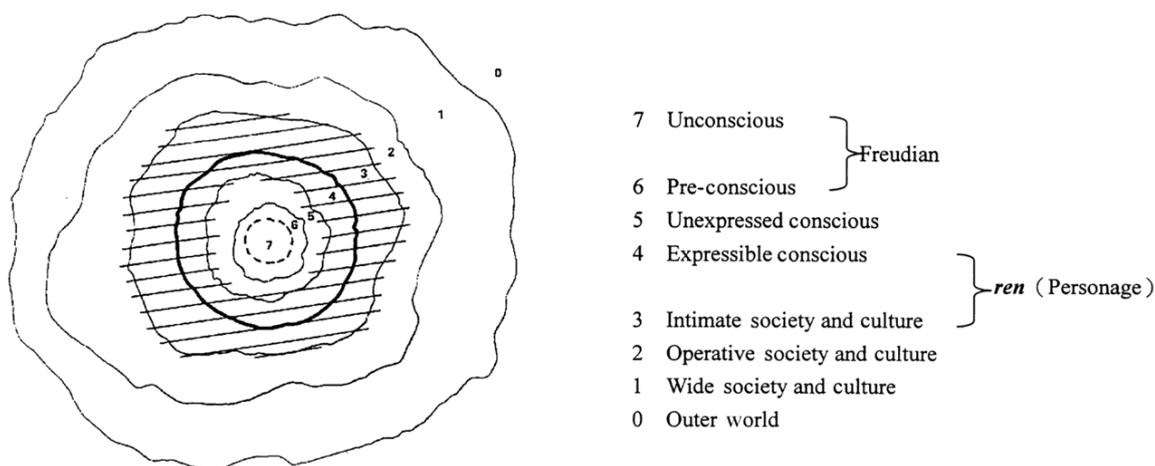


Figure 5 Psychosociogram of man (adapted from Hsu, 1971b; p. 25)

The Fourth Layer is designated as expressible consciousness. It consists of the feelings and other concepts individuals typically communicate towards or with each other, for example ideas such as greed and vision are part of this layer. Other examples are concepts like hate, greed, and love. Together these ideas also comprise cultural knowledge of social norms, ideas such as the moral compass of the society and culture's standards for technical endeavours. The third layer contains important individuals, objects, and concepts with which a person has formed relationships that can be characterised as significant and intimate. Items such as partners and loved ones belong in this category, as do pets. Another example is a collection of material possessions that an individual has formed attachments to. Additionally, certain culturally significant ways of doing things and behaving belong in this category. The relationships individuals have formed with constructs from this layer are usually 'a matter of feeling rather than of usefulness' (Hsu, 1971a, p. 26). In direct contrast, items that belong in Layer Two are viewed by the individual based on 'their usefulness to him rather than his feeling toward them' (Hsu, 1971a, p. 26). Therefore, the relationships with items in this category tend to be based on the formal roles. Hsu shaded the area of both Layers Three and Four with slight overlaps into adjacent layers (Layers Two and Five). He designates these areas as 'Ren'. This word can roughly be translated from Chinese as personage or even personality. In Chinese, this concept is related to transactions individuals conduct with other individuals. The implication is that only by attempting to be 'Ren' while also

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learning how to be 'Ren' can a person achieve a form of equilibrium in interpersonal relationships as well as achieve satisfaction with their own psyche. The juxtaposition of an individual's outwardly apparent behaviour and the standards the society holds for interpersonal interactions is known as 'psychosocial homeostasis' (Hsu, 1971a, p.44).

In later years, Hsu and Marsella Devos (1985) explicitly separated the idea of Asian 'Ren' and the concept of personality as it is viewed in the West. They argued that in the West, the idea of personality is approached from the 'Ptolemaic' angle as it relates to the nature of the individual. This view is heavily influenced by the idea of Individualism where a person is viewed as being alone, against or opposing the world. The Asian view of *Ren* however, places individuals on a matrix which can only be in the state of equilibrium if interpersonal relationships within the matrix are maintained at a satisfactory level. A 'Galilean' view, which embeds individuals into an intricate social network of relationships has close similarities with the Asian view of *ren*. Hsu argued that the *Ren* view of human nature yields better results in understanding the differences in human behaviour across social and cultural standards than the concept of Western personality. Therefore, in his opinion, the 'Galilean' instead of the 'Ptolemaic' view would be more suitable for examining human nature.

2.5.4 Relational Orientation Concepts

Ho (Ho, 1993) claims that Chinese individuals tend to place less emphasis on the uniqueness aspect associated with their life experiences. Instead, they view the direction they take in life, their aspirations, and the goals they set, as similar to those around them without making specific distinction between theirs and those of their fellow individuals. Therefore, he (Ho, 1993) argues, that Relational Orientation may be used to describe Chinese social behaviour with greater precision than previous concepts such as Social Orientation (Yang, 1981) and Collectivism (Hofstede, 1984) which are less suited for this purpose. He also finds that Psychosocial Homeostasis (Hsu, 1971a, p.44) and Situation-Centeredness (Hsu, 1963) also offer a less precise approach to the evaluation of Chinese (social) behaviour and psychology.

Ho develops 'a conceptual framework, not a theory' (p. 257) utilising notions of relational orientation (Ho, 1993). This section conducts a critique and examination of Ho's principal ideas. Firstly, the section focuses on his statements on relational orientation as well as some of the linked concepts that appear in his work. Additionally, the section will be looking at Harris's conceptual views on ideas of individuals as well as his views and concepts of self and person to better understand the research of Chinese indigenous scholars.

2.5.4.1 Relational Orientation and Relational Self

He (Ho, 1993) argues that Relational Orientation not only has indigenous features, but also a distinctiveness that differentiates it from the individual orientation of Western psychology. Ho (Ho, 1993) believes that a person's defining characteristics are largely shaped by the interpersonal relationships during early stages of that individual's life. Similarly, the individual's perceived meaning of life is largely influenced by such relationships. Since the meaning of life is derived from the quality of the co-existence with fellow individuals, this meaning may be lost or altered when significant relationships are terminated (Ho *et al.*, 1991). It is Ho's opinion that, in Chinese culture, the concept of self is irrevocably linked and dependent on one's relationships with others, hence the lack of emphasis on the uniqueness of one's experiences. Since the precise demarcation line between others and self does not exist, the best way to view the concept of self in Chinese culture is by labelling it the 'relational self.' Relational self has a razor-sharp focus on the presence of others in one's life. An individual's structure of conscience, their world viewed from a phenomenological perspective, consists of combined experiences of the self and others. The two are so intertwined that it can be viewed as a construct, extracted from the world at large, termed 'self-in-relation-with-others' (Ho *et al.*, 1991).

2.5.4.2 Classification Systems of Interpersonal Relationships

Ho made an attempt at a proposal of a system of interpersonal relationships classification with a strategic unit of analysis role allocated to person-in-relations (Ho, 1998a; Ho and Chiu, 1998). His system of classification has a clear set of deficiencies. Mainly, this system is not comprehensive, nor it is exhaustive. It is not difficult to build another classification system. In fact, even Ho himself created classifications systems that were quite comparable to this one (Ho and Chiu, 1998). Additionally, this particular system, blends both socially defined and culturally defined relationships.

2.5.4.3 The Person-in-Relations and Persons-in-Relation

Ho (1991, 1998a) refutes Methodological Individualism, he proposes we 'consider how relationships are culturally defined before attempting to interpret the behaviour of individuals' (Ho, 1998, p. 3). Similarly, Ho and Chiu state that 'the strategic units of analysis are not the individual or the situation alone, but the person-in-relations (focusing on a person in different relational contexts) or persons-in-relation (focusing on persons interacting within a relational context)' (Ho and Chiu, 1998, p. 353). Methodological Individualism's focus is on individuals as a basic unit of analysis. It argues that social phenomena cannot be wholly understood without

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understanding individuals and the details about them. Methodological Relationalism refutes this approach. Allport classically defended methodological individualism via this definition: 'Social psychology attempts to understand and explain how the thoughts, feeling, and behaviours of individuals are influenced by actual, imagined, or implied pressure of others.' (Allport, 1968, p. 3).

Those who oppose Methodological Individualism take a view that governing social phenomena cannot be broken down to the levels of facts pertaining to individuals as the lowest unit of analysis, and therefore these facts do not provide adequate framework for such an analysis. In fact, it is the social context that explains the realities of the individuals that stem from the type and quality of the relationships these individuals hold, institutions these individuals participate in, and groups they belong to (Ho, 1998a). Some of the arguably most influential thinkers in western social thought, Marx, Durkheim, and Webber hold this view in high regard. Durkheim (1938), for example, adamantly stated: 'every time a social phenomenon is directly explained by a psychological phenomenon, we may rest assured that the explanation is false' (p. 129).

Ho (1991, 1998a) agrees with Hsu (1985) when he stresses the difference between the Galiean conceptualisation of persons as enmeshed into their social networks, typically adopted by the Chinese, versus the Ptolemaic approach that sees a person facing the world alone. As such, according to Ho (1993) even in cases where the focus of psychologistic examination is the social actions of just one individual, in the context of relational orientation, such study must extend to:

'either self-initiated or responsive actions by the individual.

actions taken by those who are in close association with that individual.

actions by the subjects of the individual's interactions directed at the individual.

actions taken by those who are in close association with the subjects of individual's interactions directed at him.

actions of direct or indirect subjects of an individual's interactions, directed at those whom the individual has close association with' (Ho, 1993, p. 254).

An individual's enmeshment into a network of social relationships, which account for all possible variations in behaviours of the individuals-in-relation, generate that person's lifeworld interactions. If one were to accept the plausibility of Ho's assertions, the fact remains – phenomenology is a universal philosophy. The aforementioned propositions can be applied to people in any culture. If Chinese follow the Galiean approach to the nature of humanity, rather than Ptolemaic, are there specific cultural factors at play? If so, what are they?

Hwang (2000) states that personhood accounts are supported by Confucianism and its cultural traditions. We have now laid the foundation in order to answer this particular question; the way in which Confucian tradition defines the arrangement of interpersonal relationships between self and others. A more detailed explanation will be given in the next section.

2.5.5 Confucian Ethical System of Benevolence-Righteousness-Propriety for Ordinary People Theoretical Model

Ho et al. (Ho, 1998a; Ho & Chiu, 1998) made an attempt at a proposal of a system of interpersonal relationships classification with strategic unit of analysis role allocated to person-in-relations. Hwang (2000) suggested that, a culturally defined theoretical model describing person-in-relations specifically in the Confucianism context is preferable to an all-encompassing classification system of social relationships. A Confucian explanation of personhood may be illuminated via this kind of theoretical model. A psychological analysis of manifestation of personhood in the context of specific social interactions would be served by the conceptual framework of this model. Empirical research can draw its auxiliary hypotheses formulation upon reflecting on the precise conditions associated within a given social situation.

To put it differently, it is the given culture, that directs the person-in relations in his process of social relationships classification. It also provides guidance on the expected behaviour targeted at various categories of such social relationships.

Therefore, the conceptualization of personhood as is defined by the particular cultural transitions will also define the expected social objects classification for a given individual. Additionally, it will assist in the process of interpreting individual's social relationships as well as the expected and suitable responses directed at others.

2.5.5.1 Ethics for Ordinary People

Hwang (1995) divides the Way of Humanity's ethical agreements for personal relationships into two groups: ethics for ordinary people, and ethics for scholars. The former should be adhered to by all, including scholars; it is effectively described by these propositions from Zhongyong (The Golden Mean).

Hwang (1995) stated that benevolence (Ren 仁) is an attribute related to personhood. The most important aspect of its expression is affection given to people who we are closely related to. Righteousness (Yi 义) indicates appropriateness; the most important rule here is respecting one's

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superiors (Hwang, 1995). Giving others love and accepting who they are, and respecting one's superiors in accordance with their ranks brings about the structures and distinctions of propriety (Li 礼) in one's social life (Hwang, 1995). Government of people is not possible without an authentic moral basis of social inequality (Hwang, 1995)..

These statements emphasise the important relationship between benevolence, propriety and righteousness. Confucius posits that social interaction must start with an evaluation of the relationship between others and oneself in line with two social dimensions: distance/intimacy and inferiority/superiority. Behaviour which favours those that a person has a close relationship with is called benevolence (Ren 仁); respecting others who anticipate respect is referred to as righteousness (Yi 义); and adhering to well-established social norms or rites is termed propriety (Li 礼) (Hwang, 1995).

In society, the justice concept is characterised into two groups by social psychologists in the West: distributive and procedural justice. Distributive justice refers to a particular resource distribution method that is accepted by members of the group (Leventhal, 1976, 1980). Procedural justice is the term used for procedure types that group members utilise to determine resource distribution methods.

For ordinary members of society, it is possible for Confucian ethics to be elucidated through the Western theory of justice (Hwang, 1995). Confucius enforced that the procedural justice evident in social interaction must adhere to the principle of respecting one's superior. The superior person must become the resource allocator. When selecting a suitable approach for distributive justice, superior allocator of resources must favour the intimate. From a Confucian viewpoint, it is right to it is righteous take decisions in this manner. The Confucian ethics theory for ordinary members of society, is a model for ethical agreements within interpersonal relationships. It is right that a superior person should make decisions; it is also right that the resource allocator should distribute resources by favouring the intimate. It is important to note that the Confucian concept 'Ren 仁' (benevolence) does not reach as 'love thy enemies', a Christian injunction (Hofstede, 1981,1991; Triandis, 1991); as stated by Confucius, 'if one should love one's enemies, what would remain for one's friends?' The Confucian notion of Yi (righteousness), is different to the notion of universal justice found in Western culture (Rawls, 1971), but it is used in conjunction with Chinese characters such as Ren-Yi (benevolent justice or benevolent righteousness) or Qing-Yi (affective justice or affective righteousness).

The expressive relationship component (guanxi) correlates with the notion of 'Ren 仁' (Benevolence) (Hwang, 1995). 'Yi 义' (Righteousness) is to select a suitable regulation for exchange through the consideration of the expressive factor (or the affection) between actors (Hwang, 1995). The definitive behaviour should pursue the social norm of politeness (Li 礼) (Hwang, 1995).

2.5.5.2 Confucian Ethical System of Benevolence-Righteousness-Propriety for Ordinary People

In Figure 6, in Hwang's (2000) Confucian ethical system of benevolence-righteousness-propriety for ordinary people, a diagonal line bisects the rectangle, which denotes guanxi (interpersonal relationships). The grey, shaded section depicts the instrumental element; the white section presents a relationships' expressive element (Hwang, 2000). The word 'instrumental' invokes the fact that, people, as biological organisms, host various innate inherent desires; they should interact with others instrumentally to obtain the resources they need to meet these requirements (Hwang, 2000). The expressive element denotes an interpersonal closeness among two parties. The expressive and instrumental components mingle in every interpersonal relationship. Regarding interpersonal relationships, there are three types: expressive ties, which describe family relationships; mixed ties, which comprise relationships with others who do not belong to the immediate family; and instrumental ties, which occur between a stranger and oneself, purely when acquiring a resource (Hwang, 2000). In Figure 6, a solid line sets the mixed and expressive ties apart, which implies that, between them, there is a distinct psychological barrier (Hwang, 2000). It is immensely difficult for someone who does not belong to the family to become a member of the family. In Figure 6 (Hwang, 2000), a dotted line separates the instrumental ties from the mixed ties, which suggests that the 'la guanxi' 拉关系 (seeking guanxi) process may allow someone who has instrumental ties to infiltrate the somewhat weak psychological boundary, created a mixed tie relationship. The principle related to respect for superiors and the five cardinal rules emphasise the principle of respect for superiors within procedural justice, and favouring the intimate within distributive justice, creates a formal Confucian ethics framework for average people.

Psychological Process of Resource Allocator

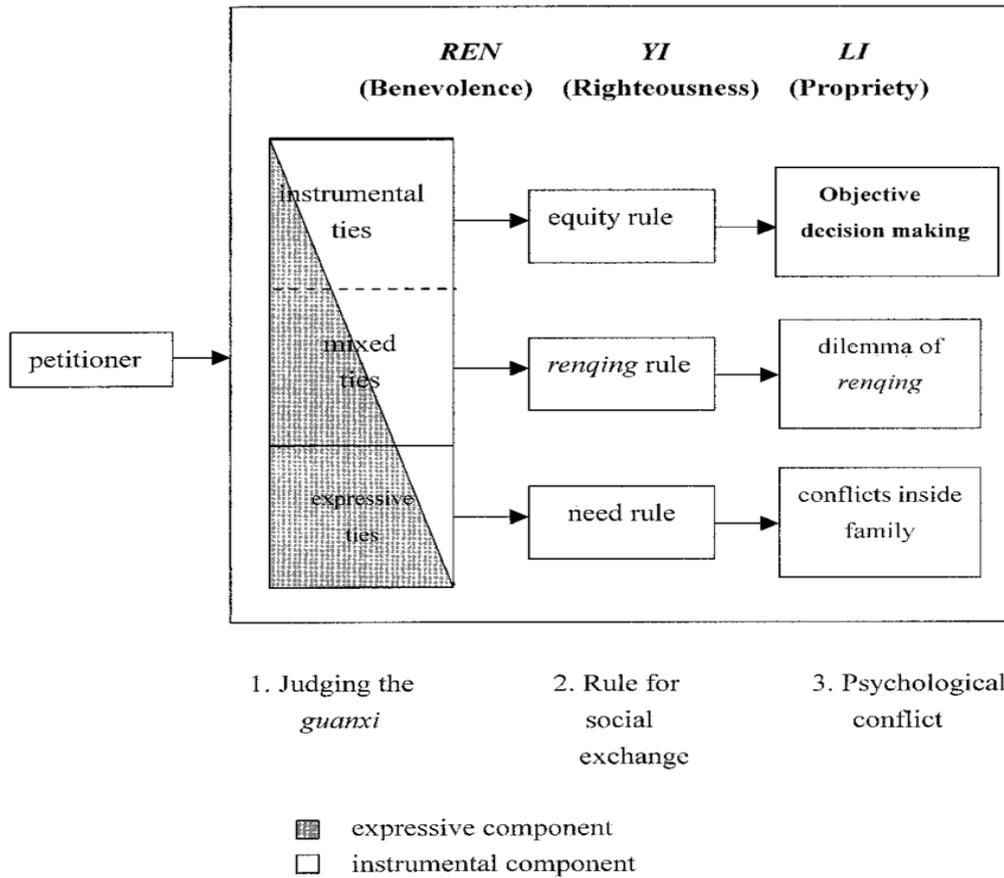


Figure 6 Confucian ethical system of benevolence-righteousness-propriety for ordinary people (adopted from Hwang, 1995, p.233)

This established framework structure (Hwang, 2000) is demonstrated through several interpersonal relationship types and Confucians have made certain additional ethical demands with regard to particular relationships. Confucians understand five cardinal rules in relation to the five main dyadic relationships within Chinese society; this proposes that social interaction among each pair of members should continue in line with ‘the Way of Humanity’ (Hwang, 2000, p.167). Hwang (2000, p.170) stated that the roles within the five relationships are distinct, which indicates that the emphasised core values are also different:

‘between a father and his son, affection should be evident; between a sovereign and a subordinate, there should be righteousness; between a husband and his wife, attention should be paid to their distinct functions; between an older and a younger brother, proper order should be seen; and between friends, there should be friendship; Of the described rules, three were designed to determine interpersonal family relationships (expressive ties)’ Hwang (2000, p.170). The two remaining rules are related to mixed ties; friends and sovereign and the subordinate. It is important to note that the relationships between superiors and inferiors are vertical. This is not the case with relationships between friends.

In Hwang's research, the righteous (Yi 义) or named as 'the ten things of righteousness' (Hwang, 2000, p, 168), are defined by Confucians as '*a father's kindness and a son's filial duty; an older brother's gentleness, and a younger brother's obedience; a husband's righteousness and a wife's submission; elders' kindness and juniors' deference; a ruler's benevolence and a minister's loyalty, between-friend relationships, suggests that social interaction should be in accordance with respecting the superior principle*' (Hwang, 2000, p, 168). In relation to the concept of righteousness, people who assume roles as decision makers, such as elders or husbands, should take decisions that are aligned with 'the principles of righteousness, kindness, gentleness, and benevolence' (Hwang, 2000, p, 168). Those who take on the roles of followers, like junior or wife, they should obedience, filial duty, deference, submission, loyalty, and to any instructions from the previous roles (Hwang, 2000).

2.5.6 Comparing and Analysis of Chinese Emic Research

When conducting a comparison of Hwang's (2000) analysis in relation to Confucian cultural tradition with the work of Hsu (1971b), it could be implied that the 'father-son axis' (Hsu, 1971b) is an example of the respect for the superior principle (Hwang, 2000). 'The Confucian benevolence-righteousness-propriety ethical system for ordinary people' (Hwang, 1995, p.233) (as exhibited in Figure 6) complements Hsu's psycho-sociogram (Hsu, 1971b), which is shown in Figure 5. The shaded area within 'Ren' (Hsu, 1971b), in Figure 5, denotes Hwang's (2000) expressive mechanisms between the resource allocator and the obedient, and Hwang's (2000) usefulness characterises instrumental structures among a pair of relationships. Layer 3's intimate society (Hsu, 1971b) comprises expressive and mixed ties, while Layer 2, the operative society, comprises instrumental ties. The interaction within the Chinese, adhering to the relevant social exchange rules, their social world could be perceived as described by Hsu's psycho-sociogram Man (Hsu, 1971b) or the differential order by Fei *et al.* (1992, p.46). Hwang's (2000) hypothetical model explains Hsu's 'psychosocial homeostasis' (Hsu, 1971a, p.44), Hwang's (2000) Confucianism research will enable the deconstruction of the psychosociogram in relation to traditional Confucian cultured.

This analysis suggests that a 'major Confucian ethic proposition for ordinary people' (Hwang, 1995, p.233) could be adapted into the main concepts of the psychosociogram using the description of 'differential order' (Fei *et al.*, 1992, p.46), through a consideration of 'the manifestation of Confucian ethics' (Hsu, 1971a, p.44) in the lives of the Chinese. It is not possible to translate ideas from 'psychosociogram' or 'the differential order' into Chinese relationalism models. Thus, conclusion could be, compared to the conceptualisations by Hsu or Fei *et al.*, Hwang's relationalism theoretical models Chinese have greater strangificability, a term used by

Wallner (1994, 1997) to describe the degree to which propositions and language within a single scientific micro word can be translated into those of another.

2.6 Anti-consumption and Its Theoretical Background

The key to a successful marketing campaign lies in the understanding of consumer behaviour. Marketing to a consumer that marketers do not truly understand will generally not be very successful. This section will first review consumer behaviour, followed by anti-consumption and its theory of BRT.

2.6.1 Consumer Behaviour

Behaviours can be conceptualised as the cultural outcome and values systems' influences. Anti-consumption is considered as a consumer behaviour (Garcia-de-Frutos *et al.*, 2018) and is under the umbrella of the behaviour, which has been reviewed in Chapter 2.2.

In modern terms, consumer behaviour is defined as:

'consumer behaviour..... is the study of the decision processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires.' (Solomon *et al.*, 2014, p. 6).

Schiffman and Kanuk (2007. p.3) take a similar approach in defining consumer behaviour: the series of behaviours or patterns that,

'consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs' (p.3).

The scope of the consumer behaviour as it is defined in most modern definitions is quite similar. Consumer behaviour research centres consumers' decisions on spending their available resources on commercial products or services, resources include time, money and effort (Loudon and Della-Bitta, 1993; Hoyer and MacInnis, 1997; Bamossy and Solomon, 2016). It is mainly concerned with what they buy (or do not buy) and why they buy (or do not buy). It also focuses on how they are influenced in what, how, when, and how often they decide to buy a product or not. Additionally, it examines how often a product is used, how it is evaluated by the consumer following the purchase, how this impacts on future purchases and how it is disposed of after use (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007).

Correspondingly, research into consumer behaviour concentrates mainly on how individuals make decisions on the scope of 'buying' or 'purchasing'. Engel *et al.* (1995) express the view that consumer buying behaviour is directly related to the consumption of products and services for personal reasons which are triggered by decision-making to meet the consumers' demand. In its definition, the word 'consumer' refers to individuals who search for information about goods and services, and then purchase and use it for self needs, wants or satisfaction. The consumer is the information searcher and decision maker in the pre-purchasing, purchasing and post-purchasing processes, and is the actual buyer, user and disposer (Kotler, 2003). An essential aspect of marketing is the examination of consumer buying behaviour: the understanding of what consumers need, want or desire and what exactly influences their buying behaviour (Kotler, 2003).

2.6.2 Anti-consumption

Although consumer behaviour includes research that is related to the 'do not buy' concept, in the literature it primarily focuses on purchasing, reasons for consumption, or explains consumption behaviour. Anti-consumption is included under the umbrella term 'consumer behaviour research', which concentrates on 'do not buy' and 'do not consume', reasons against consumption, and rationale for avoiding the purchase of specific products (including brands and services), which are qualitatively dissimilar to the 'reasons for' (Chatzidakis and Lee, 2013).

'Anti-consumption literally means against consumption' (Lee *et al.* 2009, p.145) and has been classified into 'three nonexclusive phenomena: reject, restrict and reclaim'; 'In processes of rejecting, individual intentionally and meaningfully excluded particular goods from their consumption cycle, for examples rejecting Nike because of functional, symbolic, or ethical reasons'; 'Anti-consumption focuses on phenomena that are against the acquisition, use and dispossession of certain goods' (Lee *et al.* 2013, p. 1681). The Association for Consumer Research has provided anti-consumption with its own distinct scholarly topic because 'it is a worthy field of investigation because it pertains to a particular set of reasons against consumption, which are more than and different from their conceptual opposites - reasons for consumption' (Chatzidakis and Lee, 2013, p.194). Over the past decade, the research topic of anti-consumption has been devoted to more than ten journal special issues. For instance, Psychology and Marketing in 2002 and 2020, the Journal of Business Research in 2009, the European Journal of Marketing in 2011 and the Journal of Consumer Affairs in 2016.

While anti-consumption has prospered and, has since, advanced into an array of the field; its subject matter has been primarily interested in the antecedents of the individual-level in relation

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to anti-consumption behaviour. The national culture or non-individual level antecedent of the phenomena of anti-consumption is largely overlooked in prior research (Lee *et al.* 2020).

Therefore, there remains a significant gap in the research, which this research aims to address:

'Anti-consumption research now encompasses a wide range of phenomena. Anti-consumption comprises a plethora of manifestations, which differ in terms of actors, goals, targets, duration, and intensity. Consequently, anti-consumption can be researched in different ways by varying the object of analysis, the research purpose, the sample, the methods, and the analysis employed. We believe that anti-consumption is worthy of exploration from multiple perspectives, considering multiple actors—not only individuals, but also the 'psychology' of communities, companies, or even nations' (Lee, 2020, p. 171-172).

This research will build on this concept defined by Lee *et al.* (2011), to study the phenomenon of Chinese women's rejection of tampon consumption. The anti-consumption in this research intentionally and meaningfully rejects the consumption of particular goods without attempting to reduce overall consumption. So here, the rejection of the consumption of specific goods is not motivated by voluntary or intentional reasoning, for example the inaccessibility or unavailability of particular products. Neither is it due to costs or poor financial support needed to purchase a luxury product or brand. For this reason, it is not considered to be anti-consumption. Non-consumption related to examples such as the rejection of pork for Muslims or dairy products for those with allergies are also not seen as anti-consumption. The difference between anti-consumption and consumer resistance must be delineated. Consumer resistance refers to a person as a consumer(s), to conversely respond to 'a practice of dominance within the marketplace such as commercial pressure, influence, strategies, logic or discourses that are perceived, by the consumer/person, as dissonant and antagonistic to their beliefs' (Peñaloza and Price, 1993, p.123). It is centred in power or power asymmetry (Foucault. 1982). In contrast, anti-consumption focuses on consumption against the processes of commercial consumption (Lee *et al.*, 2011).

Regarding this definition, this research demarcates three scopes:

The anti-consumption scope in the research: the behaviour related to an anti-consumer which refers to a (non)buyer, (non)user and decision maker.

The anti-consumer scope in the research: the consumers (the population) in this research are Chinese females who are eligible tampon users deciding to not buy or use tampons.

The research topic scope: what we focus on: why do/did they intentionally not consume tampons or reject tampons, i.e. to explore the reason against consuming tampons and the main emic cultural values underlying these reasons in a Chinese context.

2.6.3 Three Reasons Motivating Anti-consumption

There are three reasons in anti-consumption research that are most relevant to the fast-moving consumer goods industry where, generally, tampons are grouped. These reasons can provide insights into the reasons for consumers performing anti-consumption, which are innovation resistance (Ram, 1987), risk aversion (Gneezy *et al.*, 2006) and undesired self (Ogilvie, 1987).

2.6.3.1 Innovation Resistance

The first reason motivating anti-consumption is apparent to new products; it is innovation resistance (Ram, 1987, p.208), which is defined as 'the resistance offered by consumers to changes imposed by innovations' (Ram, 1987, p.208). Schein (2010) supported that the resistance comes from the changes that the new technology or new product brings in instead of what the resistance of the new technology or new product per se. Higgins and Shank-lin's (1992) research also showed that the hi-tech of innovations dominates the technological understanding of consumers. Their findings suggest the ease of use product is the main reason to attract customers instead of the technological sophistication. Ram and Sheth (1989, p.7) also suggested that 'functional barriers' or 'psychological barriers' prevent individuals from adopting innovations. Functional barriers include 'product usage patterns, value barrier and risks associated with product usage' (Ram and Sheth, 1989, p.7). If innovation is counterproductive to the existing habits of consumers, product use patterns will arise (Ram and Sheth, 1989). Similarly, issuing surrounding value barriers arise when the innovation does not provide a comparative cost-effective alternative (Ram and Sheth, 1989). Finally, uncertainties cause risk barriers (Ram and Sheth, 1989). On the other side, there are two psychological barriers consisting of the traditions, and image barriers (Ram and Sheth, 1989, p.8); traditional barriers (e.g. beliefs, values) arise when innovation contradicts consumer' culture, the higher conflict drives the higher innovation resistance (Ram and Sheth, 1989). The origins of innovations endows the product with its product category or its quality, when innovations are associated negatively, product image barriers are perceived consequently (Lee. 2010). As a result, the benefits of innovations are constantly compromised compared with the customers perceived risks or de-benefits. In cases where consumers could not perceive significantly advantageous innovations, innovation resistance seems like the reasons against, which hinders product adoption and increases to performing anti-consumption behaviours.

2.6.3.2 Risk Aversion

The second one, risk aversion (Gneezy *et al.*, 2006), refers to a/an (anti)consumer's 'preference for a guaranteed outcome over a probable outcome to avoid uncertainty' (Lee, 2000, p.544). Therefore (anti)consumers may practise anti-consuming to avoid risks. Risk taking 'attitude and risk perception' (Weber and Milliman, 1997, p.123) are two main concepts to fundamentally understanding risk aversion.

Risk is viewed as an aspect most often central to consumption. One of the definitions of risk associated behaviour is 'individuals' decision-making behaviour in risky contexts' (Sitkin and Pablo, 1992, p. 11). Risk, in this case, is the accounting for a possible loss and uncertain outcomes (Taylor, 1974). This type of risk is encountered in various circumstances and behavioural scopes (Zuckerman, 1994).

There is a risk aspect to consider when looking at consumption. According to Bauer (1960, p. 389):

'Consumer behaviour involves risk in the sense that any action of a consumer will produce consequences which he cannot anticipate with anything approximating certainty, and some of which at least are likely to be unpleasant'.

As such, risk is viewed as an aspect most often central to consumption by the consumer, in their attempt to minimise it down to levels they deem acceptable (Engel *et. al.*, 1995).

In the same vein, according to Cox (1967a, p.19) most consumption related to some perceived risks. There has been a distinction made by Cunningham (1967) separating an issue of perceived risk from actual risk, where 'the consumer can only react to the amount of risk she actually perceives and only to her subjective interpretation of that risk' (Cunningham 1967, p. 84). Product specific risk is viewed perceived risk as, 'the content and composition of perceived risk can be better understood in terms of the specific product category involved' (Cunningham, 1967, p. 108).

According to Dowling and Staelin's (1994) category, perceived risk is defined as: 'the person's perception of risk inherent in purchasing any particular product in a specific product category' (Staelin, 1994, p.120), which is different from the risk associated with a specific product, it is 'associated with the particular product being considered' (Staelin, 1994, p.120). Matzler *et al.*, (2008) have shown that the perception of risks is different and that their prediction of total value of risk, additionally, risk aversion mainly be subject to the product category. For example, perceived risks of phones are fewer than those for food products because food products are eaten and directly affect the health, whereas phones are used externally.

Perceived risk and actual risk have been operationally defined by these definitions for quite some time, as those two works have had a major impact on the study of consumer research. In fact, it is the subjective perceived risk by the consumer that has the most impact on the decision-making process, not the existence or non-existence of the actual risk.

As a result, much research focuses on perception of losses by consumers. Measurements of consumers' risk preceptors have been categorised along the following lines (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2000): loss of time loss of convenience, psychological and social losses, performance, and physical losses and, finally, financial losses (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2000, p.153):

'Social Risk: risk associated with a negative perception of the person by others, stemming from the poor decision on the product or service.

Financial risk: a risk that the total worth of the purchased product or service will be below that of its cost.

Physical risk: a risk associated with the possibility that a chosen service or product will cause physical damage to the purchaser or negatively affect his health or that of others.

Performance/Functional risk: a risk associated with the possibility that the service or product's performance will deviate from the expectation.

Time/convenience risk: a risk associated with the possibility that the effort and time invested in acquiring the service or product was wasted if the outcome is below expectations.

Psychological risk: a risk associated with the possibility that the ego of the consumer will be negatively affected because of inferior choice' (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2000, p.153).

Bauer (1960) also highlighted that various marketing-related matters can be better viewed as risk-taking issues. At the specific level, the research of culture identifies risk taking as one of the facets that is distinguished among cultures. For example, Hofstede (1984) and Steenkamp (2001) included Uncertainty Avoidance in their cultural dimension. Hofstede (1991b, p. 113) defined uncertainty avoidance as 'the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations.' Compared to high uncertainty avoidance cultures, low-uncertainty avoidance cultures are characterised by 'more risk taking' (Hofstede, 1984, p. 132); 'openness to change and innovations'; and 'willingness to take unknown risks' (Hofstede, 2001, p.160); 'what is different, is curious' attitude (Hofstede, 1991, p.125); and 'preference for tasks with uncertain outcomes and calculated risks' (Hofstede, 2001, p.169).

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In different cultural context, cultural risk acceptable is different depending on the level of cultural risk taking. Dowling and Staeling (1994) categorised acceptable risk as a two-type construct: 'the point above which the product category is perceived as too risky to indulge in, and the point above which a specific product category has an unacceptable level of perceived risk to purchase' (Dowling and Staeling, 1994, p.120). A consumer will typically attempt to reduce the risk associated with the purchase or outright reject the product if the degree of the perceived risk is above their risk tolerance threshold or risk-taking threshold.

Besides the specific level, the impact of culture on one's risk-taking and perceived risk also have been illustrated and recognised at the general level (Weber and Hsee, 1998), and a culturally significant influence on individual cognition and cognitive structure (Triandis, 1980; Bond, 1988) has been demonstrated in a section of culture review.

Empirical Marketing (Verhage et al., 1990; Weber and Hsee, 1998) provides additional support for cultural influence on risk taking. Hofstede's (1984) cultural uncertainty avoidance dimension negatively affects innovativeness (Lynn and Gelb, 1996; Yaveroglu and Donthu, 2002). However, cultural uncertainty avoidance index normally is related to the risk aversion, as a higher consumer risk perception will be attributed by a higher uncertainty avoidance index within different cultural context (Nakata and Sivakumar, 1996; Mitchell and Vassos, 1998; Van Birgelen et al., 2002).

Consumers process the risk aversion regarding the degree to which the product would be appropriate for their needs. They have uncertainties regarding the consequences of such failure. Therefore, in the present research, the dynamic between the Chinese woman's risk-taking propensity and their perception of risk in a specific product category is an important one to consider in Chinese cultural context. Both the theoretical frameworks and empirical research exists to support the notion that variations across cultures on these aspects of risk taking are relevant. Correspondingly, requested by the research aim and research questions, in the present research, the dynamic between Chinese females' risk-taking propensity and their perception of risk towards tampons and its product category as classified in a Chinese cultural context are considerable and worth exploring, especially on social and psychological risks. By and large, risk aversion research should be conducted in association with particular buying situations, tampons or a specific product category, and culture. It shows that the degree of complication is correlated with the value of such a product category as well as the correlation between the degree of perceived risk and risk-taking level in Chinese cultural context.

2.6.3.3 Undesired Self

Undesired self is described as symbolising what an individual does not want to be or become (Ogilvie, 1987). According to the concept, some feared features and negative characteristics of one's self-concept are contained in undesired self. Phillips *et al.*, (2007) highlighted that it is 'a representation of the self at its worst, it thus acts as a central avoidance goal' (Phillips *et al.*, 2007, p.1037). Furthermore, the undesired self is also attributed to feared memories (Ogilvie, 1987) and feared future possibilities (Cheung, 1997), hence, the individual is motivated to consistently avoid such events or any possibilities.

The undesired self (Ogilvie, 1987) is also believed to reflect a negative emotional value which contributes to the boundaries of a kind of person that I wish not to be, and motivates individuals refraining from being the undesired self (Lewis and Haviland, 2000). When a specific product category is associated or attributed to a negative emotion or meaning, an individual's undesired self will empower the most extreme notions of what is 'not me' to reject the product (Banister and Hogg, 2001).

In a similar way to consumption, scholars assert that anti-consumption towards a specific product category also contributes to anti-consumer's self-concepts defining their social reference groups (Englis and Solomon, 1997; Banister and Hogg, 2001;). For instance, the conspicuous consumption of luxury brands symbolically represents an ostentatious lifestyle that some consumers do not desire. These consumers avoid consuming luxury brands due to their being identified with an avoidance group rather than for cost reasons (Lee, 2010). Hence, rejecting the consumption these brands or not is a sign of consumer identity, representing which social class they will be in or be not a part of.

Through the anti-consumption behaviour, anti-consumers express their undesired selves in order to access their desired selves (Hogg and Banister, 2001). As the fear of being or becoming drives a strong motivation to maintain self-identity, the undesired self is of particular relative with anti-consumers. Consequently, the undesired self is an important reason against performing anti-consumption practice.

2.6.4 The Lack of Theoretical Model of Anti-consumption

In order to study consumer behaviour, various approaches have been developed, usually stemming from various psychology traditions. Scholars have developed various typologies to classify this research, for example, Solomon *et al.*, (Bamossy and Solomon, 2016) listed 17 theories.

Despite the flourishing concentration in the anti-consumption topic, the lack of anti-consumption theoretical model is preventing this topic to reaching its full development (Makri et al., 2020), this research will lead a ‘reasons against’ model to provide a model guidance for further research on the anti-consumption of a specific product category.

The theoretical background of anti-consumption is reasons theory (Chatzidakis and Lee, 2012), Behavioural Reasoning Theory (BRT, Westsby, 2005) is the core and updated one, which distinguishes between ‘reasons for’ and ‘reasons against’ performing a behaviour (Chatzidakis and Lee, 2012). BRT is classified into cognitive approach models of behaviour theories. In various theories or models, cognitive models significantly relate to the main cultural influences on consumer behaviour (Foxall, 1990; Moital, 2006; Bray, 2008). It has been claimed that cognitivism is now considered to be the primary framework in research on consumer behaviour (Furedy and Riley, 1987). Thus, in line with the requirements of the aims of this research, we would like to examine, in more detail, the application of cognitive models and the limitations of cognitive models (Ranson and Stewart, 1994; Natarajan and Bagozzi, 1999;) and the BRT to conduct an emic conceptual framework of the research (Figure 9) to offer more guidance to the research in order to lead a ‘reasons against’ model.

2.6.4.1 Two Major Types of Cognitive Approach Models

Two major types of cognitive models can be discerned as outlined in Figure 7 (Bray, 2008). First type is an analytical model which provides a key element framework that explains consumers’ purchasing behaviours.

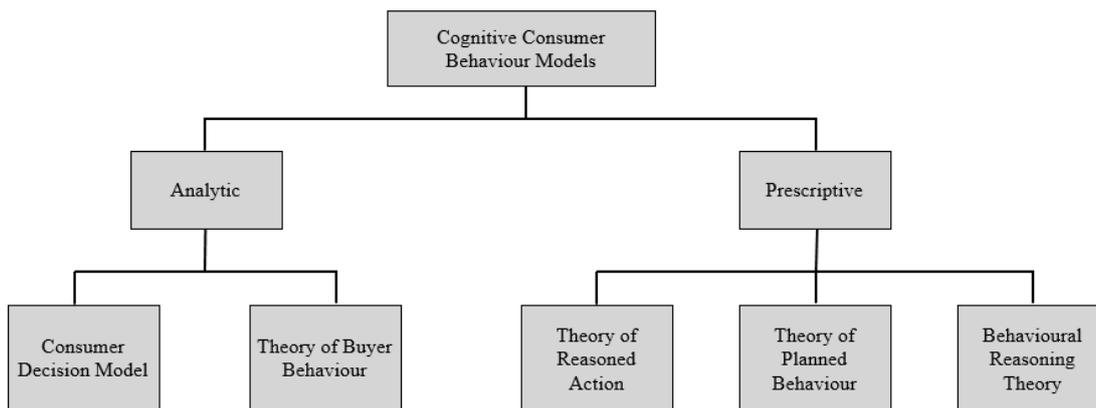


Figure 7 Cognitive consumer behaviour models (adapted form Bray, 2008)

In analytics subcategory, Howard and Sheth’s the Theory of Buyer Behaviour (TBB, 1969) and Blackwell et al.’s the Consumer Decision Model (CDM, 2001) are the most cited models (Bray,

2008; Reynolds and Olson, 2001). TBB identifies a large number of influencing determinants and suggest there are wide-ranging relationships between aspects of consumers' decision making (Kassarjian, 1982), such as personality, social group identity, family, circumstance, motivation and attitudes of consumption, cultural values and personal lifestyle (Howard and Sheth, 1969). Culture, which this present research mainly focuses on, is only one of many factors, and is considered as an influence variable rather than an antecedent of behaviour. The 'reasons against' are not listed in influence variables; they are complex in its demand for more quantitative sophisticated data collecting techniques (Leone et al., 2004). Due to their wide-ranging scope of influencing factors, they cannot support this research to achieve the aim or answer the research questions. In CDM, an individual is seen as someone who is an 'information processor' (Ribeaux and Poppleton 1978) and acknowledges that the social, cultural, and environmental context, actively pursued by consumers, has a significant part to play because individual behaviour is often affected by such inputs (Stewart and Pavlou, 2002). CDM usually follows the five traditional stages of classification, which comprises recognising the problem, a search for information, an alternative evaluation, making a choice, and evaluation of the outcome – to present the procedure of decision-making (Erasmus et al., 2001; Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). Although this research will explore the process, the culture and 'reasons against', which the present are mainly focusing on, are ignored. Theoretically, it hardly supports this research.

Secondly, prescriptive subcategory provides 'guidelines or frameworks to organise how consumer behaviour is structured' (Moital, 2006, p.12) and include information about when elements ought to appear and determine the impact that should be evident, according to particular causal factors. Practitioners benefit from inviting the particular reaction from consumers through the measurement of accentuated potential stimulus. Three most referenced include the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA, Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975), the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB, Ajzen, 1985) and Behavioural Reasoning Theory (BRT, Westsby, 2005). TRA emphasises the attitude and subjective (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) and TPB highlights perceived control as the premise, which is an important link between antecedents and behaviour (Westaby 2005). Unlike the other two theories, BRT suggests adding 'reasons' (Westaby, 2005. p.98), which are considered by many to provide a composite view of behaviour. Importantly, according to BRT, the reasons are crucial links between beliefs/values, intention and behaviours. BRT is the theoretical basis of anti-consumption research, it captures the 'specific subjective factors people use to explain their anticipated behaviour' (Westaby, 2005, p.100), which offers an opportunity and advantage to answer the research questions at a more cultural context-specific level, especially through the emic approach.

2.6.4.2 Pro and Cons of Cognitive Approach Models

Foxall (1990, p.18) outlines the following main advantages of using cognitivism (including Behavioural Reasoning Theory) as a tool for describing the behaviour of consumers:

- *“Its closeness to the common-sense explanations of everyday discourse make it an intuitively attractive means of offering explanations of everyday behaviours such as purchasing and consuming.*
- *The ability of consumers to describe their experiences in terms of their attitudes, wants, needs and motives ensures that an explanation proceeds in the same terms as the description of what is explained.*
- *It brings a measure of unity and consensus to a still young field of inquiry.*
- *The extensive use made by other social science and humanity disciplines of cognitive explanation has assisted the conceptual development of this line of consumer research by making possible the borrowing of theoretical and methodological inputs” (Foxall, 1990, p.18).*

To further expand on this, cognitivism is well suited for exploration of complex behaviours (Foxall, 1990). However, the cognitive approach does have its detractors. According to Foxall (1990, p. 96), the cognitive approach, *“...relies extensively upon the use of abstract and unobservable explanatory variables which seldom prove amenable to empirical investigation and evaluation” (Foxall, 1990, p. 96).*

Finally, some of the assumptions regarding certain aspects of consumer-characteristics have been put into doubt. For example, assumptions of consumers being active and logical have been challenged by various researchers along with the assumptions of consumers as discerning and rational (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007; Solomon *et al.*, 2006).

2.6.4.3 Behavioural Reasoning Theory and the Conceptual Framework of the Research

Drawing upon reasons theory, anti-consumption focuses on the reason against consumption (Chatzidakis and Lee, 2012) to reveal its distinctive contribution to marketing research, Behavioural Reasoning Theory (BRT, Westsby, 2005) is the core and updated reasons theory (Figure 8). Westsby (2005, p.120) stated:

‘In the predictive formulation of BRT, reasons are defined as the specific subjective factors people use to explain their anticipated behaviour. Reasons are theorised to have two broad sub-dimensions: ‘reasons for’ and ‘reasons against’ performing a behaviour as pros and cons, benefits

and costs, and facilitators and constraints/obstacles/barriers. Reasons can represent not only people's pro/con and benefit/cost explanations, but also their facilitator/constraint explanations. Hence, reasons are conceptualised to capture a wide array of specific factors in the full explanation. Reasons are not presumed to exist in isolation from people's beliefs and values. Instead, the reasons people use to influence and sustain their behaviour are presumed to result from the processing of their beliefs and values. BRT theories that reasons become strengthened after behaviours are enacted, in accordance with dissonance theory and may be used to support, distort, or rationalise behaviour.' (Westaby, 2005. p.120)

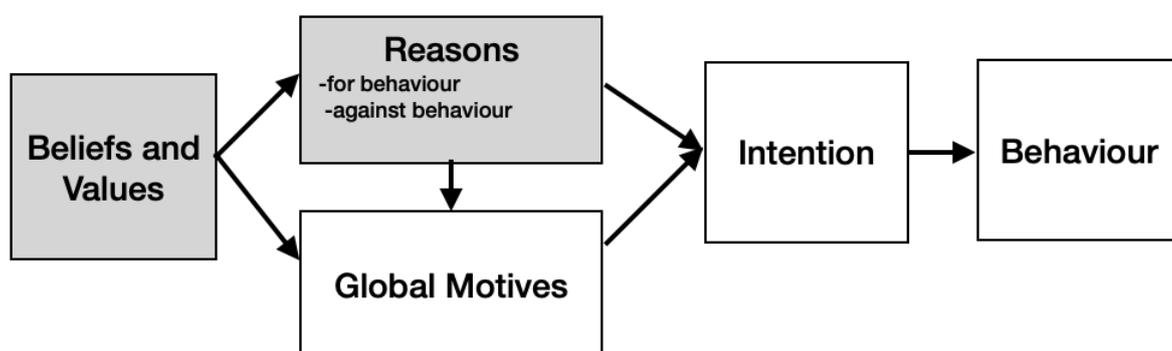


Figure 8 Behavioural Reasoning Theory (adopted from Westaby, 2005. Shaded boxes denote context-specific cognitions used to form and sustain global motives, intentions, and behaviour)

Two serious limitations are considered although cognitive approaches provide rich explanations on how to make consumption decisions. The first one is that consumers are assumed as the reasoned and rational one which seems inattention on the function of emotion (Natarajan and Bagozzi, 1999). The second is the lack of examination into the concept of volition, to seek an understanding of, and consequently to point out the gap between, the intentions of consumption the consumer stated with the final consumption behaviour performed.

However, according to the concept of anti-consumption applied in the present research, anti-consumption is considered as an intentional rejection behaviour. Compared with alternative products such as sanitary pads, anti-consumers performed the rejection action towards tampons, it is not impulsive to do shopping, it is an intentional decision to not to do it.

Moreover, unlike the other two theories, BRT suggests adding 'reasons', 'global motives' (including attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control) and intention (Westaby, 2005. p.98), which is considered by many to provide a composite view of behaviour. Importantly,

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according to BRT, the reasons are crucial links between beliefs/values, global motives, intention, and behaviours.

Most cultural study and related disciplines are founded on theories generated in the western cultural-context, with scholars recognising that these theories in universal studies present the western culture (Lituchy and Punnett, 2014; Punnett, 2017). This means that it is necessary to validate the most current theories in different cultural contexts. The lack of emic theories which boost cultural and related research has bounded the growth of emic empirical work. Next, the continuing argument for the comparison between the target of emic and etic exploring cultures has also limited the development of cultural research. The emic protagonist (Berry *et al.*, 2002) suggests that: *'cultural research should be indigenous and must be conducted on the basis of culture-specific frameworks. In contrast, the etic researchers advocate the advantages of examining differences by using previously established universal frameworks as benchmarks'* (Berry *et al.*, 2002, p.11). The lack of indigenous studies and emic frameworks or theories, especially in Chinese culture, are the challenges of the present research.

Despite the flourishing concentration in the anti-consumption topic, the lack of anti-consumption theoretical model is preventing this topic to reaching its full development (Makri *et al.*, 2020); this research will lead a 'reasons against' model to provide model guidance for further research on the anti-consumption of a specific product category.

In the present research, the case of tampons in China is a national level phenomenon of anti-consumption, in relation to which most Chinese women intentionally and meaningfully reject consuming tampons. BRT is the theoretical basis of anti-consumption research, it captures the "specific subjective factors people use to explain their anticipated behaviour" (Westaby, 2005, p.100), which offers opportunities and advantages to answer the research questions at a more cultural context-specific level, especially through the emic approach. Therefore, we consider drawing upon BRT, to conduct an emic conceptual framework of the research (Figure 9) to offer more guidance to the research and to lead a 'reasons against' model.

As shown in Figure 9, given the inconsistency of etic values views in the research and the preliminary research finding, it is necessary to conduct more accurate research into the case of tampons in China. To provide a more accurate insight into the complex factors underlying the anti-consumption of women in China, the framework of adopts emic Chinese cultural values pattern/system, which is the deep structure of Chinese culture, including egoism/personalism, situationism, relational orientation and Confucian Ethical System. The adoption of emic values can also generate new conceptualisations and interpretations of the complex contextual factors

within the anti-consumption field. These new concepts will not only theoretically contribute invaluable cultural element pools for future anti-consumption study, but will also, theoretically, provide a timely update on the Chinese emic cultural system, and provide a foundation and new resources for further etic research.

Next, considering that BRT's premise is that the 'Reasons' segment is an important link between cultural values and behaviour (Westaby 2005), its applicability has not yet been validated in a Chinese cultural context yet; moreover, there are other elements in the reasons segment box, such as risks and product category that literally influence anti-consumption. Their appearance, the order of appearance, and the effects within them have not yet been explored in China. Thus, unlike the BRT, the 'Reasons' segment box is in the solid shape outline box, or solid lines with arrows are utilized. Instead, in the emic conceptual framework, they are presented by dotted lines, which indicate that the segments and relationships between or within the boxes of segments, will be explored in the present research; the elements in the boxes, their appearance, the order of their appearance, and the effects within them will be observed by given behaviour of the anti-consumption tampons. This emic conceptual framework will lead to a 'reasons against' model, which will provide model guidance for further research on the anti-consumption of a specific product category – a culturally sensitive product. This model could be used to evaluate the relationships between cultural values, 'reasons for and against' and anti-consumption, especially in relation to the intentional and meaningful rejection of the consumption of a specific product category.

Additionally, the 'reasons for and against' significantly influence consumer to perform or not perform the behaviour in research. For example, Claudy and Peterson (2014, p.181) supported *'the direct paths from reasons for and against doing to behaviour'*, and *'the non-significant influence of attitudes on behaviour'*. They suggested that the model with *'a direct path between reasons and behaviour'* better fits the data (Claudy and Peterson, 2014, p.181). Some researchers conclude that data that reflect intentions are of no value to accurately predict purchasing behaviours or sales (Lee et al. 1997, Ajzen, 2006). Given the existing national phenomenon, most Chinese women have performed the behaviour of rejecting consuming tampons, and the research questions focus on reason against and cultural values; global motives and intention in BRT are not the scope of this research, at least not at this stage which is the first step of exploration. Thus, these research features are not visually represented in Figure 9.

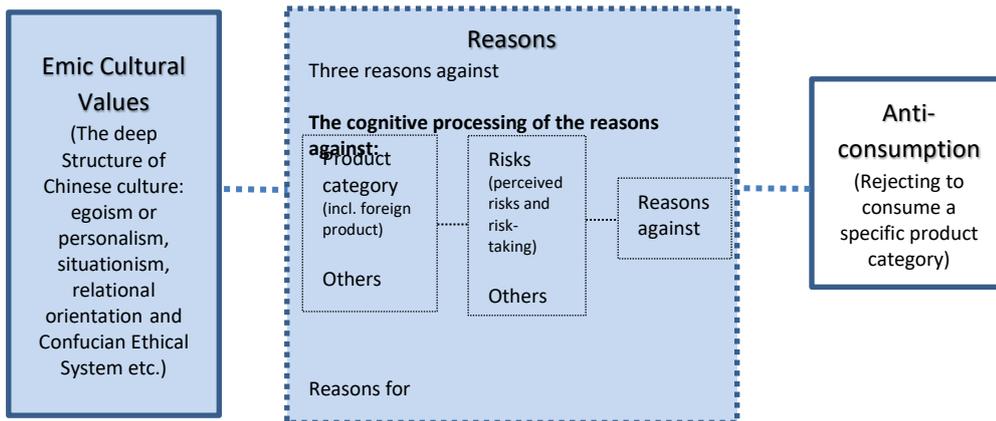


Figure 9 An emic conceptual framework of the present research

2.7 Conclusion of Chapter 2

Chapter 2 begins by reviewing (A) culture and behaviour: the culture and behaviour concepts and the characteristics of culture, to identify how to unpack and operationalise culture from different perspectives, and the underlying dimensions of cultural influence and the antecedent forces giving rise to them as well as the behavioural consequences of them. Following this, the chapter reviews (B) Chinese cultural emic research: four main concepts of Chinese emic cultural values system: egoism/personalism, situationism, relational orientation and Confucian ethical system. By ending with, (C) anti-consumption concepts, its theory base - Behaviour Reasoning Theory, and three reasons motivating anti-consumption. The chapter concludes with the following four points:

(1) Culture is all that matters in behaviour and the cultural values system approach is the most successful one to understand and predict (anti)consumer behaviour.

The literature in the culture field reviewed what culture is, why culture is important in terms of behaviour and how to best unpack and operationalise culture from different perspectives. It focuses on these in order to understand the underlying dimensions of a culture's influence, the two antecedents' forces giving rise to them and the corresponding behavioural consequences. The literature suggests culture is human made, and the nature of cultural influences on an individual can be seen as a circular process from which meaning is created, maintained, and transmitted within a society. Values, as the core of culture, have been considered as a central concept for determining, guiding, and explaining social and personal behaviour. Behaviours are not only the composition of a culture but are also the explicit cultural expressions that are determined by its value systems. Behaviours can be conceptualised as the cultural outcome and values system's influences because a values pattern/system affects behaviour and interpretations

of it; simultaneously, culture or a cultural values system is not an external factor whose effects on the individual must be examined, but rather an integral part of human behaviour. Utilising the value system approach in consumer behaviour research has been widely accepted in marketing academia and applications in the real world, with scholars coming to a definitive conclusion that in order to understand and predict consumer behaviour, the values system approach is the most successful.

(2) There is a need for an emic cultural approach to facilitate a more accurate insight into the complex factors that underpin (anti)consumer behaviours within that specific cultural context.

The culture and cultural values system can be analysed from different perspectives or through the different lenses of emic or etic, all of which can provide better explanations to cultural evaluation and are thus valid in contributing to our understanding of consumer behaviour. Most non-western (including China) cultural and cross-cultural consumer behaviour research has used etic values system concepts and elements, especially focusing on Hofstede's values dimensions' model, analysing, and identifying the contrast between 'Eastern-collectivist-interdependent societies' and 'Western-individualist-independent societies'. However, drawing on Hofstede's etic cultural values, it is contradictory and insufficient to interpret the phenomenon of why most Chinese females reject tampons in this new product. The chapter also explores four main concepts of Chinese emic cultural values systems: egoism/personalism, situationism, relational orientation and Confucian Ethical System. None of these have been applied to anti-consumption research. This gap attributes to the lack of research into Chinese emic cultural values system perspectives to investigate (anti)consumer behaviour. An awareness of the emic approach and its study in both academic and empirical research will provide more accurate insights into the complex factors underlying the buying behaviours of consumers in any particular cultural context. It will also provide insights and interpretations into the complex contextual factors involved in international business research and practice, especially in emerging economies (e.g. China).

(3) Need a 'reasons against' model and non-individual level antecedent to explore anti-consumption phenomena

Despite the flourishing concentration in the anti-consumption topic, the lack of anti-consumption theoretical model is preventing this topic to reaching its full development (Makri et al., 2020), this research will lead a 'reasons against' model to provide model guidance for further research on the anti-consumption of a specific product category.

Anti-consumption topics have mainly explored individual-level antecedents as drivers and predictors of anti-consumption behaviour, but the non-individual level antecedent of the

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phenomena of anti-consumption, in prior research, has been largely overlooked. Three fundamental reasons that motivate anti-consumption – risk aversion, innovation resistance, and undesired self – have not been investigated within the context of China. Because of this, it is important to take a more thorough approach, e.g. a national emic cultural approach, to investigate the various phenomena that underpin anti-consumption and assess the utilisation of the three principal reasons that motivate anti-consumption across various cultural contexts. Drawing on BRT, the theoretical basis of anti-consumption, and in line with the literature review, an emic conceptual framework of the research is established to offer more guidance for the research and lead a ‘reasons against’ model.

(4) The present research will fill the gaps and contribute significantly.

There is a lack of empirical and academic consumer behaviour research that specifically focuses on the anti-consumption of tampons. Taking the case of tampons in China as an example, this research will draw upon an emic approach and conceptual framework to explore and identify the reasons against tampon consumption, the cognitive process of reasons against and the most significant emic cultural elements at the root of these reasons in a Chinese context. This current study will accomplish the research central aim and fill the above-mentioned gaps.

This research will prompt a more accurate understanding of the overlooked national-level emic cultural antecedent of anti-consumption phenomena towards a specific product category, to explore the various phenomena comprising anti-consumption, test the applicability of the three main reasons that motivate anti-consumption in a Chinese context, and the four concepts of the emic Chinese values system in relation to anti-consumption. In this present research, the utilisation of the cultural emic approach will provide novel cultural concepts and interpretations within the field of anti-consumption. These novel concepts will provide an important update on the emic cultural foundation and system in China along with a resource that can be utilised for further etic research. It will also contribute crucial pools of cultural elements to support further study of anti-consumption. This research will lead a ‘reason against’ model. Moreover, in the real world, the present study will empirically provide multinational firms with a reframed and more accurate insight for practical problems and build a more holistic and ‘richer’ perspective on the cultural underpinnings of the research problem.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The central aim of the research is to better understand the national level anti-consumption phenomena towards a specific product category, leading to a 'reasons against' model. The case of tampons in China will be taken as an example to accomplish this central aim. The research will utilise an emic approach to investigate and identify the reasons against consuming tampons and the most significant national emic cultural antecedents underlying these reasons in a Chinese context.

The methodology has been chosen in order to best complement the research design and research topic (Silverman, 2016). Chapter 3 introduces the methodology selected for the aims and research topic of this thesis. The methodology describes the researchers' perspectives and knowledge frameworks, determining the way that reality is observed (McGregor and Murnane, 2010; Creswell, 2009). Kakkuri-Knuuttila *et al.* (2008) recommend categorically quoting the methodological approach that is used, to ensure there is clear understanding of the method of research, provisionally suggesting the most effective methods of exploring the new generated knowledge (McGregor and Murnane, 2010). Implementing the philosophical grounding of the research is also of benefit to the researcher, as it provides direction and security regarding the methodology's application (McGregor and Murnane, 2010). This chapter aims to provide a philosophical position before it outlines the research design, the methods that will be utilised and the sample that is being investigated. The chapter will then conclude with a description of the endeavours to assure a good-quality design framework.

The research conducts an interpretive philosophy, inductive approach and case study qualitative research strategy, depth semi-structured interview research method. The data collection consists of two stages; the first stage of pilot study is designed to support the second main interview stage of the study. In total 37 participants are interviewed (Table 3 in section 3.6.1).

3.2 Research Philosophy

The philosophy of research favoured by researchers can be thought of as their presumptions about the way they view the world (Saunders *et al.*, 2012), the significant impact that the research philosophy has on understanding research questions, the selected methods selected, and ways to deduce the findings (Crotty, 1998; Johnson and Clark, 2006). A philosophical stance

is taken by researchers regarding their research questions, which is impacted by their beliefs regarding ontology (the researcher's perspective of 'the nature of reality or being') and epistemology (the researcher's opinion about 'what constitutes acceptable knowledge') (Bryman and Bell, 2003; Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2002; Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Research philosophies are suited to different research questions, and no one is better than the others (Saunders *et al.*, 2009; Saunders, 2011). Researchers do not favour one philosophical position, working with different philosophical positions if it is recognised that there are several ways that the world can be interpreted or that research can be conducted, and, as multiple realities are possible, one stance cannot determine the full picture (Kelemen and Rumens, 2008).

Furthermore, increased globalisation makes it essential to comprehend the role of context when carrying out international consumer and business research; however, the literature does not often adequately focus on contextual factors (Teagarden *et al.*, 2018). Historically, Birkinshaw, Brannen and Tung (2011) note that the field of international business was established through studies that employed valuable explanatory qualitative research; however, there has been a recent trend towards non-speculative empirical approaches within the social science field, which have prompted the utilisation of more standardised quantitative methods. Scholars in the management field who have studied management in emerging markets have adopted a quantitative *etic* approach; Shackman's (2013) study of literature on international business determined that structural equation modelling is the technique that is most used. Birkinshaw *et al.* (2011) argue that this field's transformation has caused missed opportunities for an improved understanding of contexts and processes, and that a deeper, grounded perspective can be gained from using qualitative methods. Buckley *et al.* (2014) note that qualitative methods and *emic* approaches can bring about novel interpretations and conceptualisations of the intricate contextual factors that are concerned with international business practice and research, particularly in growing economies, for example, China.

The present research focuses on a national level anti-consumption phenomenon in Chinese cultural context. This section will review interpretivism of epistemology as the main single research particular philosophical position and will mainly focus on the characteristic which highlights the role of context, thick description and systematic interpretation, examining the interconnection between interpretivism and qualitative methods. These reviews and examinations support the idea that, for this research, interpretivism and proceed qualitative methods appear more appropriate and acceptable over the other paradigms.

When employing positivist perspective researchers are concerned with facts and collect data related to an apparent reality that they consider to be more important than unreal philosophical or conceptual abstractions. Positivism tends to create law-like generalisations and utilises statistical analysis and measurable observation to test hypotheses (Gill and Johnson, 2010). Contrastingly, interpretivism contends that the real world is too complicated to define through law-like theory: further observations and studies should be conducted to comprehend the differences between social actors, who are humans and not objects (Monahan and Fisher, 2010). Saunders *et al.* (2009) posit that human beings define their day-to-day social roles according to the meaning they convey. Interpretivism usually utilises small sample sizes to facilitate in-depth qualitative investigations. Positivist research is determined by cause and effect (Creswell *et al.*, 2003). In contrast, interpretivism researchers understand “the world of human experience” (Cohen *et al.*, 2002, p. 36) consistent with this view, Silverman (2016, 2013) claims that interpretivist researchers discover reality through participants’ views based on their own background and experiences.

Upon the review of various schools of thought, interpretivism provides a theoretical underpinning for the researchers to understand the world through the participants’ insights and experiences. In scientific inquiry, such insights and experiences can help the researcher, following the interpretive paradigm, to build an analytical framework from the data collected (Creswell *et al.*, 2003; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2013). Interpretivism encourages researchers to view the world through the lens of individual experiences.

The interpretivism’s features can be further defined in the context of the following three areas: subjective views and multiple views orientation, as well as context concerns,

“Interpretivists believe an understanding of the context in which any form of research is conducted is critical to the interpretation of data gathered”; “Although the interpretive paradigm is not a dominant model of research, it is gaining considerable influence, because it can accommodate multiple perspectives and versions of truths” (Willis et al., 2007, p. 4).

Let us first look at Silverman (2016, 2013) and Willis *et al.* (2007), who argue that interpretivism pursues a specific contextual understanding of reality. Interpretivism’s main precept postulates that reality is a social construct. In the last twenty years, management researchers have concluded that management knowledge has been significantly skewed towards “Western” views. Although business communities have drawn researchers’ attention to this issue, “management scholars have been slower to respond” (Bruton, 2010, p. 6). In a similar vein, Das *et al.* (2013)

discovered that research papers appearing in most major economic publications often are concerned with the level of development while the lower GDP countries and the societies going through economic challenges received less of a focus. The researchers emphasized the importance of understanding management from a culturally indigenous perspective, and the importance of including local perspectives in addition to the global views as well as the formulation of locally driven managerial approaches and measurements (Holtbrügge, 2013). Therefore, the transition of the cultural context of the countries which have not been the subject of much research from the culturally “western” countries is fundamental. Achieving this understanding is possible only by conducting research in those countries and by including indigenous notions and criteria in such research.

Secondly, it is understood that when one engages in interpretive research, the outcomes tend to lean towards subjective rather than objective. Willis *et al.* (2007) mention that in interpretivism the goal is to allocate greater value to subjectivity, and “interpretivists eschew the idea that objective research on human behaviour is possible” (Willis *et al.*, 2007, p. 110). Smith (1993, p. 120), accordingly, argues that interpretivists tend to be ‘anti-foundationalists’, since “there is no particular right or correct path to knowledge, no special method that automatically leads to intellectual progress”. Those who subscribe to interpretivism believe that there are no universally applicable standards for such research and that, in fact, the standards are inevitably a “product of a particular group or culture” (Smith, 1993, p. 5). Interpretive researchers do not follow rigid research methods in their pursuit of answers. In fact, they typically interpret reality from their subjects’ perspective, usually from the kind of people who recognize and own their reality and experiences in the context of a particular cultural and social group or from their culture at large.

Finally, interpretivists unlike positivists (who believe in the existence of only one precise answer) accept viewpoints of multiple individuals from various groups, therefore they are much more comprehensive in their approach. Interpretivism, it could be said, is “accepting and seeking multiple perspectives, being open to change, practicing iterative and emergent data collection techniques, promoting participatory and holistic research, and going beyond the inductive and deductive approach” (Willis *et al.*, 2007, p. 583). Researchers argue that the primary views of regions or nations or ethnicities are derived from the various experiences and often diverging perceptions of individuals (Silverman, 2016; Willis *et al.*, 2007). Therefore, in other words, specific characteristics of national character can be decided by influential persons who hold sway over opinions of the larger group. As has been said, the interpretive paradigm can answer scientific inquiry through the creation of and supporting of multiple concepts of individual views of the world. As stated by Willis *et al.* (2007), the concept of multiple viewpoints is based on an

assertion of variability of external reality. According to Willis et al, (2007, p. 194) “different people and different groups have different perceptions of the world.” The general acknowledgement within interpretivism, that multiple perspectives can exist, should lead to exhaustive knowledge of the reality (Klein and Myers, 1999; Morehouse, 2012). This considerably helps cultural investigators to find required ‘insight’ and ‘in-depth’ material from a given portion of the population rather than the numbers provided by the sole application of statistics.

3.3 Research Approach

Deduction, induction and abduction are three principal research approaches (Blackmon and Maylor, 2005; Blaikie, 2007). Disparate approaches cater for varying research requirements and none of them are better than the other (Saunders, 2011; Suddaby, 2006). The choice of a research approach hinges on the research emphasis and the research question style (Ketokivi and Mantere, 2010).

The deductive approach uses theory, practical data, and verification to assess and build upon previously established and accepted theories (Jankowicz, 2000). In contrast, the aim of the inductive strategy is to bring a new theory through its own research, observation, data, and analysis (Blaikie, 2007). In summary: deductive strategy starts with and aims to extend existing theory; inductive strategy aims for wholly fresh developments to open up new areas in the research field (Blackmon and Maylor, 2005).

The current research starts at a phenomenon, which is that most Chinese females do not buy tampons. Chapter Two displays there is little existing research to give a reason for this phenomenon and a lack of anti-consumption theoretical model to guide this research (Makri *et al.*, 2020), especially in rejecting a specific product category. Whilst the BRT, the theoretical basis of anti-consumption, has a wealth of information concerning western cultural countries or by using cultural etic elements, far less is found in relation to the Chinese cultural context with Chinese cultural emic concepts.

Furthermore, the lack of emic frameworks, models or theories that are robust culture studies and related disciplines has bounded the growth of emic empirical work. The continuing argument for the comparison between the target of emic and etic exploring cultures has also limited the development of cultural research. The emic protagonist (Berry *et al.*, 2002) suggests that: *‘cultural research should be indigenous and must be conducted on the basis of culture-specific frameworks. In contrast, the etic researchers advocate the advantages of examining differences by using previously established universal frameworks as benchmarks’* (Berry *et al.*, 2002, p.11). The

lack of indigenous studies and emic frameworks or theories, especially in Chinese culture, are the challenges of the present research.

Given this background, it may be more appropriate to inductively conduct this research, leading to a 'reason against' model by using Chinese cultural emic concepts and emic approach, as suggested as in the analysis of the previous section. The 'reason against' model will provide a theoretical model guidance for further research on the anti-consumption of a specific product category – cultural sensitive product. This model could be used to evaluate the relationships between cultural values, product category, and 'reasons against and for' anti-consumption, especially in relation to the intentional and meaningful rejection of the consumption of a specific product category, this approach from the theory to data is an induction.

3.4 Research Strategy - Case Study

Research strategy is a key point that determines whether researchers are able to accomplish their goals. It is described as a research action plan through which a researcher can identify ways to find answers to their research questions (Saunders *et al.*, 2009; Saunders, 2011), and it is designed to link the philosophy of the research, followed by data collection and data analysis (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011).

Case Study is utilised as a guidance for this study. Case study provides 'a qualitative approach to studying phenomena in-depth, particularly poorly understood or emerging phenomena' (Njie *et al.*, 2014, p.37).

3.4.1 Case Study Concept and the Case

Taking the case of tampons in China as an example, by identifying the national emic cultural antecedents underlying the reasons against the consumption of tampons, this research aims to better understand a national level phenomenon of anti-consumption towards a specific product category in a cultural context. The case of tampons in China is a national level phenomenon of anti-consumption, in which most Chinese women do not buy tampons or intentionally and meaningfully reject them. Of concern is whether this phenomenon and this aim are specific enough to justify the term 'case study', as a research strategy. To explore this further, we consider the concept of case study which may offer more guidance and clarity.

A Case Study is defined as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the case) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between

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phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (Yin, 2017, p. 16). Qualitative case studies aim to provide answers to the questions ‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘why’; they take an empirical approach to research, which primarily utilises data that are contextually rich, taken from limited real-world settings to explore a particular phenomenon (Meredith, 1998; Roth, 2007; Saunders *et al.*, 2009; Yin, 2017). The intention is to create and develop theories (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yan and Gray, 1994) and investigate and improve understanding of new, modern phenomena or problems in real-world (Flynn *et al.*, 1990; Meredith, 1998). Case studies undertake the qualitative approach when conducting an in-depth study of a phenomenon; this is particularly the case for new phenomena of which researchers have limited understanding (Boyer and Swink, 2008).

Stake (2013, 1995) and Merriam (1998) highlight that a Case Study is selected for its particularity, and is ‘bounded’ by physical, temporal, social/cultural, and conceptual features. A case study researches ‘interest in the case, not by the methods of inquiry used’ (Stake, 2005, p.443). Similarly, according to Yin (2017), a case study can use various methods (e.g., ethnography, action-research, interviews, observation and documentary analysis methods etc.), the real-life context rather than laboratory experimentation and the central concept as the boundary, although it can be unclear. In addition, the outer limit of a case may also be empirically ascertained or it might be constructed abstractly from a theory-based class, from observation, or an ideal type (Dumez, 2015).

The above reviewed definitions of a case study provide the basis for this research’s nature of qualitative case study as an empirically focused inquiry into a given issue, utilising deep and detailed information acquired in the actual context and background of the issue, to answer the investigatory questions.

In relation to “the tampons case in China”, any number of these concepts’ perspectives on what a case might involve seems to be operating. The case is a specific, a complex, functioning thing (Stake, 1995). The contemporary phenomenon, i.e., most Chinese females do not buy tampons or intentionally and meaningfully reject tampons, is the case; the boundaries between the phenomenon (i.e., anti-consumption, intensively and meaningfully reject a specific product category) and context (i.e. culture) may not be clearly evident as they are symbiotic (as reviewed in Chapter 2.2). The research captures the stories of the participants who do/did not buy tampons through individual in-depth interviews, testing the applicability of Chinese cultural emic concepts and exploring how these interact with the behaviour of not buying or rejecting tampons, in order to answer the research questions and to deductively develop the existing BRT theory in the Chinese context. Maintaining options for and alterations of data resources, assessment of

pertinent existing research and ongoing identification of the investigatory questions are all possible by adopting a deductive methodological approach.

Furthermore, three types of case study, “the intrinsic”, “the instrumental” and “the multiple or collective” have been distinguished by Stake (1995, pp. 445-448). For the instrumental type, researchers are interested in understanding something more than just one case, studying it only as a means to a larger goal (Stake, 2005). This is consistent with Eisenhardt and Graebner (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007), Yan and Gray (1994) who emphasise that theory-building or affirmation is also generally the aim of case research besides the need to comprehend the actual context of a developing or current event or occurrence in a case study (Flynn *et al.*, 1990; Meredith, 1998).

According to Stake’s three types of case study, ‘the tampons case in China’ might be described as an instrumental case study because the intention seems not only to focus on the Chinese females rejecting tampons, but also on the cultural emic conceptual insights into cultural interpretation of anti-consumer behaviour and the possibilities for generalisation and the identification of interaction between culture and (anti)consumer behaviour. If considered in this way, our study is extended further from an instrumental case study to other cultural contexts. By employing this type of “instrumental” case study the extent to which this investigation has developed throughout the research is revealed; progressing to not only address the thesis question but also to provide substantial impetus for any subsequent empirical research. With reference to the cataloguing in this section, the research strategy is an amalgamation of the following methods: (1) empirical case study research and (2) theoretical development.

3.4.2 The Pros and Cons of Case Study

Scholars outline several attributes of case study research that make it increasingly attractive for inclusion as these shores up our fledgling methodology (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007; Lewis, 2015; Roth, 2007; Voss, 2010; Yin, 2017):

- 1) The provision of a qualitative approach that is used to collect rich, original data from the real world to conduct in-depth research on a particular phenomenon.
- 2) Uncovering a topic for research in its particular context knowing its capability to full comprehend the context of the case.
- 3) Investigators’ particular focus on a ‘case’ while retaining a holistic, real-world viewpoint.

However, these benefits come with drawbacks. From various methods using available perspectives to illustrate:

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- 1) A method that can be used to access secondary data is documentary analysis. Secondary data often has a smaller number of resource requirements, can be extensively available, and the expenditure for data collection is lower (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2010). However, the secondary data could be less reliable, and it may not be a good fit for the requirements of the new research, as it relies on the authority and standards of the initial researcher (Denscombe, 2014).
- 2) However, even though the observations and interviews can potentially supply primary data that meet the objectives of the research objectives, they have clear disadvantages. Alongside financial and temporal costs, ways to deal with the problems with the quality of primary data should be specified when they relate to validity, reliability, generalisability and types of bias (Silverman, 2016, 2013). For instance, when conducting in-depth and semi-structured interviews, poor standardisation could cause unreliability, which also poses the risk of interviewer, interviewee and participation bias (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012, 2002).
- 3) Case studies can provide unforeseen insights; this can lead to new inquiries, but can also be more costly and time-consuming and brings a potential risk of misleading the entire research (Yin, 2017). Importantly, when using a limited and atypical number of cases, it may not be possible to generalise the case study (Bonoma, 1985; Meredith, 1998; Yin, 2017).

A further disadvantage is that quantitative validity and transferability are lacking in the in-depth interview case study approach (Harrigan, 1986; Silverman, 2007). The ideal approach is to carry out quantitative research to supplement the findings of a qualitative case study. However, as the first research is of the (anti)consumer behaviour towards tampons, this thesis mainly focuses on the initial qualitative interpretation of this case. Yin (2017) argues that the best case study provides a foundation for further examination. Due to the time limitation of this research a quantitative supplement may not be scheduled although it may well be considered, primarily, as main further research.

Another problem is that case studies can often be reliant on subjective data, such as interviews, in which the interviewees' interpretation tends to be mostly based on personal experiences. As a result, data can vary depending on the view and descriptions given by interviewees. Stake (2005) suggests utilising replicative, falsification and triangulation methods to better avoid subjectivity and to maximise the objectivity of data. Additionally, there are ethical issues related to interviewees' subjective data that need to be taken into consideration. It is crucial to consider the rights of participants, such as anonymity and data confidentiality, and to be prepared for the eventuality that a participant may refuse to answer certain questions. Care should be taken by

researchers when reporting experiences, personal views, or opinions given by participants, as they could find this offensive.

Benefits of interview case studies include being able to conduct an in-depth examination of a topic. Researchers are able to concentrate on particular subject matter, which allows them to make a careful examination of various nuances and factors. Within their everyday settings, case studies can supply a rich description and an original investigation of a phenomenon. Case studies are regularly utilised to examine intricate phenomena during in-depth social science research interviews (Silverman, 2016, 2013). Yin (2017) posits that interviews are used in a range of situations to investigate knowledge related to organisational, group, individual, cultural, social, and political phenomena, thus facilitating comprehension of phenomena in a rich, detailed and significant manner. Although, often, case studies yield unintended insights, which can lead to new avenues of inquiry, it is often through these unintended insights that a case study can lead to better comprehension of the intricacies of phenomena in detail, thus maintaining options for and alterations of data resources. Assessment of pertinent existing research and ongoing identification of the investigatory questions are all possible by adopting a deductive methodological approach (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007).

Additionally, Gomm and Hammersley (2000) (Gomm *et al.*, 2000) proposed that the strength of a case study depends on its incorporation of assenting and dissenting opinions. An in-depth and refined consideration of relevant information is attainable via the qualitative case study interview method, as various viewpoints can be included and rich accounts can be developed. A larger number of in-depth, one-to-one interviews will support opportunities for researchers to accurately comprehend answers expressed by interviewees, and explore areas that have not been considered previously, but which have the potential to contribute to the research. This allows interviewees to clarify and expand their answers, which can bring richer data from which the researcher can find answers to the research questions (Cooper *et al.*, 2006). Berg *et al.* (2004) also explains how, following the methodical collation of data concerning an institution, occurrence, social context or individual, the issue or occurrence should be easier to more fully comprehend.

3.4.3 The Cohesion of Interpretivism and Qualitative Methods

Scholars tend to agree that qualitative methods are mostly used by the constructivist and interpretivist paradigm (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992; McQueen, 2002; Nind and Todd, 2011; Silverman, 2016; Thomas, 2003; Willis *et al.*, 2007). Willis *et al.* (Willis *et al.*, 2007, p. 90) states that: “interpretivists tend to favour qualitative methods”. Willis believes that in order for interpretivists to fully understand the context, they must rely on the wealth of content from the

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reports generated by the qualitative methods. In agreement with Willis, Thomas (2003) also contends when using the interpretivism, one *'portrays a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex, and ever changing..., and therefore interpretivists tend to favour qualitative methods'* (Thomas, 2003, p. 6). The adaptation of qualitative methods, as a specific characteristic of interpretivists in their approach, differentiates them from the subscribers to positivism. Positivism's reliance on interpreting the reality via measurable and objectively observable facts makes quantitative methods particularly suitable for its purposes (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992). This explains the reliance on qualitative methods by the interpretivists, arguing the following: *'interpretivist researchers seek methods that enable them to understand in depth the relationship of human beings to their environment and the part those people play in creating the social fabric of which they are a part'*. (McQueen, 2002, p. 17)

Interpretivism would rather not use the research approaches which concentrate solely on objective data or specific datasets. According to McQueen (2002, p. 16) *'interpretivists perceive reality by a series of individual eyes and select individuals who 'have their own interpretations of reality to encompass the worldview and quantitative methods that are not the favoured approach of the interpretivists'*. In contrast, according to those who subscribe to the interpretivist paradigm, examination of one's reality can be better served by qualitative methods.

Consequently, Creswell and Creswell (2017, p. 4) point out that *'qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem'*. Therefore, for the purposes of cultural behaviour research, qualitative methods are expected to be a better-suited option when looking for insights into customer ideas and their perspectives as well as their experiences. The most critical objective of the researchers following the interpretive model is to glean the 'insight' into 'in-depth' data. Therefore, the bare measurements and numbers produced by quantitative research, rather than descriptive words, are likely to be far less useful for such purposes.

One of the principal reasons for the in-depth and rich characteristics of the qualitative data is because such data is often captured by researchers via 'deep attentiveness, of empathetic understanding' (Punch and Oancea, 2014). The connection between qualitative methods and their role in the interpretivist paradigm have been now sufficiently established by the evaluations presented above.

Marguerite et al, (2010, p. 21) summarize the features of qualitative research as follows:

- 1) *"Studies are carried out in a naturalistic setting.*

- 2) *Researchers ask broad research questions designed to explore, interpret, or understand the social context.*
- 3) *Participants are selected through non-random methods based on whether the individuals have information vital to the questions being asked.*
- 4) *Data collection techniques involve observation and interviewing that bring the researcher in close contact with the participants.*
- 5) *The researcher is likely to take an interactive role where she or he gets to know the participants and the social context in which they live.*
- 6) *Hypotheses are formed after the researcher begins data collection and are modified throughout the study as new data are collected and analysed. The study reports data in narrative form."*

3.4.4 Summary and the Application of Interpretive Qualitative Methods in the Present Study

According to this review, the world is examined by the interpretivist research through the subject's own experiences. The specific backgrounds and ideas of the participants play a crucial part in qualitative methods. Interpretivism endeavours to collect experiential data from their subjects rather than statistical information described by numbers. There exists a strong connection between qualitative methodology as a means of acquiring the data and the interpretive paradigm as a methodological approach. Qualitative methodology is a preferred method of data collection for the interpretivist.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate mainland Chinese females' behaviour in the anti-consumption of tampons. Emic concepts will be adopted in the hope that, firstly, the research will provide individuals with the opportunity to facilitate their own interpretation of individual anti-consumption behaviours; secondly, that it will facilitate a deeper understanding of this specific cultural context and thirdly, that it will provide further insight into the 'cultural' variables which have influenced such consumer behaviour. To explore individual participants' cultural interpretation of their anti-consumption behaviour, an interpretive approach provides an investigative cultural context that allows the researcher to examine the participants' subjective and multifaceted thoughts and views on, and interpretations of, Chinese females' consumer behaviour in relation to tampons. In alignment with the interpretive paradigm underpinning this investigation, qualitative methods were employed in the data gathering stage, thus potentially allowing more diverse and multifaceted information to be available for interpretation. These qualitative methods allow the demographic group under investigation (Chinese females who

menstruate, but who do not consume this product) to explore, in their own words, their cultural interpretation on a range of questions, including: What are their perceptions of tampons? What, for them, is the cultural meaning of tampons? Why do they not purchase tampons? Thus, given the aim and intentions of this study, it seems that the interpretivist paradigm and concomitant qualitative approaches to data gathering are the most appropriate tools for the investigation in hand.

3.5 Research Method and Data Validity

There are numerous sources of data: structured interviews (during which the interview tool is fixed), semi-structured interviews, and observations (for instance, a tour of the plant or attending a meeting), archives (for instance, documents and historical papers, production statistics, and organisational charts). Many researchers will have only used one method, for example, an observation (Gersick, 1988), but others will have used several methods to triangulate data from various sources (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007).

3.5.1 Semi-structured Interviews

Which type of data source is adopted is dependent on its fitness for three aspects of consideration (Saunders *et al.*, 2009); (1) the purpose of the research; (2) the nature of the data collection questions, the relevance with research question and research strategy; (3) the significance of establishing personal contact. We examine the fitness between the research and these three aspects in turn.

"Semi-structured interviews provide us with the opportunity to 'probe' answers, where we want our interviewees to explain, or build on, their responses. This is important if you are adopting an interpretivist epistemology, where you will be concerned to understand the meanings that participants ascribe to various phenomena. Interviewees may use words or ideas in a particular way, and the opportunity to probe these meanings will add significance and depth to the data you obtain. Interviewees may use words or ideas in a particular way, and the opportunity to probe these meanings will add significance and depth to the data you obtain. They may also lead the discussion into areas that you had not previously considered but which are significant for your understanding, and which help you to address your research question and objectives, or indeed help you formulate such a question. Interviews also afford each interviewee an opportunity to hear themselves 'thinking aloud' about things they may not have previously thought about. The

result should be that you are able to collect a rich and detailed set of data." (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009, p. 324).

Two research questions of the present research are all 'what' questions. Semi-structured interviews are normally in line with gathering and analysing qualitative data, especially for a case study research strategy which aims to explore or understand the 'what' and 'how' questions. Semi-structured interviews are also very helpful to 'find out what is happening [and] to seek new insights' (Robson, 2002, p. 59).

Semi-structured interviews are non-standardised (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Scholars (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012; Healey, 1991; Jankowicz, 2000) suggest that semi-structured or unstructured interviews will be the most advantageous method to collect data in specific circumstances, including if the interview has a large number of questions, if there are complex, open-ended questions to be answered, or if the order of the questions varies according to the flow of the conversation. The research attempts to test four emic concepts of the deep structure of Chinese culture and three reasons which motivate anti-consumption in Chinese context, exploring more elements. These applicability tests request that some themes must be covered by the data collection which excludes non-structured interviews. The interview list in the present research is conducted by the interview themes and key questions which could differ depending on the interviewer's answers, the flow of the dialogue and her circumstance and whether she has rich knowledge of tampons or no awareness of tampons at all. This means that some themes or questions might be omitted, and some might be highlighted or in-depth interviews the order of questions may be varied.

Semi-structured interviews also benefit from the significance of establishing personal contact. Participants are more likely to agree to be interviewed instead of to fill a questionnaire, especially where the interview topic is seen to be interesting and relevant to their current daily behaviour (North *et al.*, 1983, cited in (Healey, 1991)).

In summary, the semi-structured interview is chosen to best address the present research's interpretivism research philosophy, the 'what' research questions, case study qualitative research strategy and the aim of research.

3.5.2 Data Validity and Preparing for the Interview

To ensure data validity, reduce the bias and develop a comprehensive and more accurate understanding of anti-consumption phenomena towards a specific product category, triangulation (Patton, 1999) is applied in the whole study. The whole study consists of pre-preliminary study,

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preliminary study (Lin, 2014), the present research and further quantitative research. The pre-preliminary and preliminary study provided the foundation of the present research, the further quantitative research is the complement to the present research. This research is the core of the whole study, continuously taking more than seven years focusing on the same phenomenon in which most Chinese women reject tampons. The whole study utilises multiple data collection methods and data sources (Pentland 1999), including Data A – D. Data A and B have been done by the author's MBA dissertation in 2014, Data C and D are collected by the present study.

(1) Data A - the pre-preliminary data. Data A is second-hand qualitative data, it is a part of the author's MBA dissertation (Lin, 2014), obtained from online tampons shopping websites.

(2) Data B - the preliminary data. Data B is collected by questionnaire, it is a first-hand quantitative data, and a part of the author's MBA dissertation (Lin, 2014). The questionnaire was designed by the author by utilising Data A to design Data B's questions and options/themes in the questionnaire.

(3) Data C - reviews documents. Data B is collected through second-hand data resources (e.g. the reports of the Wall Street Journal in relation the case tampons in China in the 1990s, and the 'ob' tampon's advertisements of Johnson and Johnson in the 1990s) in the present research (details in Chapter 1 and 4).

(4) Data D - semi-structured interviews. Data D is the first-hand qualitative data in/from the present research, collected by semi-structured interviews.

The pre-preliminary and preliminary data collection in the author's MBA dissertation (Lin, 2014) are briefly reviewed below.

- Data A - the pre-preliminary data: second-hand qualitative data

The pre-preliminary (Lin, 2014) utilised a qualitative method to explore basic variables and themes, which subsequently established the final format and content of the preliminary research, the questionnaires. To achieve this, pre-preliminary research utilised secondary data from the Taobao.com website which provided a vast amount of data on Chinese females' individual consumption views towards tampons, especially on views of pre-purchasing and post-purchasing tampons. Taobao is the biggest Chinese online sales platform (The Economist, 2015). Its combined gross merchandise volume exceeded £100 billion, more than that of eBay and Amazon combined (Alexa.com, 2018). Taobao sells an extensive range of products, including tampons, which are sold by hundreds of overseas purchasing stores. There are two function icons, "customer views" and "asking questions to others" on the Taobao.com stores' website pages for customers to post pre-

and post-purchasing queries and comments which provide a wealth of qualitative data for this pre-preliminary investigation. Of great significance for this investigation is the fact that comments and questions on this website are anonymously posted which, arguably, allows their customers to converse with no chance of their mutual identities being exposed and with a diminished concern for addressing cultural taboos. Pre-preliminary research collected more than 50,000 pre and post purchasing postings and classified them by themes which provided variable options for the preliminary questionnaire design.

- Data B - the preliminary data: 1000 questionnaires, a first-hand quantitative data

The themes classified by the Data A, were utilised by the author to design the questions and provide the variable options for the questionnaire (i.e. Data B); in other words, Data B was designed by the author herself based on Data A; Data A provided the source of Data B's design, Data B reflected Data A's themes in relation to respondents' tampon consumption.

The participants of the preliminary research are Chinese females who are eligible, potential tampon users. They are 18 plus years old, who have previously consumed menstrual products. It excludes pregnant or breastfeeding females or otherwise vulnerable adults. One thousand hardcopy self-administered questionnaires were distributed in the author's hometown, Shenyang, the provincial capital of Liaoning, with a population of 7.7 million (Shenyang Government, 2014) in August 2014. The survey was conducted in Shenyang; one reason for this is that it is the author's hometown which could reduce the cost of survey and enable the author work more effectively. More importantly, Shenyang is where the first applicator tampon was launched in China and is the home to Tampax's Chinese headquarters and factory (1989-1999); the local respondents may feel more positive about taking part in the survey, providing more feedbacks, and from a local perspective to provide more detail and holistic and historical information.

The participants were recruited through eight of the third parties in Shenyang, i.e., employees/students who were accessed via their organisations (Lin, 2014). The researcher's personal relationship with the leaders of organisations who are highly influential in the Chinese context of high-power distance culture hierarchy (Hofstede, 1984, 2014), facilitated the fact that 950 of the 1000 distributed copies were finished and handed back in two weeks, with 893 proving valid for research purposes, representing a high response rate of 95%. Good personal relationships between the researcher and the leaders of these organizations enabled access to staff through these managers who, in some cases, personally distributed the questionnaire survey to the employees. A case in point is the leader of a bank who personally distributed the questionnaire documents (including information sheet, consent form, questionnaire and briefing

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form) to his subordinate staff, following his wish to have the questionnaires completed honestly and carefully and returned within two hours. It is more likely that there would be a cultural issue than an ethical issue. The questionnaire survey was conducted with all the ethical requirements and the approval of the University of Southampton's Ethics Board and its ethical requirements (ERGO No.11041). Information sheets and consent forms were distributed to the participants first. The researcher stated their rights clearly and if they were happy to take part, the participants signed the consent forms. As analysed in Chapter 2, Chinese people are in relationships and within a high-power distance culture, at 80 China sites in the higher rankings of Power Distance Index – i.e., 'a society that believes that inequalities amongst people are acceptable, the subordinate-superior relationship tends to be polarized' (Hofstede, 2014). This concept is exemplified above, demonstrating that the wishes of the bank's leader is to be seen as a friend of the staff in the bank; therefore, such wishes would be kindly and happily supported (Lin, 2014).

The pre-preliminary and preliminary data study provided the foundation of the present research. In the present research, qualitative, semi-structured, face-to-face individual interviews are organised to encourage the interviewees to speak in their own words during the interview. The unit of data collection and analysis is their interpretations within Chinese emic cultural concepts, the reasons against and the anti-consumption behaviour towards tampons. The research samples are the same as preliminary research (who are the Chinese females with menstruation cycles, are eligible tampon users, have previously consumed menstrual products, excluding pregnant or breastfeeding females or otherwise vulnerable adults). In terms of time frame, interviews covered a time frame of approximately one and a half years, particularly taking into account that there were a few Chinese international students interviewees. These are one-year taught course master students, were interviewed in the early days upon their arrival in the UK, and then after six to nine months of study in the UK follow-up interviews were conducted to help interviewees to complete their interpretation.

As the first part of the whole study, pre-preliminary research took place in 2013 through to the end of 2019 when the last interview of the present research was completed. The whole study has taken more than seven years to collect various data of the phenomenon. The whole study combined qualitative and quantitative methods with the first and second-hand data together to conduct the whole study ensuring the data validity of the research.

In addition, two more steps were taken to encourage participants to provide more data and minimise informant bias and enhance reliability (Owens *et al.*, 2013). First, most of the questions were asked from different perspectives and asked for the basic reasons to minimise bias. For example, during the exploration of relational orientation, an emic Chinese cultural concept, when

a participant mentioned that she normally bought sanitary pads, she said she did not think she would buy tampons because her mum did not use tampons at all and never recommended tampons to her. The most important follow-up question besides “Why is your mum’s recommendation important to you?” is, ‘If you have a daughter, what menstrual products will you recommend to her, why and why not?’, this question allowed the researcher to gain a broader perspective on her interpretation of rejecting tampons. Secondly, it used the same language as interviewees to reduce the bias of communication. As a Chinese native speaker, the researcher designed the interview questions in Chinese and conducted all interviews in Chinese. Other documents, such as the participant information sheet, consent form and briefing statement were all in Chinese to ensure participants’ understanding of what the interview is, the risks, data confidentiality and their appeal.

3.6 Data Collection

3.6.1 Research Participant and Samples Recruitment

This research sample of population is drawn upon of Chinese females with menstruation cycles, who are the tampons eligible users, and have previously consumed menstrual products, more than 18 years old, with menstrual products’ consumption experience, excluding pregnant or breastfeeding otherwise vulnerable adults. The interview adopts simple random sampling; in total 37 participants were recruited (Table 3), which were approached in a university campus and Chinese city centre business districts. 10 participants were recruited in University Road of Southampton in the UK, 27 in China. 5 of 10 participants who were recruited in Southampton had arrived in the UK less than 4 weeks earlier and did a follow-up interview 6 to 9 months later. The interviews in Southampton took place at the Hartley Library Cafe of the University of Southampton.

The samples recruitment conducted in the same method both in the UK and China. Take the UK’s to illustrate how it implemented. In the UK, the researcher stood on the University Road of Southampton, the Highfield Campus, closing to the entrance of the library side, when people passing, the researcher through their appearance to check whether they are the research population. For the people who are qualified, the researcher took the initiative to walk past and greeting them, to ask their willing to take the interview. Meanwhile, briefly introduced the research by providing the information sheet and provide the opportunity to ask questions about the study. If the participant is willing to do, then check whether the potential participants meet the participant criteria of the interview. Next, the participants were told what to expect by

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participating in this research by explaining the participant information sheet. As this interview explores a sensitive topic, there could be the possibility of psychological discomfort or distress, these risks are informed clearly and properly in the participant information sheet: when participants explain their views of rejecting tampons or discuss the usage of tampons, some words, such as vagina, insertion, menstruation or sexuality related words, might be involved; if they dislike such words, they can use other words instead, or they can withdraw at any time. Afterwards, to allocate an interview number to participants and ask participants to sign consent form to directly interview or make an appointment to conduct the interview later. Similar implement in China to recruit 27 participants.

3.6.2 Procedures of Data Collection, Transcription, Translation and Data Saturation

The interviews were conducted by face to face. The participants and the researcher were situated in a quiet place. an iPhone 7 as a recording tool were utilised to record the interviews electronically if the participant agreed to be recorded. No interviews were carried out without confirmation of the verbal and written informed consent of the interviewees. One interview was conducted during each interview session. Each of the interviews were transcribed by the researcher (Chinese to Chinese). The interviewees were asked to add anything they wished after reflecting on the question and transcription. The interviewees themselves did not do any of the editing or writing of the results or analysis. None of the participants were able to access the other interviews and they could not contribute with any insight regarding how, as a group, they may have had viewpoint that were similar or different to one another.

There is not always a consistent one to one match between Chinese indigenous words and concepts and each English word and concept. Thus, the transcription did not be translated into English to reduce the linguistic error for the cultural interpretation (), and the key codes, themes and concepts are noted in Chinese together with in English translations to interpret their original meanings. The key code, themes and concepts in English were translated into English first by the research, a Chinese native speaker. Secondly, an English native speaker who known Chinese very well to translate them into Chinese. Thirdly, the research compared the difference between the original meaning of Chinese codes and the translated one, followed up two or three time re-translations to reduce the error.

Memos were written on a regular basis during the study (Urquhart, 2013). Constant comparative analysis and memo writing both help to minimise bias, as the two activities are both reflective, which supports the study's objectivity (Birks & Mills, 2011). Memos are a reminder for the researcher about the thoughts they had during an interview and can help them keep these

thoughts separate to those they have on the related theory (Birks & Mills, 2011). Memos can include concerns or thoughts that have emerged, included topics such as thoughts or concerns related to the study, the researcher's understanding of related papers and books, their reflections on process quality, and thinking related to categories, emerging codes, and theories.

Marshall et al., (2013) discussed data saturation which is when a researcher realises that, there are no further emerging categories resulting from the code, so there is nothing further to add. They recommended that 'qualitative studies should generally include between 20 and 30 interviews' and 'single case studies should generally contain 15 to 30 interviews' (Marshall et al., 2013, p.21). It is possible, in this research, that saturation could have been reached during the interviews. When there is no new emergence of data, the saturation has been reached. In this study, this occurred after the 32nd interview had taken place.

3.6.3 Conducting Interviews

Two stages of data collection conducted the present research, the pilot interview and main interview. The pilot interview data (5 individual face to face interviews) were collected within June and July 2018, the main one (32 individual face to face interviews) was from Sep. 2018 to Dec. 2019.

Table 3 Stages and details of data collection

Stages	Number of participants	Audio-recorded interview (Yes/No)	Follow-up Interview (Yes/No)	Interview venues
Pilot Interview	5 females	5 audio-recorded	No	UK
Main Interview	5 females	5 audio-recorded	Yes	UK
	27 females	25 audio-recorded 2 note taking, no audio-record	No	China
In total	37 females	35: audio-recorded 2: note taking, no audio-record	No	37: 10 in the UK 27 in China

3.6.4 Pilot Interview and Main Interview of Data Collection

“The term ‘pilot’ is used in two different ways in social science research. It can refer to so-called feasibility studies which are small scale version[s], or trial run[s], done in preparation for the major study” (Polit et al., 2001, p. 467). ‘It can also be the pre-testing or ‘trying out’ of a particular research instrument’ (Baker 1994, p.182-3). The benefit of performing a pilot study is that it helps to highlight potential areas of problems or failure in which the research practices might present complications, or proposed approaches are inappropriate or not easy to implement (Polit et al., 2001). De Vaus (1993, p.54) suggests ‘do not take the risk, pilot test first’.

The reason for conducting a pilot interview in the present research is the need to test the main interview research on a small size sample of participants to ensure, in so far as is possible, that any problems with the conduct of the main interview research will be identified, so that interview questions can be changed or adapted before the main qualitative research starts.

The reflective and interrogative processes for the pilot study are essentially to help shape, direct and develop effective and appropriate main interview questions, and to provide the researcher with some initial experience and practice of managing the interview process. The pilot study enables timings to be recorded in order to decide whether enough time is given for the questions to be adequately responded to, as well as allowing for identification and feedback on the more difficult questions. Problems of formulating interview questions and the researcher’s lack of interview techniques meant that some questions were difficult to answer whilst others did not allow for an adequate range of responses requiring more than the allotted time of one and half hours. Indeed, the first interview took three and half hours while the second took two hours to complete.

Five Chinese females are involved in the pilot study. After carrying out the pilot study, interview questions, interview schedules and the researcher’s interview technique for the main study were revised and improved from the below four aspects. 32 participants conducted the main data collection by using the revised interview’s topics, themes and questions (Table 4) (Appendix F: Interview questions guide).

- **Try to avoid overusing the word ‘why’ in main questions.** In the pilot study, interviewees are comfortable talking about their purchasing experiences, but often do not know how to respond to the more abstract question of ‘why?’ Instead, it was found that by asking about their experiences and listening to the responses it was possible to gain insights to the ‘why’. For example, one participant said the first impression of tampons is that ‘it is abnormal,’ so the follow-up question was “Why is it abnormal?” In

the pilot study, she did not know how to respond, and just repeated “because it is abnormal”. Instead, the revised follow-up question in the main study of “What does abnormal mean or what is not ‘abnormal’ or normal in your opinion?” is the conversation opener.

- **Try to avoid using academic jargon in the interview questions**, because it will possibly confuse most interviewees. For example, in the pilot study the question “Could you explain how relationism affects your buying behaviour towards menstrual products?”, most interviewees had no idea what the question was asking. Instead, it was found to be better to ask who she went shopping with and what she discussed with them while shopping, what is the difference if she goes shopping with other(s)?
- **Re-formulating and re-wording main questions and themes.** Rubin and Rubin (2005) suggest that “a major type of initiating the main question is termed a tour, in which interviewers suggest to their interviewees to act more or less as guides, walking interviewers through interviewees’ turf while pointing out what interviewees think are important on the way” (p.159). Due to the wide variety of the interview techniques available, by using the fixed and specific pilot interview questions formulated, the researcher was often lost on guiding the tour when conducting the pilot study. For example, the interviewees’ answers to the question ‘Which MPs do you use mainly rather than others? Why?’, they regularly incorporate part of the answer to another question ‘Who was the first person to guide you to select/how to use your first MPs? What/how did she say/do it?’. Similarly, the answer for some questions overlapped the other questions. In such situations, the researcher found it not only difficult to follow a detailed and specific interview questions list, but was also unsuccessful in conducting follow-up questions consistently, and thus failed to assess whether each pilot question provided an adequate range of responses. Besides consolidating overlapping questions and discarding superfluous questions, the detailed and specific pilot was consequently revised into three tour guide topics and themes in the main interview study; the tour from the general consumer behaviour narrowed down to the specific behaviour of buying tampons, and more focus on the ‘mini-tours’ (Rubin and Rubin, 2005, p, 160) (i.e., the narrower tour questions). The tour guide consists of three topics which highlights the themes and is easier for the interviewer to follow than using fixed questions in the pilot study. It also allows the interviewer to ask more open and flexible questions according to interviewees’ different backgrounds, which can encourage the interviewees to provide, in an unfiltered way, their own take on an issue, and as such this can often evoke unexpected themes. For instance, according to the first tour topic

(general and MPs consumer buying behaviour), the first fixed pilot interview question (Could you tell me about how many kinds of MPs were you aware of and which one or ones you have used?) is revised and might be worded differently as follows : “Could you tell me about how you shop?” or “What is on your list of things students should bring from China to the UK (things you think you will not be able to buy easily in the UK)?” for the participants who just arrived the UK.

- **Identify embarrassing words and change words in response to the interviewees’**

euphemisms. Before the pilot study, the participants are informed clearly and properly in the participant information sheet that, as this interview is exploring sensitive topics, involved words may include the vagina, insertion, menstruation or language that was sexuality related. If they disliked or felt uncomfortable with the idea of using this type of language, other words to express these aspects could be used, or they could withdraw at any time. Indeed, in the pilot study, when participants explained their views of rejecting tampons, some words were considered too embarrassing to use, such as vagina, penis, insertion, menstruation and intercourse. Many euphemisms were used by interviewees to speak about them. The following examples serve as an illustration of this: ‘Dayima’ (aunt visiting, 大姨妈), ‘Laishi’ (the matter comes 来事), ‘Daomei’ (unfortunately falling into a terrible time 倒霉) and ‘Najitian’ (those days 那几天) to substitute for the word menstruation; ‘Nagedifang’ (that place 那个地方) for vagina; ‘nanshengdenagedongxi’ (male’ stuff 男生的那个东西) or ‘Xiaojiji’ (chickling chicken 小鸡鸡) for penis; ‘zuonashi’ (do that activity 做那事) for intercourse. The interviewees who were very well-educated (with PhD title), sexually experienced/married and in the UK more than one year still felt ashamed to directly say the words ‘penis’ or ‘intercourse’ (vagina and menstruation, they can say directly), although they were less sensitive than those interviewees who had just arrived in the UK and were sexually inexperienced. Therefore, the author learned the vocabulary through participants’ answers and the question wording was changed in response to the interviewees’ euphemisms to avoid potential embarrassment.

Table 4 Interview question topics, themes and questions guidance

No.	Topic	Questions guidance	Related themes and References
1	Participant's general consumer behaviour, especially towards menstrual products and general product categories.	Asking general questions about participant's consumer behaviour, mainly about their consumption of menstrual products, general product categories (such as innovation, new, foreign, luxury products)	Dowling and Staelin (1994): product category risk. Ram (1987): innovation resistance - innovation to change.
2	Participant's interpretation on the reasons against consuming tampons, and the cognitive process of reasons related with tampons and its product category.	Mainly asking the questions about participant's awareness, knowledge and first impressions of tampons, tampons product category, the reasons for rejecting tampons and their cognitive process related with tampons and its product category.	Ram (1987): innovation resistance - innovation to change. Schein (2019): the changes caused by technology. Hoggins and shank-lin (1992): ease of use. Ram and Sheth (1989): functional barriers Ram and Sheth (1989): Product usage patterns - counterproductive to the existing habits of customer. Ram and Sheth (1989): psychological barriers. Lee (2010): risk aversion. Weber and Millian (1997): risk taking attitude and risk perception Dowling and Staelin (1994): perceived risks. Schiffman and kanuk (2000): risk category. Dowling and Staelin (1994): product category risk. Philips et al., (2007): undesired self. Lewis and Haviland (2000): negative self. Banister and Hogg (2001): social reference groups; desired end state.
3	Participant's interpretation on Chinese culture antecedents underlying their reasons and the cognitive process.	Mainly asking the questions about participants' cultural reasons for 'the reason against consuming tampons' and the cognitive process. If the participant does buy and use tampons, more questions about their views of before and after buying/use.	Ram and Sheth (1989): psychological barriers. Weber and Millian (1997): risk taking attitude and risk perception Dowling and Staelin (1994): perceived risks. Schiffman and kanuk (2000): risk category. Dowling and Staelin (1994): product category risk. Philips et al., (2007): undesired self. Lewis and Haviland (2000): negative self. Banister and Hogg (2001): social reference groups; desired end state Fei et al., (1992): egoism. Yu (1987): personalism. Ho (1998a): Relational orientation/the person-in-relations. Hsu (1965): Situational centeredness.Hwang (1995): Confucian ethical system.

The open-ended, semi-structured face to face interviews are conducted based on three categories, interview topics and themes (Table 4) (Appendix F: Interview questions guide)

developed from the literature review. Each pilot study interview took around two hours on average, with one taking 3.5 hours, but in the main study interviews took around one hour, and the follow-up interviews took around 15 minutes. This data was transcribed into Chinese for subsequent analysis.

3.7 Data analysis

This research adopted the approach and method of Miles & Huberman (1994, 2013) when analysing the data of the pilot and the main study. Miles & Huberman (2013) and Balogun (2006) suggested using an interactive qualitative data analysis model, which comprises four activities: data display, data reduction, theory comparison, and conclusion drawing or verification. This perspective minimises the conflict that emerges between the research philosophy that is adopted, and the methods utilised within the research (Miles and Huberman, 2013). When conducting the analysis of qualitative data, three tools were utilised in the field, i.e. coding, contact summary paper, and a memo. After completing the data collection, the data are re-examined, the coding continues, the descriptive data is exhibited and the study themes are presented. The complete process is detailed below. For the purpose of analysis, the central focus of the study is to identify the reasons against performing consuming tampons practice, and the cultural antecedents underlying these reasons against to better understand the national level phenomenon of anti-consumption in China.

The coding and transcripts are compiled in the same order as the interviews – five in a batch at one time. This gave the researcher the opportunity to reflect on and edit the questions as the theories started to emerge. Coding was utilised to help the researcher comprehend the participants' viewpoints and when conducting analysis of their integrated experiences. The codes were data based and were developed as part of the research process to analyse the data (Birks & Mills, 2011). Coding was carried out manually and through the use of qualitative, computer-assisted data analysis software- NVivo.

The transcription coding was a crucial aspect of the data analysis. In grounded theory, coding is instrumental to providing a structured focus for interview analysis based on the experiences of participants. By coding, the interviewer avoids overemphasising the significance of a particular aspect too soon, which ensures that a thorough analysis of the whole interview is conducted (Stake, 2010).

A constant comparison relates to the process of analysing, then reanalysing and comparing new data to data that already exists (Urquhart, 2013). At the beginning of each coding phase, it was

crucial to continue reviewing the data from the previous stages, so that connections could be made continually until saturation was reached.

3.7.1 The Interactive Model of Qualitative Data Analysis

Four components for the interactive model are detailed below.

- **Data reduction:** This process selects, focuses, simplifies, abstracts and transforms data in the form of transcriptions or field notes (Miles and Huberman, 1994, 2013). This process occurs for the duration of the research, which helps to manage and reduce the copious amounts of data.
- **Data display:** This is the organised information used to prompt actions and draw conclusions and includes graphs and charts (Miles and Huberman, 2013). Data is displayed in two ways – through networks and matrices. A matrix is a table into which data are entered; networks are a mixture of boxes or nodes that are connected by arrows or lines to suggest relationships (Saunders *et al.*, 2007). These methods provide opportunities to analyse data efficiently, and to identify relationships between them to support conclusions (Saunders *et al.*, 2007).
- **Conclusion drawing and verification:** Conclusions are drawn then verified during the collection of data and throughout the process of data analysis. It is then examined to check its validity (Miles and Huberman, 2013).
- **Theory comparison:** The researcher compares the drawn and verified conclusions using up-to-date theories to characterise a contribution and stimulate further theoretical conversations.

The four components are organised to generate the interactive model that is utilised within this research, as exhibited in Figure 10.

In the present research, it is crucial to examine and compare these conclusions; they must be verified using the BRT theory in relation to culture characteristics. They must then describe the contribution and further theoretical conversations to illustrate the components of an emic approach of cultural values and values system, illustrating how these influence the reasons against consuming towards a specific product category.

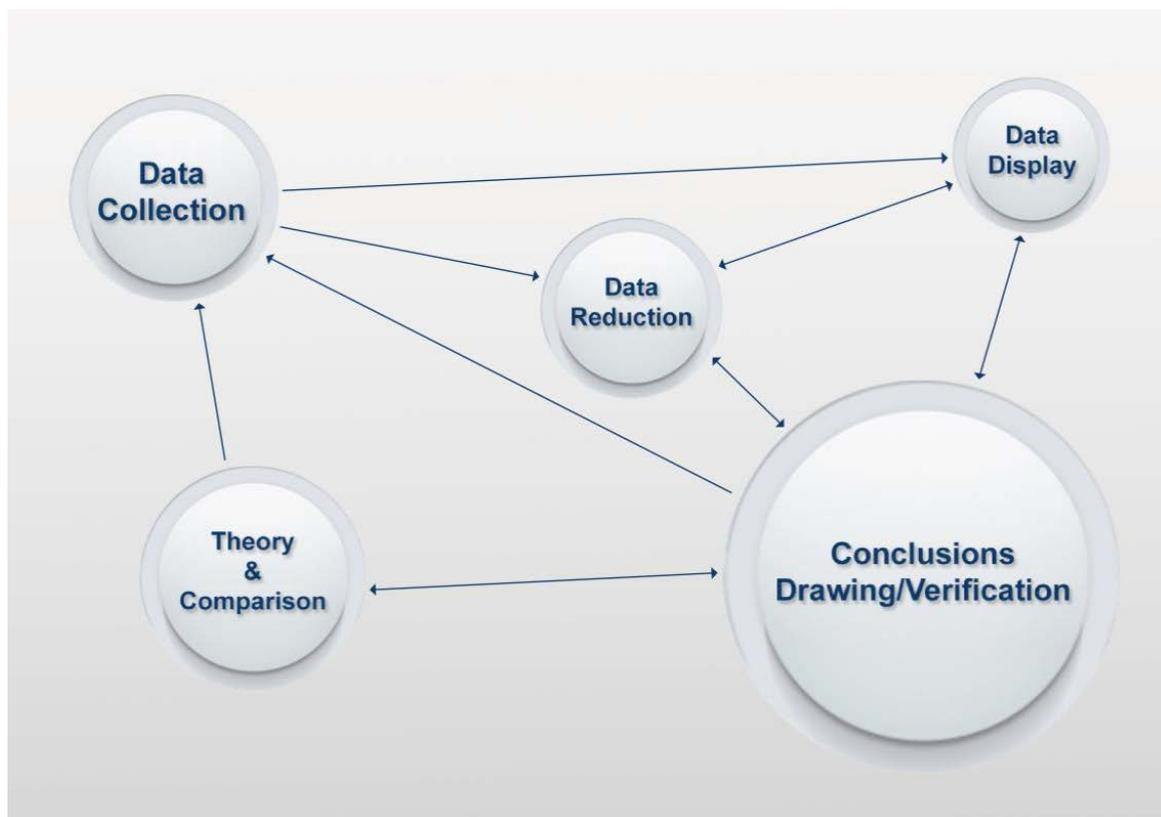


Figure 10 Aspects of data analysis (based on Miles and Huberman, 2013)

3.7.2 Research Instruments Used for Field Data Analysis

Three different methods were employed by which the data was analysed. These are contact summary sheet, coding and memo. Interview transcripts are relied upon in the data analysis process.

3.7.2.1 Contact Summary Sheet

It is essential to create contact summary sheets before an interview and after the transcripts and notes have been written up. During the data collection process, summary sheets are written immediately after observations and interviews have been completed, so that information is still fresh in the interviewers' minds. The sheet helps to summarise crucial points and essential data from observations and interviews and minimises the risk of losing valuable information; the sheet also supports next contact planning and allows the researcher to focus on crucial data without the risk of it becoming lost. A contact summary sheet example is provided in Table 5 (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Table 5 Contact summary sheet (adapted from Milles & Huberman, 2013)

Contact Summary Sheet	
Contact Type: Visit	Site: Southampton
Contact No. (interview No.): 1	Date: **_**_**
Contact's background: Tampon user	Time: 2.30 – 6:00 p.m.
Follow-up interviewee: No	Follow-up interview data and time: N/A
<p>1. What are the main issues or themes that struck you in this contact?</p> <p>This interview lasted for 3.5 hours. She has been using tampons before arrival in the UK. Her mother is a tampon user, and it is the main reason for the interviewee's use of them.</p> <p>2. Summarise the information you got (or failed to get) on each of the target questions you had for this contact?</p> <p>She provided significant feedback which was useful for identifying difficult 'Why' questions.</p> <p>3. Is there anything else that struck you as salient, interesting, illuminating or important in this contact?</p> <p>Although she is very well educated (PhD candidature), married and has been in the UK for more than five years, she still felt very ashamed to directly say the words 'penis' or 'intercourse'. However, she can directly say 'vagina' and 'menstruation'.</p> <p>4. What new (or remaining) target questions are you considering for this interview in the next interview?</p> <p>To be a tampons user in China is rare at her mother's age range (55-60) She suggested that I interview her mother or a participant who is at a similar age to her mother.</p>	

3.7.2.2 Memo

This study utilised memos alongside contact summary sheets. A memo is 'one of the most helpful and powerful sense-making tools at hand' (Miles and Huberman, 2013), and can be adopted to note novel ideas when conducting data analysis. Memos are often written using a limited number of words and paragraphs, but this does not as only a few words or paragraphs, this does not dismiss the fact that they are important and powerful instruments for data analysis facilitation. Memos can help researchers comprehend problems when conducting the process of data collection. A memo example is exhibited in Table 6.

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Table 6 Format of a memo.

Memo
Date: **-**-** Interview No.: 1,2,3 Theme: cognition order / cognition sequence
From the interview data it is found that three product features of tampons associated in the Chinese culture, they present in a certain sequential order.

3.7.2.3 Coding

Coding is utilised during the process of data collection to 'assign units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study' (Miles and Huberman, 2013). Coding is an excellent tool for information organisation and analysis support.

Before the field work commenced, an initial code list was generated. This is exhibited in Table 7. The codes were rooted in the conceptual framework that was developed through the review of literature and the research question list. When the data collection commences, the data are guided and organised using the code list. It is important to note that coding must be conducted while the data are being collected and not afterwards. Therefore, attention is given to novel and interesting information during the continued field experience; in addition, the initial codes will be revised developed, or deleted once the data are collected.

Table 7 The initial list of Themes

Themes	RQs	Reviewed in (Section No.)	References and Themes
1. Innovation resistance 1.1 New product 1.2 Ease of use or convenience 1.3 Perceived innovation benefits 1.4 Functional barriers: 1.4.1 Product usage patterns 1.4.2 Product value 1.4.3 Risks associated with product usage 1.5 Psychological barriers: 1.5.1 Traditional barriers 1.5.2 Perceived product image barriers	RQ 1	2.6.3.1	Ram (1987): innovation resistance - innovation to change. Schein (2019): the changes caused by technology. Hoggins and shank-lin (1992): ease of use. Ram and Sheth (1989): functional barriers Ram and Sheth (1989): Product usage patterns - counterproductive to the existing habits of customer. Ram and Sheth (1989): psychological barriers.
2. Risk aversion 2.1 Risk taking attitude 2.2 Perceived risks: 2.2.1 the nature of risk customers perceived 2.2.2 the degree of risk customers perceived 2.3 Risk category: 2.3.1 Social risk 2.3.2 Financial risk 2.3.3 Physical risk 2.3.4 Performance/Functional risk 2.4.5 Time/convenience risk 2.4.6 Psychological risk 2.6 Product category risk	RQ 2 RQ 1&2	2.6.3.2	Lee (2010): risk aversion. Weber and Millian (1997): risk taking attitude and risk perception Dowling and Staelin (1994): perceived risks. Schiffman and kanuk (2000): risk category. Dowling and Staelin (1994): product category risk. Philips et al., (2007): undesired self.
3. Undesired self: 3.1 Negative self 3.2 Social reference groups 3.3 Desired end state	RQ 1&2	2.6.3.3	Lewis and Haviland (2000): negative self. Banister and Hogg (2001): social reference groups; desired end state
4. Egoism/Personalism 5. Relational orientation/the person-in-relations 6. Situational centeredness 7. Confucian ethical system	RQ 2	2.5.2 2.5.3 2.5.4 2.5.5	Fei et al., (1992): egoism. Yu (1987): personalism. Ho (1998a): Relational orientation/the person-in-relations. Hsu (1965): Situational centeredness. Hwang (1995): Confucian ethical system.

3.7.3 Data Analysis After Data Collection

3.7.3.1 Re-examination of the Data

A careful analysis of the data started after exiting the field. The analysis comprised transcripts from interviews, memos, and contact summary sheets. It was extremely important, at this stage,

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to make sure that all the crucial interview records were transcribed. Valuable data were still missing, even though this was noted during the data analysis conducted earlier in the field. This data re-examination intended to minimise the number of missing data and prepare for the data analysis to be done later. This was successful and the completed data was placed in the created file folder.

3.7.3.2 Re-coding

The process for the coding was continued and the collected data were re-examined. Sentence-by-sentence, open coding was utilised for the interview transcripts. The created codes were highly detailed, so many themes and categories were developed with appropriate codes, based on the theoretical framework and research questions (Miles and Huberman, 2013).

Three code cycles were utilised throughout the process of data analysis process: descriptive, interpretive, and pattern. During the earlier data analysis phase, these descriptive codes were utilised to 'attribute a class of phenomena to a segment of text' (Miles and Huberman, 2013). When more information was found, the analysis advance and further, interpretive codes were adopted. As a consequence, the pattern codes were given more clarity and were employed to illustrate the field notes. Pattern codes lend themselves to a more inferential and explanatory discussion than the remaining code types. Actually, the codes were adopted during various times and cycles throughout the process of data analysis. To draw out interpretations from the collected data, the materials from the field were read repeatedly. When making a decision about when the coding was complete, Lincoln and Guba's (1985) suggestion were followed. They indicate that coding is complete when an analysis process as was regarded as finished when the analysis itself appears to have ceased.

Descriptive open Coding

Descriptive open coding relates to the phase during which each transcribe line of interview text is coded one line at a time (Miles and Huberman, 2013), in short as 'code' in the present research. This line-by-line coding is crucial to qualitative methods (Charmaz, 2006; Miles and Huberman, 2013)). As its name suggests, each line of an interview transcription utilises a small number of words to describe the data. It is what its name reflects, where coding each line of the transcribed interviews by using a few words to describe the data (Birks & Mills, 2011). During each interview, this coding method helps the researcher to focus on the data in great depth.

Interpretive Coding

Interpretive coding occurs when no new descriptive open codes are apparent, or when the codes only relate to emerging core categories (Urquhart, 2013). The terms constructs and categories are interchangeable (Birks & Mills, 2011; Urquhart, 2013). Sometimes, interpretive codes emerge more frequently and a single interpretive code can become an important theme or pattern/theoretical code ((Miles and Huberman, 2013; Urquhart, 2013). When conducting interpretive coding, although the researcher is hoping to determine emerging categories, there will be more descriptive open than interpretive codes. Miles and Huberman (2013) suggests going back to interpretive code categories in cases when there a large number of descriptive open codes emerging from the initial coding. Coding reinforcement is an iterative process, and Miles and Huberman (2013) suggests that researchers should review interpretive codes to analyse whether n interpretive code name fully represents the open or interpretive codes. Urguhart (2013) conveys that viewing selective code attributes and potential relationships can help the researcher tell the difference between interpretive, descriptive open, and pattern or theoretical coding.

Pattern Coding

Learned theorists differ in their opinions on when pattern sampling initially starts. Charmaz (2006) asserts that pattern and theoretical sampling is initiated once the categories have emerged. Birks and Mills (2011) argue that pattern or theoretical sampling starts when open coding takes place, as the data beings to uncover concepts that start indicate potential theories or clarifications of phenomenon. The pattern and theoretical coding starts to happen when the categories and codes which emerged when the open and Interpretive coding are compared, and relationships are determined among them (Urquhart, 2013). The phenomenon or theory materialises out of these relationships. The coding is all iterative. New codes need to be continually compared with data that already exists to check whether new categories are emerging or whether they are becoming denser. Memos must be included in the continual comparative analysis as they are a crucial part of the pattern theoretical coding process.

During the coding process, a large number of marginal and reflective remarks were given. Table 8 presents an illustrating of the coding process, which was captured from one of the interview transcripts.

Table 8 An example of the coding process

Interview transcript	1 st Coding Descriptive codes	2 nd Coding Interpretive codes	3 rd Coding Pattern codes
<p>① I was aware of tampons when I was a little girl. ② My mum normally put her menstrual products, both sanitary pads and tampons, in our bathroom, I can see them as they are just there. ③ So in my world, there are various product options for periods, tampons are just one of them, although I did not exactly know what a period was at that time. ④ When I was about 10 years old before I got my first period, my mum explained menstruation very well to me. She told me what would mean to me, normal timing of menarche, what I will experience for my menarche, how to use sanitary pads and some special consideration in my period, such as warming up yourself, drinking warm water which mixed with brown sugar and ginger, avoiding touching cold water, avoiding eating cold food, avoiding doing a vigorous exercise, taking more rest. ⑤ She said to me that tampons are for married women, that I could use them after I got married. ⑥ Since then I expected to have a menarche and use tampons.</p>	<p>① awareness of the tampon ② mum's use of tampons ③ impression of tampon - an 'option' of FHP ④ mum' is the 1st person for 1st period product and period consideration ⑤ 'for married woman' ⑥ expecting using the tampon</p>	<p>① setting product information ② mum's use of tampons ③ the attribution of the product category ④ product using habit, traditional and conservative customs and taboos ⑤ user's segmentation: 'married woman' and user's symbolic identity: non-virgin ⑥ positive emotion toward product</p>	<p>The direct and most significant influence of Mum's use of tampons.</p> <p>(Note. Mum's use of tampons directly tampons consumption in a conscious and unconscious way.</p> <p>The source of product information;</p> <p>The attribution of product category;</p> <p>The approach of accessing product;</p> <p>Product using habit;</p> <p>The convention of traditional and conservative customs and taboos;</p> <p>Virginity;</p> <p>user's symbolic identity;</p> <p>Emotional product benefits;)</p>

After the paragraph is carefully read for the first time (1st coding), descriptive codes in Table 8 are used to summarise the information in the paragraph. In the example, the first code represents the participant's awareness of tampons which is linked to her mother and the second code mum's use of tampons. These codes are used as general descriptive codes for all interviews. The coding at this stage is straightforward and some of them are 'in Vivo' codes (Saldana, 2013, p.4) which refer to that "one of the codes is taken directly from what the participant her/himself says and is placed in quotation marks".

As more knowledge was obtained from the interviews more interpretive and pattern codes emerged from the same paragraph. When coding proceeds (2nd coding), the paragraph was re-examined to extract clearer meaning from it, necessitating more interpretive codes for this re-examination process. For instance, the code in 1st coding 'an option' is recorded as 'attributing the product category', which interprets when a tampon is considered an option of feminine hygiene products; tampon is classified in the product category of feminine hygiene products. Compared with other participants who category tampons as a 'sexual product', they are significantly different. As a result of the analysis, the similarities in conducting show how the source of information about tampon products impacts her category for tampon products.

As analysis progressed into the 3rd stage of coding, the data enabled identification of the sources of information about products (information of tampons) that have an influence on (anti)consumer behaviour. They are divided into two main types: indirect and direct influence. Therefore, in the 3rd coding procedure, the code 'the direct influence of Mum's use of tampon' is a causation pattern code, which was employed here to clarify how the source of information about tampon products impacts (anti) consumer behaviour towards tampons directly and significantly.

Another example (Table 9) to illustrate how the initial code 'the person-in-relations' is developed into three sub-codes/themes during the coding processing.

Table 9 The developed list of codes (themes) – the person-in-relations

Code No.	The initial code	The developed sub-codes/themes	3rd Codes	2nd Codes	1st Codes Person impacts on Tampon (anti)consuming
1		The person-in relation of 'Kinship by blood or marriage'	Mum	Mum	Mum
			Kinship by blood or marriage	Family	Sister, cousin, aunt, grandmother, Sister-in-law
			Kinship by marriage or heterosexual relationship	Marriage or heterosexual relationship	husband/boyfriend/partner
2	The person-in-relations	The person-in-relation of 'The equal Social relationship'	1. The equal social relationship: e.g., Classmates, Friends.	Study network	Classmates/Schoolmates, opinion leaders of classmates, Teachers
			2. Situational Unequal social relationship: 2.1 People in authority: e.g., manager/boss, Doctors (when the participant is the patient).	Work network	Colleagues, Line manager/boss
3		The person-in relation of 'Situational unequal Social relationship'	2.2 People with special identities: idols or doctors (not in Doctors/patient situation), higher social class members, opinion leaders of classmates.	Social network	Friends, Club-member, sisters in church, social class members, reference group members
				People in authority	Doctors/specialist
				People with special identities	Instructors, Pastors
			People with special identities	Idols	

3.7.3.3 NVivo Assistant Data Analysis

The interviews are conducted in Chinese, as it is the interviewees' native language and the actual language used in their daily life. The data of the pilot study is manually coded, and given enough time for analysis, then moving to the main stage data collection. The main stage of interviews is mainly manually coded, and all data transcripts (in Chinese words) and codes (in Chinese) are uploaded into NVivo 11 (a software of CAQDAS - Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software) which assists in coding organization and management. According to the CAQDAS, it does not do the analytical thinking and the coding for the researcher so, in general, researchers need to decide what can be coded in what way. Some CAQDAS may do automatic coding from the results of text searches, but it is still important to check what has been automatically coded. Therefore, initially, the data is manually analysed which aims to improve the researcher's data analysis technique. Manual data analysis without the proper tools makes finding connections extremely difficult and time-consuming. For example, the average word count of a one-hour interview transcript is 20000 and the whole procedure for analysing a one-hour transcript manually includes the need for first coding, re-examination and second and third coding which takes seven to eight days at least. Considering that there are 37 interviews in total means the advantages offered by CAQDAS of providing a place to organise, store and retrieve data so it can be worked on more efficiently, saves time and rigorously backs up findings with evidence. With advanced data management, query and visualisation tools, the researcher is better able to ask complex questions about the collected data and can thus potentially discover more insights. The top ranking CAQDAS, NVivo software is utilized for assistant data analysing to avoid missing meanings and to understand the field data in its original context. All interview transcripts are to be kept in the original Chinese versions due to the lack of most CAQDAS in the Chinese language version, although given that some of the Chinese words in NVivo are composed of garbled words, the text demands careful checking to ensure the avoidance of any missing items, and a few functions do not work well on the data in Chinese language.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

In conducting data collection, 'ethical issues may arise at the different stages, but there are potential solutions' (Punch and Oancea, 2014, p. 43). Interview disrupts participants' regular activities, and it is the researcher's obligation to reduce any harm or discomfort and to clearly state any shortcomings known to interviewees (Babbie, 2013). Shared esteem and confidence also should exist between the interviewer and interviewees during qualitative investigations (Berg *et al.*, 2004). Besides respecting participants, the interviewer could seek a solution to benefit the

interviewees to avoid placing them at risk. The relationship preservation technique, return principle, voluntary principle and confidentiality principle all govern ethical considerations in qualitative studies (Eysenbach and Till, 2001). The present study is conducted with the ethical requirements and the approval of the University of Southampton Ethics Board and its ethical requirements; its ERGO number is 30339.

In the present research, various parts of the research procedure and the interviewees are informed by ethical considerations. including the integrity of interviewees and ensuring the security of their data so as to enhance the dependability of the research process. Linked anonymity is guaranteed through removing personal details and any connections to the gathered data.

Prior agreement was garnered from potential interviewees prior to the initiation of the qualitative investigation. The interviewees were informed on a range of issues including procedures to guarantee linked anonymous contributions and security of data, what the collected information would be used for, the investigatory process, and the intentions of the research. The interviewees and the University of Southampton Ethics Board were all required to give consent form to the investigation before it could begin. Participant information sheet, consent form and briefing statement of ERGO 30339 are in Appendix C, D, and E.

During the interviews, the interviewees' rights also are completely preserved. For example, I try to avoid using academic jargon in the interview questions, because it will possibly be confusing to most interviewees. In the pilot study the question "Could you explain how relationism affects your buying behaviour towards menstrual products?" was problematic because most interviewees had no idea what the question was asking. Instead, it was found to be better to ask who she went shopping with and what she discussed with them while shopping, and what is the difference if she goes shopping with other(s)? Moreover, it was important to identify embarrassing words and change words in response to the interviewees' euphemisms. Before the study, the participants were informed clearly and properly in the participant information sheet as this interview was exploring a sensitive topic, vagina, insertion, menstruation or sexuality related words, might be involved, and that if they disliked or felt uncomfortable with the idea of using this type of language, other words to express these aspects could be used, or that they could withdraw at any time. Indeed, in the study when participants explained their views of rejecting tampons, some words were considered too embarrassing to use, such as vagina, penis, insertion, menstruation and intercourse. Many euphemisms are used by interviewees to speak about them. The interviewer learned the vocabulary through participants' answers and the questions wording was changed in response to the interviewees' euphemisms to avoid potential embarrassment. At the

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end of interviews, the participants were provided with a briefing statement, their rights were highlighted, along with the voluntary and confidentiality principle and they were thanked for their attendance.

During the writing up of the study, the original interview transcript language is likely to be easily comprehended by individuals from similar backgrounds and societies. This, in fact, poses a hazard to the interviewee if they, and associates who they may speak about, can be identified from the manner of speech. Protection of particular information and people's identities can, of course, be discussed with the participants, with the degree of protection they feel is necessary being agreed prior to publication of the investigation's findings. It may be required that particularly controversial or risky data needs to be omitted from the publication of the qualitative research when it poses a threat to the interviewee in some manner.

3.9 Summary of Chapter 3

This chapter attempts to outline the research method which is unitised to answer two 'what' type research questions. The research philosophy, approach, research strategy, study samples, data collection, semi-structured interview topic, themes and questions are discussed which outline the specifics of how the research is conducted and who was sampled. The research is designed to identify the reasons against performing consuming tampons practice and the cultural antecedents underlying these reasons against, to better understand the national level phenomenon of anti-consumption, leading to a 'reasons against' model. Benefitting from the pilot study, the interview topic, themes and questions were revised in the main study, encouraging the participants to draw out the details of their experience and insights related to 'reasons against' performing anti-consumption practice. Contact summary sheet, memos and coding for qualitative data analysis are discussed, the validity of data and the ethics consideration are also included. Drawing on the interpretivism epistemology, deductive approach, Case Study research stage and a semi-structured face to face interviews qualitative method, all interviewees contributed to this purpose by sharing their reasons for rejecting tampons, their behaviours in a Chinese context and their interpretation of emic cultural antecedents.

Chapter 4 Data Analysis and Findings

Chapter Four contains the results of the analysis from the semi-structured interview methodology study, which was conducted to answer two research questions:

RQ1. What are the reasons against tampon consumption in China and how are these reasons are cognitively processed?

RQ2. What are the Chinese cultural elements underlying these 'reasons against'?

Through distilling over 1,000 pages of transcripts conducted from 37 interviews, the process of data analysis discovers the codes, categories, and themes that lead to the resultant 'reasons against' model. There are three levels of coding analysis, descriptive coding, interpretive coding, and pattern coding for themes that emerged from the data. Chapter Four also includes sample demographics and tables to complement the data analysis.

4.1 Samples

This research sample of population is drawn upon of Chinese females with menstruation cycles, who are the tampons eligible users, and have previously consumed menstrual products, more than 18 years old, with menstrual products' consumption experience, excluding pregnant or breastfeeding otherwise vulnerable adults. The interview adopts simple random sampling; in total 37 participants were recruited, which were approached in a university campus and Chinese city centre business districts. 10 participants were recruited in University Road of Southampton in the UK, 27 in China. 5 of 10 participants who were recruited in Southampton had arrived in the UK less than 4 weeks earlier and did a follow-up interview 6 to 9 months later. The interviews in Southampton took place at the Hartley Library Cafe of the University of Southampton. Appendix A and B indicate the participants' demographics, samples' characteristics are driven by data.

Of the 37 female participants, 28 (76%) had an income and their financial and consumer decision making on feminine hygiene products were independent. Although nine (24%) of the females were students (undergraduate, master or PhD) or had recently graduated from college (so were not financially independent) they stated that their decisions regarding purchasing feminine hygiene products were independent.

4.1.1 Age, Ethnic Group and Native Place

All the participants shared their age range, ethnic group, and native geographic place information.

4.1.1.1 Age

The participants' ages ranged from 20 to 50 years old (Table 10). Participants who were aged between 21 and 25 years represented 35% of the sample, 24% were aged between 26 and 30, and 39% were older than 30 and were all married.

Table 10 Summary of participants' ages.

Age range	Number	Percentage
21–25	13	35%
26–30	9	24%
31–35	8	22%
36–40	2	5%
41–50	5	12%
Total	37	100%

4.1.1.2 Ethnic Group

Of the 37 female interviewees, 35 (95%) were Han Chinese, the main ethnic group in China which accounts for more than 90% of the population and constitutes the world's single largest racial-cultural group. Two women (5%) were from two of 56 minority ethnic groups in China; one was Korean Chinese and the other was Inner Mongolia Chinese.

4.1.1.3 Native Geographic Place

Native geographic places are provincial-level administrative regions in mainland China (in short: provinces); these places were where the participants were born and stayed at least until their graduation from high school (around 18 years), where their menarche occurred, where they developed a regular menstrual cycle, and where they had puberty lessons including information about feminine hygiene products, special considerations during menstruation, and the biology of their developing bodies. The included native geographic places covered 17 provinces: 77% provinces of Han Chinese habitation and 65% of provincial administrative regions in mainland China.

4.1.2 Knowledge about Tampons

The participants' knowledge about tampons was categorised into three levels. The knowledge levels of the 37 female participants were varied.

The first level was the participants' awareness of tampons, with reference to whether participants had heard about tampons and were aware that this type of product existed. Most participants (89%, 33 of 37 participants) were aware of tampons and only 11% (four participants) were not aware they existed.

The second level referred to having some knowledge of tampons; at this level, participants had not only heard about tampons, but also knew what tampons looked like, how they worked, and how to use them. Of the 37 participants, 49% had seen tampons, knew how they worked and how to use them. Therefore, almost half of the samples were at the second level.

The third level referred to the participants' experience in using tampons. At this level, participants had attempted to use tampons, or had used tampons either for the short-term or long-term. Eight participants had experience of using tampons, representing 21.6%. Two participants (5.4%) had attempted to use a tampon once but failed due to being unable to insert it into the vagina. Six (16.2%) used them short-term or occasionally while one participant (2.7%) used tampons long-term. Therefore, out of 37 participants, just one participant regularly consumed tampons (2.7%), which is very close to the average usage in China at 2.5%.

A table and graphic display of demographics on financial dependency, age, ethnic, native place, and knowledge and usage of tampons are in Appendix A and B.

4.2 Data Analysis

The data from the pilot study was coded manually with enough time given for analysis, with a move then to the study's main stage of data collection. The main study interviews were mostly manually coded and all data transcripts and codes were uploaded into NVivo 12, which assisted further origination and management of the data analysis. The analysis procedure consisted of three coding cycles, namely descriptive codes, interpretive codes, and pattern codes. Mind-mapping and NVivo (searches, queries, and retrievals functions) assisted significantly with the second and third cycle coding stages. The second coding resulted in five distinct categories in the interpretative codes: the attribution of product features, the attribution of product categories, the perception of product de-benefits and benefits, reasons against, and cultural values.

4.2.1 The Attribution of Tampon Product Features and Product Categories

Product features are based on a product's attributes which provide the customer with functional utility. Menstrual products can be divided into different categories based on the attribution of these features. The European Nonwovens Association (2012) categorised them as disposable and reusable: disposable products such as sanitary pads and tampons, and reusable products such as menstrual cups and period panties. However, none of the participants attributed features or categorised them as the European Nonwovens Association did; instead they categorised them in their own way in relation to the Chinese culture context.

All the interviewees focused on internal use. The main product feature they mentioned was 'insert into the vagina'. All of the participants mentioned this at least five times. Participants compared sanitary pads with tampons initially and captured the significant difference between them: tampons' internal use and pads' external use.

Interviewee No.12 directly distinguished that tampons are 'internal use', *'insert into the place (vagina)'*, but the other products she used for period are all 'external use', *'it is completely new to me'*.

Interviewee No.31 stated, *'when I use it (tampon), it is inside of here (vagina), it works before the blood flows out here', 'not like sanitary pads to absorb blood from outside of here'*.

On the differing ways in which they are used, participants attributed and categorised them as external use and internal use products. External use products such as sanitary pads and panty liners are attached to the crotch of the underpants to absorb women's menstrual flow after it leaves the body, while internal use products such as tampons and menstrual cups are inserted into the vagina to catch or absorb menstrual flow before it leaves the body. In the Chinese context, the insertion of the product into the vagina for internal use is the key difference between internal use menstrual products (IMPs) and external use menstrual products (EMPs).

Participants compared other internal use products with tampons; they expressed their similarities and differences. The most common reference product was contact lenses, which are attached to the outer surface of the eye.

Interviewee No.29 said: *'Tampons are similar to contact lenses, which must be inserted into/onto the body organ, and it is the significant difference with sanitary pads which use externally'*.

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However, the difference between contact lenses and tampons is that the former is potentially visible to others when in use (Participant No.32), but tampons remain invisible and imperceptible to all but their user (Participant No.28).

The other reference products discussed were nasal irrigations and suctioning devices, as explained by participant No.25:

'I've undertaken a nasal irrigation that works well for cold and stuffy noses, or when the nose is blocked with sticky snot, it helps pour the snot out. I've also seen patients with much phlegm and a device inserted to suck it up. When the suctioning device cleans their tracheae, they are painfully gasping. These are very uncomfortable, and it is really uncomfortable to insert something into the body. These internal use objects are all for necessary medical treatment. Anything that goes into the body, whether it's into the eyes and nose or any other organs, I'm a bit averse to using them unless I'm sick and have to do so'.

In their view, internal use products and tampons are considered invasive, but with a significant difference in that tampons are inserted into the vagina by the woman herself. *'The insertion of a product into the vagina'* is considered more *'culturally sensitive'* (Participant No.1 and Participant No.25). Similar products for internal vaginal use are condoms or sex toys (Participants No.14 and No.15), but tampons and sex toys differ from condoms insofar as they are only *'worn'* by the female herself. Condoms and sex toys are *'shared'* *'with a man and inserted into woman's vagina mainly by a man'* (Participant No.1); however, tampons, *'must be inserted into vagina and by woman herself'* (Participant No.1), *'like masturbation'* (Participant No.2). As explained by the participants.

Participant No.13: *'A tampon should be inserted into my sexual organ, so I was associating it with sexual action'.*

Participant No.25: *'I think it (tampon) may have challenged one of the most secret issues about me, I think, because it has a relationship with vagina, vagina is the sex, I feel that it (tampon) has something to do with sex, like condom, is always related with sex'.*

Participant No.14 directly classified tampons as sexual products *'sexual products, more accurately, masturbating products for women, due to the woman herself using them in that special place (vagina)'.*

Furthermore, tampons are internally used for a significantly longer duration (continuously within a period time) (Participant No.34) than most contact lenses and condoms or sex toys.

In the above analysis, compared with other female consumer products, tampons are identified as a unique personal care consumer product possessing ‘three distinctive integral features’ (Table 11). For Chinese females, they are a new type of foreign menstrual product with three distinctive integral features. These features are:

- A. They are an unnatural type of product and are designed to be used internally for a continuous and extended period for standard function (i.e., basic consumer function) (in short: internal use and an unnatural product).
- B. They require insertion in the vagina, and the insertion is actioned by the woman herself (in short: vaginal insertion by the woman herself).
- C. They are invisible or imperceptible to others when in use (in short: inconspicuous).

Correspondingly, three main product categories of tampons classified (Table 11) in a Chinese context are:

Category A: Internal use menstrual product, invasive or medical product like;

Category B: Sexual or woman’s masturbation product like;

Category C: Inconspicuous foreign product.

Table 11 Tampon product features and categories in a Chinese context.

Reference Products	No. Feature/Category	Tampon Product Features in a Chinese Culture Context	Tampon Product Categories in a Chinese Culture Context
Sanitary pads Contact lenses Nasal irrigations Suctioning device	A	Unnatural product for internal use and used for a significantly longer duration. (In short: internal use unnatural product)	A1. Internal use menstrual product A2. Invasive product A3. Medical product like
Condoms Sex toys	B	Inserting into vagina by woman herself (In short: vaginal insertion by the woman herself)	B1. Sexual product like B2. Woman’s masturbation product like
Contact lenses Foreign products	C	Invisible or imperceptible to others when in use (In short: inconspicuous foreign product)	C1. Inconspicuous product C2. Foreign product

4.2.2 The Perception of Product De-benefits

4.2.2.1 Emotional De-benefits

4.2.2.1.1 The First Impression of Tampons – Negative

For most of the anti-consumer interviewees, their first impressions of tampons were negative. They described tampons as 'strange/rare/abnormal', 'harmful', 'worrying/frightening', 'absurd', 'ridiculous', 'disgusting', 'repulsive', 'they induce terror', and 'shame' due to the internal use method, especially as they are inserted into the vagina by the woman herself. This is demonstrated in the following interviews:

When the researcher showed a tampon to Participant No. 5, a 24-year-old woman who claimed she was a virgin, she smiled bashfully and said: '*Oh my Goddess, qiguai* (in Chinese) (translate into English: absurd or strange'. And in her follow-up interview, she told the researcher her mum's first impression; her mum, who is 49 years old, said: 'ridiculous, they (foreigners) use it this way (internal use).

The first impression of tampon anti-consumers also includes feeling frightened about inserting it into/onto the body. They explained '*tampons are like contact lenses; I feel afraid to insert it onto my eyes, afraid to insert anything to my body, it is harmful*' (Participant No. 12). Participant No.29, a 29-year-old woman, had to prepare herself more than two minutes to feel ready for the researcher to show her a tampon. She closed her eyes and then opened them, glanced at the tampon and said: '*Ah, inserting it into that place (vagina), it is terrible*' with a face of terror'. Participants No. 3 and No.19 also presented the same concern and told the researcher that this was the main reason they did not wear contact lenses.

Besides anti-consumers, participants who were tampon consumers also perceived emotional de-benefits after using tampons. Participant No.1, who has used tampons for almost 12 years, still worried about Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS), often associated with tampon use, which can ultimately lead to death. She explained 'this worrying has never disappeared since the first time using a tampon when I was a virgin, now I have been married almost 10 years and my son is 7 years old, I am still concerned about it and worrying about these risks'.

4.2.2.1.2 Feeling Shame

Most participants highlighted the feeling of 'shame'. Shame was one of the most frequently used words during the interviews. Participants described three dimensions of shame: feeling ashamed

to talk about it, feeling ashamed to use it, and even feeling ashamed when thinking about it or searching for information about it.

Participant No.1 expressed two dimensions: *'I would be a little shamefully embarrassed to say publicly that I use tampon';*

'If I use a tampon, I must insert it into there (vagina), it would cause me to think about whether it was a similar feeling (like intercourse). So, my initial perception of the tampon was it was a rather shameful stuff'.

Participant No.13: *'Tampon should be inserted into my sexual organ, so I was associating it with sexual action';*

'It is true that sex education in China is rather obscure, not public, not scientific, not open';

'People don't talk about it (sex), society avoids talking about it, so if I talk about tampon and sex occasionally and say these things and do these, it is very shameful'.

Participant No. 25: *'I think using it (tampon) is quite a shame for me';*

'I did not put them inside the cabinet, put them on some places where I can easily find out and take them. But my grandmother always criticised me 'in those days, it was hidden and shameful to look at it. Unbelievable, now you even put them everywhere and left them in public';

'For me, there is no shame in seeing, talking or using sanitary napkins. But on tampons, I think now it's not shameful viewing it in public and saying it, but it's a bit shameful to use it (tampon)'.

Participant No.13: *'I also feel like I'm weird even when I try to understand about tampons. The 'weird' is it's shamefully and embarrassingly weird. I feel like I am a bad girl when I go searching for it. It's a burden to do (want to understand about tampons) it, a little bit. Or have shameful awkwardness even to think about it'.*

Participant No.28: *'I've heard about tampon and how good it is, but for me to actively go online and search for this product (tampon), I wouldn't do it. I really haven't searched for it, since I think it's a bit private and it's weird to search for it. If I do it, I'd definitely blush and be uncomfortable and ashamed, like watching a porno, what a good girl will not do'.*

4.2.2.2 Functional De-benefits

Product functional de-benefits is an umbrella term used in this dissertation to describe tampons' utility to satisfy customers' basic needs and the initial reason against tampon consumption. More

than six codes are assigned to the umbrella term 'functional de-benefits'. All of the participants, including the two tampon consumers, mentioned at least two of the codes under the umbrella of functional de-benefits. Twelve participants notably captured all these codes about their initial reasons against consuming tampons.

4.2.2.2.1 The Perceived Risks

All of the participants presented the risks to body health they perceived were linked to the internal use of tampons. Participant No.21 shared the de-benefits of internal use tampons, including *'to block the blood flow'* and *'the flow may not be completely emptied'*; the view of Participant No. 2 was similar: *'it is the retention of menstrual blood'*; Participant No.11 said similar: *'tampons stick menstrual blood flow'*. Participant No.11 also mentioned 'the foreign body sensation' of internal use; Participants No. 5, 6, 7, 8, and 25 said they would suffer 'discomfort' and 'pain' from internal use tampons. Participant No.25 said *'I've attempted a nose cleanser that works well for cold and stuffy noses, or when the nose is blocked with sticky snot, it helps pour the snot out. I've also seen patients with much phlegm and a device inserted to suck it up. These are very uncomfortable, and it is really uncomfortable to insert something into the body'. 'Anything that goes into the body, whether it's into the eyes and nose or any organ, I'm a bit averse to using them unless I'm sick and have to do so'.*

Other risks included *'the tampon's string may break in the body'* (Participants No. 2, 6, 7, 14, 17, 20, and 24); *'may cannot take out'* and *'may retain tampons' cotton or nylon's fibre in the vagina'* (Participants No. 3, 8, 11, 12, 17, 22, 25, 30, 31, and 34). They were afraid that they might not be able to take tampons out, or afraid of causing danger inside the body.

Most participants also presented their concerns about the product's unnatural ingredients. In their view, unnatural ingredients are not good for health. Cotton is one of the best natural product ingredients used next to the skin.

Most interviewees were more worried that internal use may bring bacteria into the body and drive bacterial infections (Participants No.1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 16, 20, 23, 25, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, and 36). Nearly all of the participants claimed that the introitus of the vagina and uterus are 'open' during a period and that women are weaker during their non-period times. They said that it is essential for them to keep the uterus warm, to not do any exercise or heavy work, and to keep their vaginal area clean. Therefore, they felt that there is a risk that bacteria on the tampon or on their hand, when inserting a tampon into the vagina, might be transferred into the uterus. Most of them also listed the risks associated with using contact lenses, such as the infection of the

cornea (keratitis), to illustrate there must be significant risk for internal tampon use, although they did not know exactly what kind of illness tampons might cause.

These risks were presented not only by interviewees that were anti-consumers, but also by those who were tampon consumers, and the perception of these risks did not change if the tampon consumers' circumstances changed. Two of the tampon consumers also listed more serious risks associated with using tampons.

Participant No.1, who has used tampons for almost 12 years, still worries about Toxic shock syndrome (TSS), which is often associated with tampon use. She explained *'this worrying has never disappeared since the first time using a tampon when I was a virgin, now I have been married almost 10 years and my son is 7 years old, I am still concerned about it and worrying about these risks'*.

Participant No.4 *'was worrying about using a tampon at first, and the reason I am using a tampon in the short-term or mixed with pads to reduce the risk of internal use and physical body health concern'*. She emphasised that *'actually there's still a worry of using tampons because there are many risks. For example, I read news about a female model who had her leg amputated after her vagina suffocated from using tampons. It is vaginal asphyxiation. I don't know which country she was from, but just recently, she is very young, born in the late 1990s'*.

4.2.2.2.2 Not Easy to Use and Inconvenient

Further, some participants were concerned that tampons are not easy to use and are inconvenient owing to the perceived complicated method (inserting into) and the lack of sanitation facilities in toilets.

Participant No.12 stated, *'Let me check.... There are 6 steps to use a tampon, too complicated, not easy to use, and how can you know it is the time to change a new one? Complex! But the sanitary pad is so simple, only 3 steps, and can directly check the volume of blood and know when to change a new one'*.

Participant No.2 was puzzled and said, *'how to know that the tampon is absorbed fully and needs to change a new one, because internal use forming "the check-up" is indirect and difficult'*.

Participant No.22 was a primary school teacher and had experience teaching in rural areas where there is no hand washing sink in the toilets. She expressed, *'I really do not think it is possible to use tampons in the countryside. I will get blood all over my hands when I pull it out or insert it.'*

How am I going to wash my hands when there's no sink, so there's no way for rural people to use it'.

Considering the de-benefits of tampon used in rural areas, two participants also shared the difficulties and de-benefits of using tampons in some city toilet environments.

Participant No. 34 lived in Beijing, the capital city of China. She explained *'courtyard homes are the most normal residential buildings in the old town of cities, and they are on the list of culture heritages, no private toilets, only public lavatories are available for them. There are 5 or 6 toilets in a public lavatory, all are squatting style toilet instead of western sitting style, half a high partition wall divides each toilet, no door at all, is semi-closed. Other women could view you when you use tampons, they will observe you and doubt what you are doing. Why inserting something into your body...yes, impoliteness, but you have to face this impoliteness'.*

4.2.2.3 New and Foreign Product De-benefits

Compared with sanitary pads, which are 'external use – not inserted into the body', tampons, as a new product, are attributed as 'internal use – inserted into the body'. From the above analysis, this new feature brings more negative emotional and functional benefits. In addition, tampons, as a product that is 'foreign' (western developed countries) in their interpretation, not only have functional or utilitarian value, but also symbolic or utilitarian value perceived in the same way as other foreign products (conspicuous and inconspicuous). But they are not perceived to have more functional de-benefits.

All participants were keen to consume foreign (western developed countries) products. Besides conspicuous foreign luxury products that are unnecessarily consumed, foreign goods (both conspicuous and inconspicuous) have flooded the everyday goods consumption of participants who look for high quality, cleanliness, product safety, trustworthiness, or a particular lifestyle. These include health supplements from Canada or the USA, infant formula from Australia or New Zealand, skincare and cosmetic products from Korea, Japan, and Europe. Regarding tampons as a type foreign product, anti-consumers express that tampons provide negative utilitarian values and no symbolic benefits:

Participant No.14: *'it (tampon) is designed for western women, their vagina size or structure is different from the Chinese one, it may not be suitable for the Chinese'.* She states, *'the westerners have different diets, they eat more meat and dairy products, but we eat more grain and vegetables, and we are yellow, they are white, so their physique or corporeity must be different with us (the Chinese)'.*

Participant No.3 provides an example of underarm deodorant to state why she did not consider there were any functional benefits perceived from foreign tampon products: *'Not all foreign products from developed countries are suitable for us. For example, westerners used the underarm deodorant frequently because they sweat more than we do, but we, the Chinese, do not need to use it. So, although tampons, this foreign product, may be indeed excellent, it has no functional benefits for us, just like the underarm deodorant, it is not serviceable for the Chinese'*.

4.2.2.3 Symbolic De-benefits and Taking Risks

Symbolic value signifies the immaterial value attributed to an object. It communicates its symbolic meaning, and relates to underlying needs for social approval, personal expression, and outer-directed self-esteem (Solomon, 1983).

4.2.2.3.1 Explicit and Implicit Immoral Labelling

Participants who were not married and did not state whether or not they were a virgin, all stated their concerns about hymen breaks through the use of tampons due to tampons product features B. Their concerns were associated with the cultural meaning of hymen breaks rather than the hymen breaking per se. The meaning linked to tampon use labelled them explicitly and implicitly.

Participant No. 5 said, *'If I am a tampon user, others will recognise me and label me as non-virgin regardless of the truth. No matter what the fact/truth is, I am a virgin or not. Since I have not married yet, I do not want to be recognised by others as non-virgin'*. She explained, *'I will tell my boyfriend whether I am a virgin or not when I consider, or we think we are closer, and it is the time to talk about virginity. I do not want via "using tampons", my consumer behaviour, to discover it (whether I am a virgin or not)'*.

In section '4.2.2.1.2 Emotional De-benefits Analysis', the examples of interviews on 'feeling shame about talking, using tampons, and searching for information about tampons', from a symbolic de-benefits perspective, 'feeling shame' drives the participant to implicitly label herself as a bad girl.

Participant No.13 said, *'I also feel like I'm weird even when I try to understand about tampons. The "weird" is it's shamefully and embarrassingly weird. I feel like I am a bad girl when I go searching for it (tampon). It's a burden to do (want to understand about tampons) it, a little bit. Or have shameful awkwardness even to think about it'*.

Participant No.28 stated, *'I've heard about the tampon and how good it is, but for me to actively go online and search for this product (tampon), I wouldn't do it. I really haven't searched for it,*

since I think it's a bit private and it's weird to search for it. If I do it, I'd definitely blush and be uncomfortable and ashamed, like watching a porno, what a good girl will not do'.

Although the married women, and the single women who had sexual experience, were not concerned with the hymen being broken, their concerns were both explicit and implicit.

When Participant No.14 directly classified tampons as '*sexual products, more accurately, masturbating products for women, for the woman herself using in that special place (vagina)*', she also immediately gave her views on who would use tampons. She said, '*Who is going to use it, the bad woman, like the streetwalker. I cannot say the bad woman, but at least the coquette or the risk one*'. '*My husband and my son might have the same judgement, it is moral degradation, but if I use tampons, I might be a bad wife and a bad mum in their views*'.

Participant No. 32 said, '*Nobody uses tampons around me, especially for my colleagues. If I am more fearless about trying something new, tampons may not be new to others, but it is a new one to us. I mean all my colleagues, using tampon presents I am more adventurous in my thinking and more adventurous in my activities. I might lose the trust and lose my job; I do not want to lose my job. I am a cashier; cashiers must have a meticulous working attitude. I should follow the crowd (conformity), when there are more than 70% colleagues using tampons, then I will use it, no, no, no, must be more than 80%*'.

4.2.2.3.2 The Lack of Symbolic Benefits Added for the Consumption of Tampons (an inconspicuous foreign product)

When participants compared tampons with contact lenses, they all listed the risks of wearing contact lenses, but surprisingly, all participants apart from No.3 and No.19 used contact lenses. The participants who used contact lenses perceived the various risks associated with using contact lenses, but they still took these risks and wore the lenses. The on-the-surface reason for this is the improvement of the consumer's appearance; wearing contact lenses made them 'look beautiful', thereby improving their confidence, social status, and valued characteristics of reference groups. However, there were no similar benefits or motivations perceived in relation to tampon consumption as, to them, tampons are a foreign (western developed countries) product. In their interpretation, there is little symbolic value perceived, as from other foreign products (conspicuous and inconspicuous), to motivate them into taking the perceived **de-benefits**.

Participant 27 said: '*actually, I have had infection of the cornea due to wearing contact lens. Contact lens causes me to be more beautiful, when looking more beautiful, I have more confidence to talk to others, so I wear contact lens.... So far, it is unclear who and which social class or group*

are consuming tampons in China. It is harmful, but when the benefits we really care overweigh the risks, we definitely will buy it. It is like cosmetic surgery, more risks than using tampons, but it makes us looking more beautiful, beautiful will give more benefits to women, even change the destiny. This one benefit overcomes all invasive risks, people will take these risks.'

The researcher showed the participant the 'Tampax' and 'o.b.' tampon websites and their advertisements in China. After reading them, she replied, 'able to swim or be free (not restricted) during the period, nobody (of the Chinese) will be touched by these, at least I won't, and I do not think it is important for us, people like me, we do not do any exercise at all during the period.'

Participant 28 said, *'I am wearing cosmetic contact lenses, blue coloured. I am not a myopia, but I wear cosmetic contact lenses. I was in (south) Korea for 5 years for Korean language learning. The local Korean women, the upper status ladies, they have exquisite makeup, wear stylish suits and cosmetic contact lenses, and carefully manicured nails. You are what you wear, your physical appearance shows your status and classes. The higher status ... will get more respect. Wearing cosmetic contact lenses is one of signals of my status, an exquisite lifestyle. But what can tampons do for it? It (tampon) is invisible or imperceptible to others when in use. There are significant risks (for using tampons), no benefits, then, why do I take the risks.'*

The researcher showed her the 'Tampax' and 'o.b.' tampon websites and their advertisements in China. After reading them, she shook her head, frowning, and said: *'it is not worth taking these risks of using tampons, but contact lenses are worth it'*.

Participant No.33 said, *'It is OK if it pleases me, this product makes me know I am using the product the upper classes or a group I like much consumed. For example, scented candles, Fornasetti, a brand of scented candles, an upper class, only put them as the decoration at home, it pleases me. Using scented candles is full of a sense of ritual, it also presents the nobleness, elegance, and sense of identity. But tampons do nothing'*.

Participant No.36 explained, *'My hairbrush, its brand is Kent, the same one used by the Queen and Kate (Duchess of Cambridge), when I brush my hair, I deserve the best one, and I am affordable to consume the best one, the royal family consumed one'*.

Later, she gave another example, *'bath gel and shampoo is Molton Brown, a British Royal Warrant Holder (not easy to buy from China and more expensive than buying from the UK). Whenever I stand in the shower warm fog, then sniffed the fresh scent of the both gel and shampoo, make me so happy although the scent cannot be recognised by others, but I knew I am in a different group*

with those who are still using Head & Shoulder and Pantene shampoo (cheap and easy to buy in most Chinese local supermarkets), but tampons do nothing to me'.

4.2.3 Reasons Against and Reasons For

The data analysed above in relation to the emotional, functional and symbolic de-benefits is associated with the reasons motivating anti-consumption which have been reviewed in Chapter 2. These are 'innovation aversion', 'risk resistance', 'undesired relational-self and situational-self', and 'no significant added value for inconspicuous consumption'.

4.2.3.1 Innovation Aversion

Internal use and vaginal insertion-based feminine hygiene product innovation explains the rejection and non-consumption of tampons. To trial a tampon, the consumer must insert it into her body. This creates a higher perceived risk due to the more intimate relationship between the consumer and the tampon than is present with other products, such as a bike or phone. Once inserted, the consumer then feels uncertain about her health. Some participants perceived that there are very risky events that can lead to amputation or even death. The perception of unpredictable health problems and potential negative events leads to the resistance of tampon use by the consumer.

The internal use of tampons poses various risks, which provokes a high level of concern amongst Chinese women. The precipitation of risks for tampon use includes social risks, physical risks, time/convenience risks, and psychological risks.

Social risk: the perceived risk of tampon use associated with a negative perception of the person who is a tampon consumer by others. This is analysed as part of the symbolic de-benefits in section 4.2.2.3.1 – explicit and negative labels.

Physical risk: the perceived risk of tampon use associated with the possibility that a chosen tampon will cause physical damage to the purchaser, or negatively affect her health or others. This is analysed as part of the functional de-benefits in section 4.2.2.2.1 – perceived risks.

Performance/Functional risk: the perceived risk of tampon use associated with the possibility that the performance of tampons will deviate from the expectations of the sanitary pad alternative. This is analysed as part of the functional de-benefits in section 4.2.2.2.2 – not easy to use and inconvenient; and section 4.2.2.2.3 – new and foreign product de-benefits.

Time/convenience risk: the perceived risk of tampon use associated with the possibility that the effort and time invested in acquiring the tampon was wasted due to the perceived outcome being lower than the expectation of the sanitary pad alternative. This is analysed as part of the functional de-benefits in section 4.2.2.2 – not easy to use and inconvenient.

Psychological risk: the perceived risk of tampon use associated with the possibility that the ego of the consumer will be negatively affected due to making an inferior and immoral choice. This is analysed as part of the emotional functional de-benefits in section 4.2.2.1, and symbolic de-benefits in section 4.2.2.3.1 –implicit and negative labels.

Furthermore, psychological barriers can explain the rejection and non-consumption of tampons. Chinese cultural elements act as a psychological barrier to tampon consumption, due to the application of ‘internal use’ and ‘vaginal insertion’ innovations. These cultural elements will be analysed in section 4.3 – Chinese cultural values.

Innovation resistance literature suggests that the adoption of a new product is for its ease of use rather than its sophistication (Higgins and Shanklin, 1992). Compared with the product currently used by most of the participants – sanitary pads – the analysis in section 4.3.2.2 suggests that participants found tampons too complicated to use; to use tampons, there are six steps, but pads only require three steps; and tampons cannot directly check the volume of blood or inform the consumer when they need to be changed whereas, with sanitary pads, it is easy to see when they need replacing. Following this data analysis, it is obvious that innovation resistance occurs when the resistance to the innovation is more convenient than utilising the innovation.

4.2.3.2 Risk Resistance

Matzler *et al.* (2008) suggested the prediction for product total risk relies on the product class. Regarding tampons, owing to the sensitive nature of ‘internal use’ product consumption, tampons are attributed (analysed in section 4.3.1) as invasive or as medical products, for example, tampons have a higher total health risk than sanitary pads, which participants are more familiar with. Thus, participants avoid the uncertainties and consequences of consuming tampons by resisting their use.

The anti-consumption of tampons is not restricted to the health risks of ‘internal use’ based innovation, but also to the moral relevance of ‘vaginal insertion’. Tampons are also categorised as sexual or as a woman’s masturbation product. Consuming tampons is perceived as immoral, against social morality, and participants ‘feel ashamed’ to talk about it. They label themselves implicitly as ‘bad girls/women’ (as analysed in section 4.2.2.3.1). They even experience the feeling

of shame when thinking about tampons or searching for information about them (as analysed in section 4.2.2.1.2). Hence, consumers reject tampons, performing anti-consumption practice to avoid being associated with a product that conflicts with their morals.

4.2.3.3 Undesired Relational-self and Social-self

The undesired perceived relational-self and social-self is another central avoidance goal that causes certain participants to perform tampon anti-consumption behaviour. Consumers are concerned about being labelled by society and by the people they care for rather than how they identify themselves.

As analysed in section 4.2.2.3.1 – Explicit and Implicit Immoral Labelling – women feel that if they use tampons, especially for ‘vaginal insertion’, they will be labelled as the ‘non-virgin’, the ‘bad woman’ ‘bad wife or bad mum’ or ‘different to others’, ‘adventurous’, ‘un-meticulous’, regardless of who she is. A consumer who does not want to be labelled like this will refrain from consuming tampons, which are associated with their undesired perceived relational-self and social-self.

Negative emotions that a consumer has towards tampon ‘vaginal insertion’ also implicitly define their perceived social-self-concept (perceived by society). The participants evaluated tampons and decided on their symbolic meaning in relation to whether they fit with their undesired social self-concept.

Furthermore, products that anti-consumers avoid consuming define their social reference groups just as the products they choose to consume do (Englis and Solomon, 1995, 1997; Hogg, 1998; Banister and Hogg, 2001; Hogg and Banister, 2001). A consumer who rejects tampons is defining the social reference group to which they belong, such as ‘virgin’ or ‘not the coquettish women’ group.

4.2.3.4 The Lack of Emic Culture Values Recognised Symbolic Value Added for the Consumption of Tampons

In the data analysis in section 4.2.2.3.2, consumers who recognised the health risks of wearing contact lenses, or even directly suffered from those risks, still wear contact lenses because they want to improve their appearance, making them ‘look beautiful’ and, thereby, improving their confidence; physical appearance is also considered to present status; people with a higher status/class or who are well-educated gain more respect. Tampons do not provide similar benefits because tampons are invisible or imperceptible to others when in use. Other inconspicuous consumption products given as examples by the participants included scented candles, shower

gel, shampoo, or hair brushes used by the Royal Family and other upper class or fashionable groups. These were attributed to symbolic signs of social class, a wealthy lifestyle or valued characteristics of reference groups, which motivated participants to overcome the perceived de-benefits and perform consumption of these products. However, participants do not perceive similar benefits from tampons or the marketing of tampons to motivate them into taking the perceived risks associated with tampon consumption.

4.2.3.5 Reasons For

The only type of consumption in relation to tampon use was stated by a few tampon anti-consumers – ‘occasional use’. The occasions described were mostly related to water activities, such as going to a spa or swimming; in these cases, the product benefits the user as they are able to swim due to product feature A – internal use.

Participant No.12 said, *‘I think tampons are useful for swimming or SPA occasion, but for myself, why do I have to go for swimming or SPA in my period. You know that we must keep the uterus warm, and do not do any sport. It is usual for us (the Chinese girls) in the period to ask for a sick leave on PE lesson’.*

Similarly, when discussing reasons against water activities during the menstrual period, participant No.11 expressed, *‘the entrance of these places (vagina and uterus) are opened up in our period, any water activities may cause water to enter into here (vagina and uterus), too dangerous, may cause infection’.*

As well as concerns about being perceived as the ‘non-virgin’ and the ‘bad woman’, participants stated tampons are more suitable for certain consumers who have occupational demands, such as players of water sports, actors, dancers, or models.

Participant No.4 stated, *‘I read the news, in the news, a model was on the catwalk in her period, an underwear fashion show, she used sanitary pads, the wing of her pad was left poking out of her pants and was captured by a photographer. I think in such situations, it is better to use tampons, it is her occupation demand’.*

According to the participants, other possible Chinese consumers of tampons are women who have lived in foreign developed countries for a long while. Participant No.15 said, *‘probably those ladies who have lived in foreign developed countries widely using tampons for a long while will use it (tampon), they do as the Roman do’.*

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The truth was exactly the opposite. None of the five follow-up interviewees became tampon users after living in the UK for six months. When they took part in their first interview, which was conducted during the first four weeks after arriving in the UK, they were not tampon users. Through the interviews, they started to understand tampons well, but they still rejected tampons in their follow-up interviews, which were conducted six months after the first interviews. Of the 37 females in the sample, none of them attempted or consumed tampons due to staying or living abroad. Participant No.2 had studied (holding a master's and a PhD degree) and lived in the UK for more than eight years, but still rejected tampons. The participant did not do what British people did when they were in Britain.

4.2.3.6 Summary

The reasons against tampon consumption in a Chinese context outweighs the reasons for their use. In addition, marketers have not attributed participants recognised valuable symbolic meaning to the consumption of tampons in China. Thus, Chinese women have not been motivated to overcome the reasons against tampon use or the product's de-benefits and, consequently, consume tampons.

4.2.4 Cultural Values

Twenty-five cultural values are identified in the current research; their applications in anti-consumption and the products' features and categories are shown in Table 12. Echoing the emic research conducted by indigenous Chinese scholars (Fei, *et. al.*, 1992; Yu, 1987; Hus, 1985; Ho, 1993; Hwang, 2000), values related to egoism/personalism and relation/situation are identified in the present research. 11 of the 25 values identified are similar to those in other research. Fourteen of the values identified in the present study are novel and have not been captured in the literature by Chinese values researchers. The 25 emergent values are arranged into three groups:

'Personal physical health' – Centric Values and the relevance to tampon product feature A – internal use;

'The person-in-relations/situations' – Centric Values and their relevance to tampon product feature B – vaginal insertion by the woman herself;

'The person-in-relations/situations' – Centric Values and the relevance to tampon product feature C – inconspicuous foreign product consumption.

Table 12 Chinese cultural values derived from semi-structured interviews

No.	New/Existed	Values	Meaning and Literature Support	Related to product features/categories and anti-consumption behaviours
		'Personal physical health'- Centric Values		<u>Tampons product feature A and product category A:</u> <u>Internal use - insert into body</u>
1	Existed	Health 健康	A healthy body. <i>Health (Zhang and Harwood, 2004; Hsu and Huang, 2016)</i>	More sensitive to 'positive for health' products or services.
2	New 1	Harmony within the body 身体和谐	Maintaining homeostasis within the human body (including mood and state of mind), avoiding all parts of the body confrontation, and keeping all in balance. <i>Relationship with Nature: Harmony between man and nature (Fan, 2000); Harmony with others (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987)</i>	Reject or minimise consuming the internal use product, if it is necessarily for medical treatment, avoid a continuous and extended period of use.
3	Existed	Safety 安全性/感	The state of being safe from harm or danger; if you are concerned about the safety of something, you are concerned that it might be harmful or dangerous. <i>Personal safety and stability of life in general (Hsu and Huang, 2016)</i>	More concern on the safety of the product, especially for the products of eating, drinking, the nearest skins or necessarily using in the body.
4	New 2	Being Natural and Comply to nature 顺应自然	Being natural and letting things take their own course, excluding the unnecessary indulging, and not reluctantly using people's power to interfere with the natural or social laws own development. <i>Relationship with Nature: The Way - Tao (Fan, 2000)</i>	An aversion of unnatural product ingredients or unnatural use method; reject or minimise consuming the internal use product.
5	New 3	The mysterious and awe of an organ of the body 器官神秘且敬畏	An organ of the body is mysterious and awe-inspiring.	Reject or minimise consuming the internal use product.

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6	New 4	Regimen 养生	A set of rules about food, supplies and exercise that people follow in order to stay healthy.	More sensitive for 'positive for health' products or services.
7	New 5	Hygiene 卫生	Keeping the balance of various bacteria instead of killing all of them to prevent illness, an illness is the unbalance of various bacteria.	Reject or minimise consuming the internal use product to prevent bacterial infection.
8	New 6	Risk resistance 风险防范	Evaluating risks to decide whether a risk is worth taking. Keeping away from the unworthy risk. <i>Being conservative, Prudence (carefulness) (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987; Fan, 2000)</i>	Lower acceptance of high perceived risks products.
9	Existed	Easy to use, convenience and comfortable 简单便利舒适	An easy life in a comfortable environment, or feeling easy and comfortable, without putting in too much effort to achieve one's goals. <i>Convenience (Cheng, 1997), Convenience, Easy and comfortable (Hsu and Huang, 2016)</i>	More concern on easy to use, convenience and comfort.
10	Existed	Quality of Life 生活品质	Focus on the quality of life and improve the general well-being of one's life. <i>Quality of Life (Hsu and Huang, 2016)</i>	More concern on the product, which can improve the general well-being of one's life.
		<u>The person-in-relations/situations'- Centric Values</u>		<u>Tampons product feature B and product category B:</u> <u>Vaginal insertion by woman herself</u>
11	New 7	Sex related is implicit 性相关话题/事宜隐性化	Sexual related issues are transmitted in an indirect, implicit and non-verbal way. <i>Chinese sexual culture is non-sex (Zheng, 1994)</i>	Avoid buying sexual products in public
12	New 8	(Women living up to) Patriarchal society expectation	Be patriarchal society expectation-oriented in women's behaviour or decisions.	Resist the product which does not match patriarchal society expectation.

		女性遵从男 权社会的期 望	<i>Chastity in women; Hierarchical relationships by status and observing this order, Observation the rites and social rituals (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987; Fan, 2000)</i>	
13	New 9	Good- looking physical appearance in women 女性姣好的 容颜	Male-dominated aesthetic standard. <i>Physical appearance is key for women's upward mobility (Chen, 2017)</i>	Focus more on the product or the function of the product, which may improve women's physical appearance.
14	Existed	Virginity and Chastity in women 处女及女性 贞操	Virginity and chastity in women. <i>Chastity in women (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987; Fan, 2000)</i>	Reject the product which may break hymen, and resist putting a product in the vagina.
15	New 10	Man's the decisive power, dominance, priority in sexual relationship 男性在性关 系中拥有决 定权主导权 优先权	Giving the decisive power, the dominance, the priority to man in a sexual relationship. <i>Hierarchical relationships by status and observing this order (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987; Fan, 2000)</i>	Women avoid buying sex related products.
16	New 11	Vagina reserved only for man's penis insertion	(Excluding the necessary medical treatment) Only a man's penis can be inserted into vagina and it is inserted by man; vagina is for sex; woman's sexual needs rely on man. <i>Chastity in women; Hierarchical relationships by status and observing this order (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987; Fan, 2000)</i>	Women avoid putting anything in their vagina or using masturbating products by themselves.

		阴道是专门为男性阴茎而保留的		
17	Existed	Family orientation 家族观念	Be family-oriented in one's decisions, family members significantly affect each other's behaviour and decision making. <i>Family orientation (Hsu and Huang, 2016); Kinship (Fan, 2000)</i>	(Anti)consuming decision-family oriented. Family members significantly affect each other's (anti)consumer behaviour and decision-making.
18	New 12	Relational/situational role responsibility orientation 关系角色或情境角色责任观念	Carrying different role responsibilities in different relationships and situations to match the relational-identity. <i>Obligation for one's family and nation (Fan, 2000); Sense of obligation (Hsu and Huang, 2016)</i>	Anti-consuming the product, which its product image is non-consistent with the consumer's relational/situational role responsibilities, and the anti-consumer behaviour will be changed in different relationships and situations.
19	Existed	The pattern of difference sequence 差序格局	Everyone centres himself/herself in a relationship network, other people form a circle around him/her, the circle forms the pattern of difference sequence, which marks the distance between him/her with others. <i>The pattern of difference sequence (Fei et al., 1992)</i> <i>Hierarchical relationships by status and observing this order (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987; Fan, 2000)</i>	The different relationships are varied in the influence (anti)consumer behaviour. The closer/intimacy one, in a higher status or hierarchy one, well-educated one, or more knowledgeable/seasoned one in a special field will influence more.
20	Existed	Conformity 从众	Do as others have done. <i>Conformity (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987; Fan, 2000 ; Hsu and Huang, 2016)</i>	Low acceptance to the unpopular product.
21	Existed	Conform to the situation 顺应情境	Conform to the needs of the situation. <i>Adaptability (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987; Fan, 2000)</i>	(Anti)consumer behaviour could/should be changed over time and situation.
		<u>The person-in-relations/situations'-Centric Values</u>		<u>Tampons product feature C and product category C:</u>

				<u>Inconspicuous foreign product consumption</u>
22	New 13	Social status/class 提升社会地位/阶层	Be in upper social status/class, and to improve one's social status or social class. <i>Fame and Fortune (Hsu and Huang, 2016)</i>	Disinterested in consumption (1) inconspicuous; (2) without any valuable symbolic meaning of upper social status/class; (3) without any signal of upper social status/class.
23	Existed	Wealth 财富	Be rich. <i>Wealth (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987; Fan, 2000); Fame and Fortune (Hsu and Huang, 2016)</i>	Disinterested in consumption (1) inconspicuous; (2) without any valuable symbolic meaning of wealth; (3) without any signal of wealth.
24	Existed	Knowledge and education 学识及教育	Improve one's knowledge or to be well-educated. <i>Knowledge and education (Hsu and Huang, 2016)</i>	Disinterested in consumption (1) without any valuable symbolic meaning of upper social status/class; (2) without any signal of upper social status/class.
25	New 14	Reference groups orientation 参照群体观念	To look upon to and aspire to be like reference groups, to have the valuable sign/characters of reference groups.	The followers of reference groups, consuming or anti-consuming what the reference groups do, and adopting their (anti)consumption behaviours over the time, situation and the valuable signs/characters of various reference groups.

4.2.4.1 'Personal Physical Health' – Centric Values and the Relevance to Tampon Product Feature A – Internal Use

The participants in this research intensely discussed health concerns and how they related to tampon product feature A – internal use, and the anti-consumption of tampons, along with how to achieve or maintain health, which includes harmony within the body, being natural and complying to nature, the mystery and awe of an organ of the body, regimen, hygiene, and risk avoidance (analysed in section 4.3.2.2.1 – The Perceived Risks). All of the participants also expressed safety, especially in relation to the safety of products related to health, which was caused by a series of food and vaccine safety scandals in China. This is explained by four of the participants:

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Participant No.25: *'I'm a believer in "complying to nature". You simply let it be what it was, and you try not to destroy it. Just like nature, when man destroys nature, nature in turn will bring you catastrophic consequences and retribution. These insertions for me are all about destroying the original state of the body. Artificially inserting objects is destroying the body, just like a river you have to dam up, that's a type of destruction. The body feels the pain, and there are all sorts of risks, unknowable risks that might manifest themselves in the long term'.*

Participant No. 29: *'The human body as a whole one, and all parts of the body themselves have their own resistance and immunity. If you disinfect the resistance out, the disinfection will be gone, that is not hygiene, not health. Just like chemotherapy for cancer, it kills all the harmful cancer cells, but it also kills the beneficial resistance and immunity together. One cannot live in a sterile room. That's why maintaining the body's original balance is the only way to be truly healthy, that is, maintaining nature is best'.*

Participant No.14: *'I have a son, 6 years old. I fed him foreign infant formula milk powder for 4 years, costly, but worth it for his health. That TCA case (infant formula milk scandal) in China is so serious. I am still suffering with insecurity although currently Chinese products are better; I wouldn't buy them online if they enter into my body or directly next to the skin, like food, toothpaste, underwear... I have to view them, check them on site and then buy them. I do not think online shopping can ensure the safety of products. Health is most important for us. Yes, so important, to have a healthy body is the most essential'.*

Participant No.15: *'Concerning the safety of products, it is the least I can do for keeping myself and my family member's healthy'. 'Products are used on the skin, directly on the skin, like the skin care products, or going into your body these kinds of products, even semi-enter to my body, toothpaste, I trust powerful and famous stores and buy from them'. 'But if a store only has an online shop, I won't buy from them because the skin care products are used on the skin, it is directly related with my health. The same product in another physical shop is expensive than the online one, there's no way to choose, I can only buy the expensive one in-store, because of the safety of products, healthy, healthy.'*

Several participants agreed with the importance of products being 'easy to use, convenient and comfortable' and the importance of 'quality of life'. Both themes were analysed in section 4.2.2.2.1 – The Perceived Risks and section 4.2.2.2.2 – Not easy to use and inconvenient.

4.2.4.2 'The Person-in-relations/situations' – Centric Values and the Relevance to Tampon Product Feature B – Vaginal Insertion by the Woman Herself

All interviewees attached great importance to the links between 'guanxi' (relationship 关系) and the anti-consumption of tampons; they explained how the links related to tampon product feature B – vaginal insertion by the woman herself.

4.2.4.2.1 Values Related to 'The Woman-In-Sexual Relations'

In section 4.2.2.3 – Symbolic De-benefits, we analysed that participants who are not married and did not, on their own initiative, claim that they were not a virgin, all stated their concerns regarding hymen breaks through the use of tampons; for virgins, this highlighted the results regarding vaginal insertion. Married women and single women who had sexual experience expressed their concern about vaginal insertion by the woman herself; this highlighted the vagina, the action, who does the insertion, and what is inserted into the vagina. It is about chastity and more than chastity. As analysed in section 4.2.1 – Product Features', when participants compared tampons to other products that are inserted into the vagina, they said condoms and sex toys are *'shared with a man and inserted into the woman's vagina mainly by a man'* (Participant No.1); however, tampons *'must be inserted into the vagina by the woman herself'* (Participant No.1). All participants described China as a patriarchal society and explained that women are living up to patriarchal societal expectations. Besides virginity and chastity in women, a patriarchal society embodies sexual relationships and a good physical appearance, matching male-dominated aesthetic standards. In a sexual relationship, women give the decisive power, the dominance, and the priority to a man. This was demonstrated by the following interviews:

Participant No. 3: *'Although the woman's virginity has lost the importance held by my grandmother or mother's generation, it is still the man and social expectation'*.

Participant No.2: *'vagina is for sex; I do not want to insert any others to there (vagina)'*.

Participant No.5, a 23-year-old, claimed she is a virgin. She was aware of tampons, but had not seen one yet. When the researcher showed a tampon to her, she smiled bashfully and said: *'Oh my Goddess, qiguai (in Chinese) (translate into English: absurd or strange'*. The researcher asked her why it is qiguai, she blushed again and repeated *'because it is only qiguai'*. She could not explain more. Then the researcher asked her, *'what does 'qiguai' mean or what is not 'qiguai' in your opinion?'* She responded, *'it is not 'qiguai' (absurd or strange) to not insert into vagina, it is not 'qiguai' (absurd or strange) that man's stuff (penis) inserts into that place (vagina)'*.

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Participant No.14: *'We can't touch our that place (genitals) or insert anything else (into vagina), otherwise it is depraved'*. The researcher asked her *'why can't we touch and what is not "anything else" in your opinion?'* She answered, *'doing that action (intercourse) is human nature, so the only acceptable one is the man inserts his chickling chicken (penis), other insertion is depraved. If a woman is so active to do those actions (intercourse, or touch her genitals by herself), she is depraved, the woman must control sexual desires'*.

Many participants opined that sex-related issues are implicit in China. Sex education (both schooling and parenting) or sexual knowledge is transmitted in an indirect, implicit, and non-verbal way, as demonstrated by the data analysed in section 4.2.2.1.2 – Feeling Shame:

Participant No.1: *'When no one tells me, when no one puts sexual topics on the table, in my perception, when no one puts it on the table, I understand it as something that cannot be said openly. I should say that when no one puts it on the table to say it, in my perception, it is considered shameful to say it, it is shameful, it is shameful to say such a topic'*.

Participant No.13 expressed similar views: *'It is true that sex education in China is rather obscure, not public, not scientific, not open. If all do not talk about these (sex) issues openly, I will judge it is not appropriate to talk about it; The way I do the judgement is that if people don't receive it is appropriate to talk about it openly, so in my view it should be inappropriate to talk about it openly. People don't talk about it (sex), society avoids talking about it, so if I talk about tampon and sex occasionally and say these things and do these, it is very shameful'*.

The values 'sex related issues are implicit', along with the values 'the mysterious and awe of an organ of the body' are the root of most Chinese women's insufficient knowledge of the vagina; this has, consequently, caused Chinese women's anti-consumption of tampons.

Participant No.5, a 24-year-old master student, blushing told the researcher: *"I do not know where the hell is the hole of vagina"*.

Participant No. 25, a 29-year-old girl and a lecturer at a university and a master's degree, was still unable to distinguish between the urethra, the anus and the vagina. After the researcher showed her tampons and demonstrated how to insert a tampon into the vagina, she said: *'This product is excellent, then all babies can use tampons instead of wearing nappies'*.

4.2.4.2.2 Values Related to 'The Woman-In-Kinship by Blood or Marriage'

Besides 'shame', 'mum' is the other most frequent word in the interviews. Their 'mums' have been the most crucial people providing puberty knowledge to the participants, including their first

feminine hygiene product and special consideration during menstruation. Mums also consciously or unconsciously pass their beliefs, attitudes, norms and values towards sex to their daughters, which, in turn, affects their (anti)consumer behaviour.

Participant No.1: *'I was aware of tampons when I was a little girl. My mum normally put her menstrual products, both sanitary pads and tampons, in our bathroom. I can see them as they are there. So in my world, there are various product options for periods. Tampons are just one of them, although I did not exactly know what a period was at that time. When I was about 10 years old before I got my first period, my mum explained menstruation very well to me. She told me what would mean to me, normally timing of menarche, what I will experience for my menarche, how to use sanitary pads, and some special consideration in my period, like warming up yourself, drinking warm water which mixed with brown sugar and ginger, avoiding touching cold water, avoiding eating cold food, avoiding doing a vigorous exercise, taking more rest. She said to me that tampons are for married women, that I could use them after I got married. Since then, I expected to have a menarche and use tampons'.*

Participant No. 5: *'Although the woman's virginity has lost the importance held by my grandmother or mother's generation, it is still the man and social expectation. Honestly, I do not care whether my hymens are broken or not'. 'It does matter to me only because of my mum, she believes it (virginity) is important due to it being the expectation of the man or the society. I am their only child, I do not want to make them (parents) disappointed by doing such minor issues (using tampons), and I do not want me to be perceived as this (the non-virgin), it won't be good to me'.*

Besides mums, other people in kinship by blood or marriage relationship also play an important role in their tampon (anti)consumption. Eight participants had experience of using tampons. One used tampons due to her mum's usage and four used tampons because their sister, cousin, aunt and sister-in-law used them. Three participants used them due to the recommendation of a member in a 'situational unequal social relationship' (this will be analysed in the next section). Compared with other relationships, kinship by blood or marriage relationships ('family orientation') is the main one that interprets or affects (anti)consumer behaviour and decision making towards tampon consumption.

4.2.4.2.3 Values Related to "The Woman-In- 'Situational Unequal Social Relationship'"

Participants' knowledge of tampons is classified as three levels in section 4.1.3 – the awareness of tampons, knowledge of tampons, and experience of using tampons. At the first level, word-of-mouth was the only way that participants became aware of tampons for the first time. Most

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participants first heard about the word 'tampon' from their personal relation networks, including classmates, colleagues, or blood-tie members, presenting 97% (36 of 37 participants); one participant heard the word from an actress's line in a television drama (the actress was the participant's idol). At the first level, all three types of relationships impacted on the spread of information about tampons (kinship by blood or marriage relationship, equal social relationship, and situational unequal social relationship).

At the third level, 'experience of using tampons', as analysed in section 4.3.4.2.2, 'kinship by blood or marriage relationship' plays the major role in interpreting or affecting (anti)consumer behaviour and decision making towards tampon consumption. The next is 'unequal social relationship', the relationships are varied in their influence on (anti)consumer behaviour. The closer a more intimate relationship, higher status or hierarchy, wealth, more knowledge, and/or seasoned in a specialised field have more influence. This presents three cultural values, which are the pattern of difference sequence, social/status/class, wealth, knowledge and education, and reference group orientation. Equal social relationships have no effect.

Most of the participants attached great importance to the situation and believed that consumption or anti-consumption should be changed over time to meet the needs of the situation. In this regard, the values 'conform to the situation' as code emerged. The following quotes illustrate how 'conforming to the situation', 'the pattern of difference sequence', and 'relational/situational role responsibility orientation' affect their (anti)consumer behaviour towards tampons.

Participant No.11: *'I might use it (tampons) for diving, but I never schedule dive in my period, just in case if it is in my period and I can't change the schedule. A few years ago, I went to Thailand for diving with my friends, I noticed a diving instructor recommending tampons to a lady who planned to dive but got her period. In that situation, if I was her, I would use tampons. You know, all friends are joyful and ready to go diving together, if I cannot go, it will be such a wet blanket, spoiling the fun. Tampons are recommended by the diving instructor, she/he is a specialist, she/he knows well how to deal with the period for diving, she/he is trustful. And more important is, she/he is not the Chinese, my rejection of using a tampon will cause her/him to consider the Chinese are barbaric or uncivilised, it will lose the Chinese face'.*

Participant No.19: *'Normally the length of my menstrual cycle is around 28 days, but sometimes it is changed, especially on my travels abroad. I am planning to go to Japan for a weekend trip to the most famous hot spring, most of my friends have been there, but I have not. If, unfortunately, I get my period when I am in Japan, in that situation, definitely, I will use it (tampons), I do not want to*

waste my money and lose the opportunity to explore Japanese hot springs where my friends knew well. I will use tampons, otherwise I won't have the same topic with them, I will be out'.

4.2.4.3 'The Person-in-relations/situations' – Centric Values and the Relevance to Tampon Product Feature C – Inconspicuous Foreign Consumption

In the above section 4.2.4.2.3, four cultural values were identified: social status/class, wealth, knowledge and education, and reference group orientation. These four values also emerged in the quotations of participants in section 4.2.3.2., in which we analysed insufficient symbolic benefits of tampon consumption related to tampon product feature C – inconspicuous foreign consumption; they were 'non-signal of social status/class, wealth, knowledge/education, no valued characteristics of reference groups.' Those de-benefit are direct reasons against tampon consumption and a reflection of these four values. One quotation typically illustrated these values:

Participant No.13: *'To earn more money and be well-educated are my targets, both of them show my social class, more money will provide me a high quality of life. I also can do charity to help more people, but without proper education, like Beckham (David Beckham), he is working class although he has money'.*

4.3 Pattern Coding Results – Findings

In the third coding cycle, mind-mapping and NVivo 12 software were utilised to further understand the patterns, links and relationships between the open described codes (1st coding cycle) and interpretive codes (2nd coding cycle), to assist conceptual and theoretical modelling code discovery. Three themes resulted from the third cycle of coding: (1) reasons against consuming tampons; (2) a set of emic cultural values; and (3) a 'reasons against' model of anti-consumption towards a specific product category. Mind-mapping and NVivo 12 software were utilised to further understand the patterns, links and relationships within the open described codes (1st coding cycle), interpretive codes (2nd coding cycle), and assistant conceptual and theoretical modelling code discovery.

4.3.1 Reasons Against

The themes for 'reasons against' in the third coding cycle are directly tied to the second. The reason of 'innovation resistance' was merged with 'risk aversion' due to the repetition of the new product in the reason of 'risk aversion'. Others were not developed or revised. Three reasons

against tampon consumption tampons are identified in the answer to the 'what' question of RQ1. What are the reasons against consuming tampons in China? They are: (1) risk aversion; (2) undesired relational-self and situational-self; and (3) the lack of emic cultural values recognised symbolic value added for inconspicuous foreign product consumption.

4.3.2 A Set of Emic Cultural Values: Values Pattern and Values

Twenty-five Chinese emic cultural values (Table 12) were identified in section 4.2.4, and were classified into two categories; 'personal physical health'-centric values, and the person-in-relations/situations'-centric values. This categorisation presents two orientations of values: 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational self'. Through (anti)consumption, participants aim to maximise their 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational self' personal gains. These gains centre on the woman or girl herself. This result confirmed the emic concept described by Yu (1987), which defined the deep structure of Chinese culture as personalism.

The values pattern – personalism with its 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational self' orientations – and 25 values together constitute a set of emic cultural elements; they are the cultural antecedents to interpret the reasons against tampon consumption and they provide an answer to RQ2. What are the Chinese cultural elements at the root of these reasons against? Of the 25 values, 14 identified in the present study are new ones that have not been captured in literature by Chinese values researchers; this provides a more accurate insight into the anti-consumption of tampons in China.

4.3.3 A 'Reasons Against' Model

In the case of tampons in China, as analysed in section 4.3.1, the attribution of product features determines the classification of product categories. Both product features and product categories directly, and significantly, affect the perception of product (de)benefits (analysed in section 4.2.2), which consequently result in the reasons against tampon consumption (as analysed in section 4.2.3). The model of relationships is presented in Figure 11.

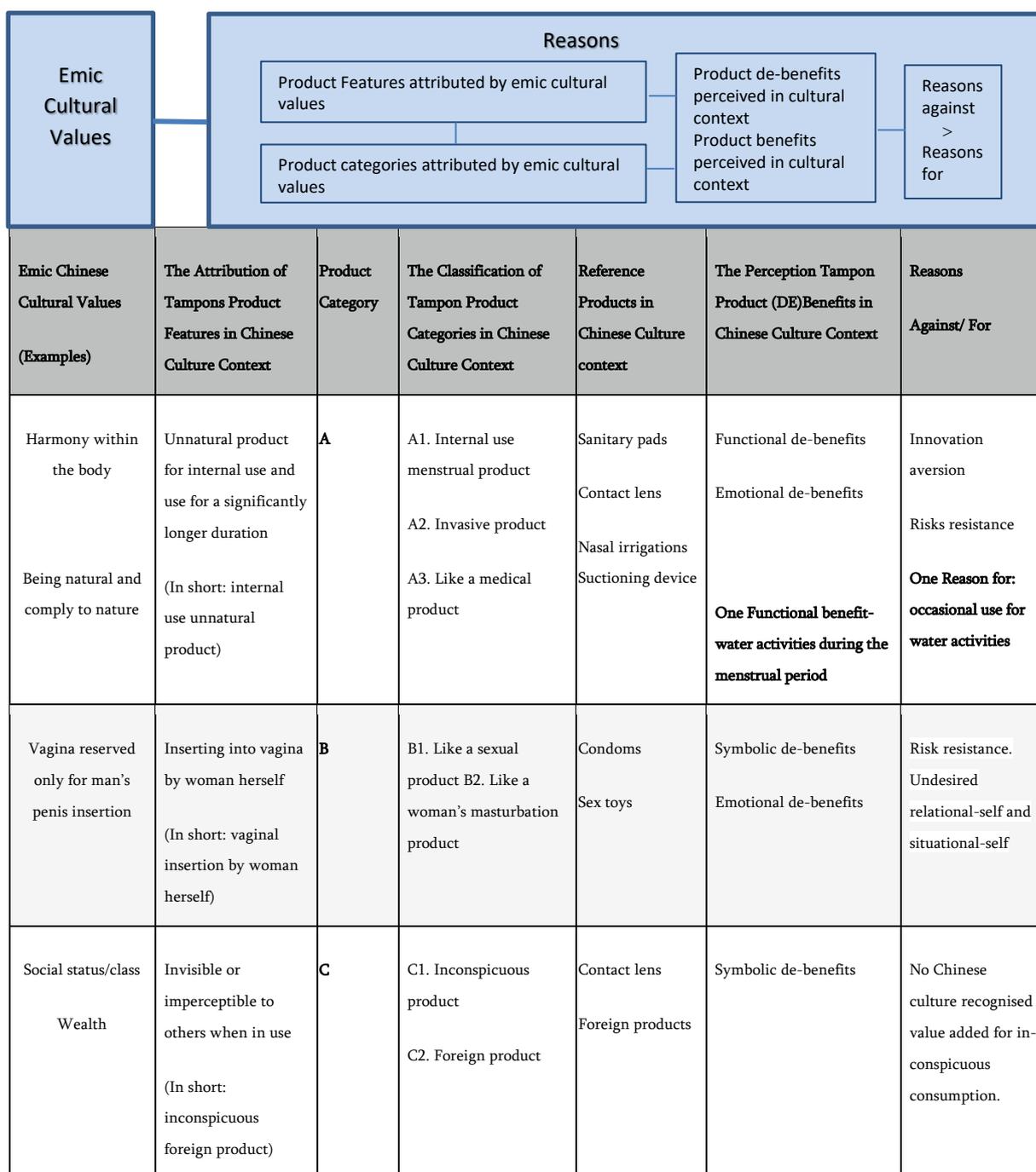


Figure 11 The relationship within tampon product features, product categories, product (de)benefits and reasons for and against in a Chinese context

In section 4.2.4, 25 cultural values identified the impact and interpreted the reasons against tampon consumption, and the impact and interpretation of the attribution of the product and the product's categories. Thus, regarding the anti-consumption of a specific product category, the mental processing model of reasons against is explored. A set of cultural values influence and interpret the attribution of product features and product categories; they further correspondingly

influence and interpret the perception of the product's (de)benefits, then consequently the reasons for and against consuming the specific product.

In section 4.2.3.6, we summarised that the reasons against tampon consumption in a Chinese context outweighs the reasons for their use. In addition, tampon marketers have not attributed a recognised or valuable symbolic meaning for the consumption of tampons to motivate Chinese women to overcome the reasons against tampon consumption or the product de-benefits with a view to Chinese women's tampon use.

The mental processing model of reasons against performing anti-consumption behaviour is illustrated in Figure 12 to aid a better understanding of the anti-consumption of a specific product category and the structure of future research.

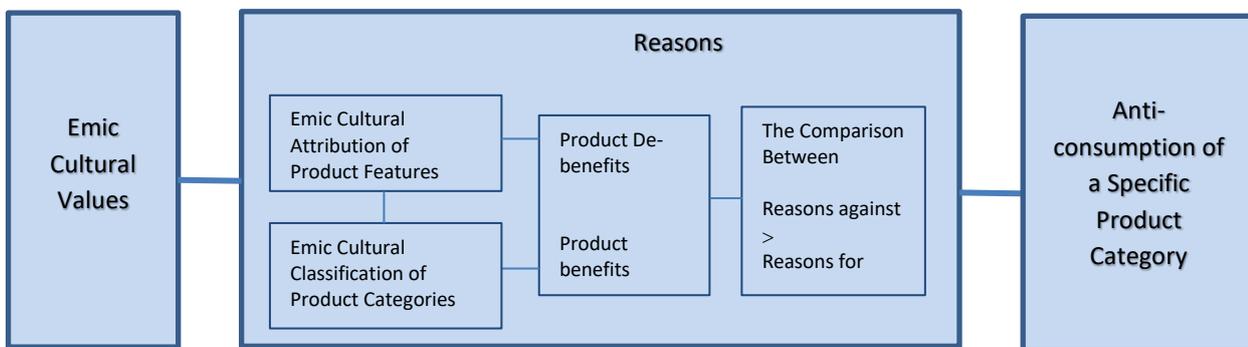


Figure 12 The model of reasons against consuming a specific product category

4.4 Summary

This chapter includes the results and findings of the data analysis and its connection to the research questions.

37 participants were interviewed. Semi-structured interview questions were created to understand the reasons against, and the cultural factors that contribute to, most Chinese women's performance of anti-consumption practice.

The participants' ages ranged from 20 to 50 years and they all confirmed that their decisions related to buying feminine hygiene products were made independently. Most participants (89%) were aware of tampons (they knew tampons existed); almost half of the sample (49%) knew how tampons worked and knew how to use them; eight participants (21.6 %) had experience of using tampons; only one participant (2.7%) was a long-term user of tampons.

Three levels of analysis, open descriptive coding, interpretive coding, and pattern coding were conducted in the research. Seventy codes emerged from the open descriptive coding, mind-mapping and NVivo 12 software assistant to explore seven interpretive codes, which emerged into categories through the descriptive codes. Pattern coding was used to discover the relationships between, and within, the open descriptive and interpretive codes, leading to three themes. These three themes, resulting from the current study, summarise the reasons against, a set of cultural values, and the model of reasons against the anti-consumption of a specific product category.

1. Finding 1: three reasons against the consumption of tampons are identified to answer the 'what' question of RQ1: 'What are the reasons against consuming tampons in China?' They are: (1) risk aversion; (2) undesired relational-self and situational-self; and (3) the lack of emic cultural values recognised symbolic value added for in-conspicuous foreign product consumption.
2. Finding 2: the values pattern – personalism with its 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational self' orientations and 25 values (Table 12) together constitute a set of emic cultural elements as cultural antecedents to interpret the reasons against consuming tampons and answer RQ2: 'What are the Chinese cultural elements at the root of these reasons against?' Of the 25 values, 14 identified in the present study are the new one, which provided a more accurate insight into the anti-consumption of tampons in China and has not been captured in the literature by Chinese values researchers.
3. Finding 3: the model of reasons against consuming a specific product category is led to answer the 'how' question of RQ1, aid a better understanding of the cognitive process of anti-consumption towards a specific product category and structures future research.

There are no differences in the 'reason against' consuming tampons in relation to participants' education, occupation, ethnic group, native geographic place and study overseas experience. Participants who are at the first and second levels of knowledge about tampons, differ only between 'virginity' concerns for participants (younger) with no sexual experience or 'chastity' for experienced participants on the third tampon knowledge level. Chapter 5 includes the discussion on the three findings and their contributions.

Chapter 5 Discussion, Contribution, Limitation and Further Research

The central aim of the research is to better understand the cultural antecedents of a national-level anti-consumption phenomenon towards a specific product category, leading to a 'reasons against' model. The case of tampons in China is taken as an example to accomplish this central aim, which explores the reasons against tampon consumption and identifies the Chinese emic cultural antecedents behind these reasons. This chapter includes a discussion of major findings in relation to the literature regarding the main reasons motivating anti-consumption, emic concepts in the deep structure of Chinese culture, and the BRT theory. Also included are the theoretical contributions and implications for international corporations' market (re)entry strategies and market activities. Followed by theoretical contributions. At the end of chapter, there will be a section comprising the limitations of the study and future research.

The discussion in this chapter aims to help answer the research questions and better understand the anti-consumption of a specific product category: RQ1. What are the reasons against consuming tampons in China and how are these reasons are cognitively processed? RQ2. What are the cultural values behind these reasons? The data analysis resulted in three main findings, all of which contribute to the anti-consumption behaviour in a cultural context:

1. Anti-consumers' reasons against and for:

Three reasons against and one reason for consuming tampons

2. Anti-consumers' set of emic cultural values:

These are composed of one values pattern, two values orientations and twenty-five values;

3. The model of 'reasons against' consuming a specific product category:

This is a structural equation model.

5.1 Discussion on Anti-consumers' Reasons Against and For – the 'What' Question of RQ1

Our findings suggest that most Chinese women reject tampons due to: (1) risk aversion; (2) undesired relational-self and situational-self; and (3) the lack of emic cultural valued recognised

symbolic value added for inconspicuous foreign product consumption. The reason for consuming tampons is occasional use for water activities during the menstrual period. The research results answer the 'what' question of RQ1 (What are the reasons against consuming tampons in China?) and suggest there are more reasons against the consumption of tampons, which explain why most Chinese women reject them. This finding is in line with previous research on 'loss aversion,' which expressed that 'losses loom larger than gains' (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979). In the case of tampons in China, this implies that Chinese women impute greater value to tampons when they reject consuming them than when they accept consuming them.

When comparing the reasons against consuming tampons in this research with existing reasons for the motivation of anti-consumption in the literature, there are similarities and differences.

5.1.1 Risk Aversion

Echoing the existing reasons, risk aversion is also found in the present study. This finding confirms that this reason can be applied to the Chinese cultural context.

Risk taking attitudes and risk perceptions (Weber and Milliman, 1997) are two main concepts that fundamentally support the understanding of risk aversion.

- Risk perception

Unlike sanitary pads, which are used externally and are familiar products for Chinese women, the product features of tampons, e.g. 'internal use' and 'vaginal insertion by the woman herself' are new and significantly different. These new differences contradict Chinese values and process various risks. The current study explores five risks perceived by Chinese women: social risk, physical risk, performance/functional risk, time/convenience risk, and psychological risk. Except for financial risk, all other risks in the literature (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2000; Mitchell, 1992) are perceived by Chinese women. These perceptions of risk are associated with cultural values that are identified in the research, including 'being natural and complying with nature' and 'convenience'.

- Risk taking attitude

The current research identified an emic value 'unworthy risk avoidance'. Chinese people's attitudes towards risk taking means that they tend to avoid unworthy risk; they evaluate a risk and decide whether it is worth taking or not. While that is the standard evaluation, the two findings in this study provide the answers. It identifies that the pattern of Chinese values includes personalism and its two orientations: 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational

self' orientations. With these in mind, Chinese women aim to maximise their 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational self' personal gains, and these gains are centred on themselves.

This finding also supports that risk aversion behaviour depends mainly on the product category (Matzler *et al.*, 2008). A similar view is evident from Lee (2010). Due to the product category, when innovation is associated negatively, product image barriers are consequently perceived. The elements 'internal use' and 'vaginal insertion' are attributed as tampon product features, correspondingly classified as an invasive product or sexual product. These product categories highly contradict Chinese emic cultural values, such as harmony within the body and man's decisive power, dominance, and priority in sexual relationships. Higher conflict drives greater resistance. In addition, due to the 'internal use' of tampons in the body, their perceived health risks are higher than sanitary pads, which are used externally.

5.1.2 Undesired Relational-self and Situational-self (Undesired 'Ren' In Relationships and Situations)

This result semi-agrees with the literature in relation to the undesired self (Phillips *et al.*, 2007) as a reason motivating anti-consumption. A more accurate word to describe this is undesired 'Ren' within relationships and situations. In the present study, the Chinese 'Ren' is consistent with person-in-relations described by Ho (1993) and 'Ren' situation-centeredness and three emic concepts for the deep structure of Chinese culture discussed by Hsu (1971).

To better understand the key difference between the Chinese word 'Ren' and 'self' in a western context, we introduced the view of Harris (1989) to identify the key differences between the self, the individual and the person concepts. Harris (1989), who is an anthropologist, views a human being as a biological, psychological, and sociological concept in the anthropological field. Hwang (2000, p.161) summarized her views:

'an individual is a biologist concept, defining human beings as creatures like any other living animal in the world; a person is related to a sociological concept that treats human beings as agents-in-society that take a particular position in the social order and develop a series of actions to achieve personal goals; the self is a psychological concept, which defines human beings as the locus of experience, including the most important aspect of experiencing oneself as a particular identity. Western psychologists often assume that an individual's competence in reflexive awareness creates a duality of self. Through awareness, the self-integrates one's behaviour and makes one distinct from others, resulting in a sense of self-identity. As the object of awareness, the self enables one to examine one's differences with other objects in the world, and to view oneself as a unique whole with a sense of personal identity' (Hwang, 2000, p.161).

The concept of 'Ren' (human being) in a Chinese cultural context is conducted by the core notion of Confucianism, which is the core of Chinese culture (Hwang, 2000; Sun, 2004; Yang, 2009). It says that being humane/benevolent to others is to be a human (a Ren) (Ancient book: Lunyu, 200 B.C.) (The Analects of Confucius - the record of Confucius' teaching). In Chinese, the pronunciation of 'human/person/man' pronunciation is 'Ren', written in Chinese '人'; the pronunciation of both 'humanity' and 'benevolence' is 'Ren', the same as the pronunciation of the word 'human/person/man', written in Chinese '仁', the character for 'two' and a human/person/man (i.e. two human beings/persons/men). In Confucianism, a human being can only be defined in the context of interpersonal relationships; the meaning of being human is found in interpersonal relationships, and as such, this concept views not so much of one's own person or self, but more of a summation of his/her social roles (Hsu, 1971; Fei *et. al.*, 1992; Ho, 1998; Sun, 2004). Western scholars support this point. For instance, words for the concept of identifying a personality in terms of a person who is separate from the context do not even exist in the Chinese languages (De Mooij and Hofstede, 2011). In this sense, a Chinese individual, far from being a distinct and separate 'individuum', is conceivable, largely in the continuum of interpersonal relationships (Ho, 1993; Sun, 2004). Corresponding to the analysis of Harris (1989), the concept of 'Ren 人' (human being) in Chinese culture is more sociological in nature, i.e. person, less in self, a psychological perspective meaning. As the subject of awareness, a Chinese individual integrates his/her identity from relational others' views. Therefore, how an individual thinks that relational others see him/herself, results in a sense of the perceived relational person as his/her identity. In different relationships and situations, the perceived and ideal relational identity is not consistent. As the subject of awareness, Chinese people integrate themselves from the views of the other persons-in-relationship, i.e. perceiving how they should be labelled by relational others, resulting in a sense of perceived labelled relational-identity as his or her own identity. In different relationships or situations, perceived labelled identity and 'ideal' labels are not consistent. As the object of awareness, Chinese people identify themselves by their own physical body (in a biological perspective), which will be discussed in section 5.2.

5.1.3 The Lack of Emic Culture Recognised Symbolic Value Added

Previous research has not captured this reason as a motivation for anti-consumption, but it is supported by the conspicuous consumption of luxuries and the symbolic value of foreign products among consumers in China. Previous research illustrates (Wong and Ahuvia, 1998, p. 424) that *'there is a strong tendency for Chinese people to consume luxuries conspicuously, because they believe they have to. Luxury products conform to social norms and convey meanings pertaining to*

social status and wealth'. The Chinese are keen to express their social identities by consuming Western products (Wei 1997; Wong and Zaichkowsky 1999) and the Chinese's desire of consuming symbolic products (Levine 1997; Zheng 1992).

Due to product feature C and product category C, tampons do not provide conspicuous benefits. Meanwhile, tampon marketers have not attributed valuable symbolic meaning to the consumption of tampons in China to motivate Chinese women to overcome the product de-benefits and, consequently, to consume tampons. Here, the symbolic meaning must be recognised by Chinese women as valuable. Chinese women do not consider that tampon marketing activities in the past and present are valuable or efficient. For example, tampon advertisements and webpages highlight that users will be 'able to swim or be free (not restricted)' during their period, but most Chinese women do not participate in any water activities during their period and many avoid doing any exercise. It is usual for Chinese girls, during their periods, to ask for sick leave from PE lessons. They believe they must keep the uterus warm and not touch cold water during their period. They also believe the entrance of the vagina and uterus are opened up during the period and that water activities could cause water to enter the area, resulting in an infection.

5.1.4 The Effect of the Demographic Factors of Participants on Their Consumption

Almost 80% of interviewees are below 35 years of age and all participants were living in big cities, 27% of them have studying overseas experiences. It meant that most of them were born after 1985, which is 7 years after of China's open-door and 3 years after of one-child policy. This age-range of participants is similar to the one who were in the author's preliminary research conducted in 2014. In the preliminary research, Lin (2014, p.39-41) analysed participants' growing up environment and its influence on their consumption behaviour:

'This meant that all of them have experienced and seen huge economic improvements in China especially in the urban landscape. They are the generation who grew up with China's open-door and one-child policy, which had provided them better with economic conditions and unprecedented opportunities for exposure to Western culture, greater wealth and much political and social stability. Such changes have also meant huge changes in the business sector as well as in society, especially in consumption. Compared with the then target group of women when Tampax first entered China in 1989, the current group of respondents is more confident and independent with their own means of relatively high disposable income and higher purchasing power. This change is directly linked to the macro-economic rise of China as a nation on the world stage. These phenomenal economic achievements of China in the last 40 years have brought to its people a sense of pride. For this current generation, this is the only period of Chinese history that has seen so much prosperity and has naturally given this group a level of confidence that is unmatched by the previous

generations. They feel they deserve more respect, and they are more self-assured of their way of doing things. Moreover, for the new generations, the open-door policy and China's economic development provide more opportunities to work in private companies, joint ventures and foreign companies at an early age, which have provided with the possibility to consume foreign products, be exposed to foreign cultures and work in a different value system. They are learning to be more independent and take initiatives and risks.' (Lin, 2014, p.39).

The statistics data of the Central government of China (2019) showed that the average wage is RMB4000 (around GBP400) per month. Of the participants in this research, more than 70% of them earned above RMB4000. For the participants who were studying in the UK, their expenses, including tuition fee, were all more than RMB20000 (GBP2000) per month. These data concluded Lin's view (2014). These interviewees, as indicated by this research, as consumers, show themselves to be more willing to consume high quality, conspicuous and Chinese emic culture recognised symbolic value added to new or foreign products and also, to high symbolic value in their consumption.

5.2 Discussion On Anti-consumers' Set of Emic Cultural Values - RQ2

This study identified anti-consumers' set of emic cultural values to answer RQ2 (What are the Chinese cultural elements underlying these reasons?) These include:

- 1) A values pattern: personalism;
- 2) Two orientations of personalism: 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational self' orientation;
- 3) Twenty-five values (Table 12).

5.2.1 The Consistent and the Development of Existing Research

Personalism, the values pattern identified in the study, is in line with previous research on Yu's (1987) personalism and Fei *et. al.*'s (1992) egoism, in which they define Chinese people as person-centric and that people themselves are the centre of their own interests. However, they only provide a concept and these concepts are not comprehensive, nor exhaustive. The current research, under its conceptual framework, defines two orientations of personalism in the (anti-)consumption field, 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational self', from which Chinese people aim to maximise their 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational self' personal gains through (anti-)consumption.

The present research also identifies 25 values to more accurately interpret anti-consumption behaviour. Table 12 shows that only 11 of the 25 values identified are similar to those in previous research about cultural values. Hence, the 14 values identified in the present study currently prevail within Chinese society and their (anti-)consumption implications have not been captured by research literature.

Among 14 new identified values, six are 'personal physical health' orientated, and eight are 'relational and situational self' orientated. Although they are contemporary values, they represent a traditional values pattern/system, which is embedded in Confucianism and Taoism and is well indicated by Chinese literature. Six values from the 'personal physical health' orientation are from Confucian the biological inevitable destiny and Taoist 'The Way of Heaven'. The other eight all consistent with the Confucianist 'Way of Humanity' and the emic concepts in the deep structure of Chinese culture reviewed in Chapter 2, such as Ho's (1993) 'the person in relationships', Hwang's (2000) 'Confucian ethical system' and Hus's (1971) 'Ren'.

5.2.2 Supported by Confucian Conceptions of Destiny

Hwang (2000) defines destiny as *'the vicissitudes that individuals experience during their existence in this universe'* (Hwang, 2000, p.159). In his research (Hwang, 2000) on Confucianism:

'human understanding of personal destiny can be categorised into four theoretical conceptualisations (Lao, 1968):

(1) destiny is controlled by God;

(2) destiny is determined by the laws of nature;

(3) destiny can be transcended; and

(4) destiny is partially determined by biology and partially fulfilled through the practice of moral principles. The fourth conceptualisation of destiny is considered as the basis of Confucianism (Lao, 1968). They argue that, as a biological being, humans are bound to encounter the inevitable destiny of birth, ageing, disease, and the end of physical life. However, as a being with a conscience and cognition, humans must actively put moral principles into practice that exceed personal interest if they are to fulfil their heavenly ordained mission or responsibility (Lao, 1968)' (Hwang, 2000, p.159).

The inescapable features of a person's biological nature is separated with his predestined destiny by Hwang's (2000) conception of destiny recommended by Confucianism. This separation calls for an understanding of inevitable biological destiny and certain moral principles.

Confucianism assigns biological event destiny to the Way of Heaven, which is beyond human power. The biological event destiny allocated a responsibility to a person to fulfil his predestined destiny, in which people could intentionally and willingly to practise the ordinances of heaven and the realm of benevolence-righteousness-proprity. Confucians also believe human nature is determined by heaven, righteousness-proprity is the only approach for a Confucians to fulfil his destiny (Hwang, 2000, cited from Lunyu - The Analects of Confucius).

5.2.3 Supported by Taoist and Confucian Conceptions of the Way of Heaven

Confucius' view of the Way of Heaven resulted from the view of the universe of Taoism which was presented in a dialogue with Duke I of Lu and outlined in Li Ji (The Book of Rites). Hwang (2000, p.157) translated this dialogue as: "Duke I asked: *'Why should a Jun Zi (true gentleman) follow the Way of Heaven?'* Confucius said: *'Because of its ceaselessness. For instance, the sun and moon circle around from east to west, this is the Way of Heaven. Everything in the universe always follows its rule of change, this is the Way of Heaven. Accomplishing everything, letting things take their own course, this is the Way of Heaven. The accomplished thing has its significant feature; this is the Way of Heaven.'* (Li Ji, The Book of Rites)" Hwang (2000, p.157). Based on this dialogue, Yang's research illustrated that *'Confucians believe that the Way of Humanity, as revealed by their sages, has a spiritual essence corresponding to the Way of Heaven'* (Yang, 2008, p.122). Hwang's (2000, p.163) *'Confucian ethical system'* also supported this view: *'As biological organisms, individuals are destined by their congenital conditions. However, as human beings with moral awareness, they are able and obligated to practice the Confucian Way of Humanity, which corresponds to the Way of Heaven. Each person is endowed with the heavenly ordained mission of applying the Way of Humanity through the mind of benevolence-righteousness-proprity, a key component of the Confucian ethical system'*.

5.2.4 Supported by Confucian Conception of 'Wulun' (Five Basic Relationships)

'Wulun', the five basic relationships, is another Confucian core concept. Both western and Chinese indigenous scholars study it and their contributions are at different levels. Western scholars, Hofstede (1991, 2010) and Triandis (1991) provide the basic meaning. Hofstede (2010, p.97) state that *'the stability of Chinese society is based on unequal relationships between people – the 'wulun,' or five basic relationships, are father/son, ruler/subject, older brother/younger brother, husband/wife, and older friend/younger friend'*.

Drawn on the Chinese concept of 'Ren', as discussed in section 5.1, in Confucianism, a human being can only be defined in the context of interpersonal relationships and, as such, this concept views not so much one's own person or self, but more a summation of their social roles (Hsu,

1971; Fei *et. al.*, 1992; Ho, 1998; Sun, 2004). The Chinese are conceived of cardinal rules and ethical norms in 'Wulun' of Confucianism, which are substantiated by Chinese and Western scholars. Chinese scholars represented these rules and norms as (Hwang, 2000, p. 162): *'social interaction between members of each pair relationship should proceed according to the Way of Humanity. Each of the roles in these five relationships is distinct, indicating that each of the core values emphasised are also different'*. A basic relationship is between a husband and his wife; their roles, ethical demands and core values are attention to their separate functions, *'righteousness on the part of the husband, and the obedience and submission of the wife'* (Hwang, 2000, p. 162).

The five values, 'women living up to patriarchal society expectation', 'good physical appearance in women', 'virginity and chastity in women', 'man's the decisive power, dominance, priority in sexual relationship', which are identified in the current study in relation to sexual relationships, are derivatives of the basic 'husband–wife' relationship.

Besides the five new values related to sexual relationships that are identified in the current study, other related values, such as family orientation, the pattern of the difference sequence, relational/situational role responsibility orientation, conformity, and reference group orientation are all consistent with 'Wulun' and the emic concepts within the deep structure of the Chinese culture and the persons-in-relationship.

The Chinese indigenous scholars Hwang (2000), Sun (2004) and Yang (2008) claim that 'Wulun' is the given culture that directs the person-in relations in her/his process of social relationship classification; Wulun also provides guidance on the expected behaviour in relation to various categories of such social relationships.

The values related to the relationships identified in the current study confirm this claim and the premise of the deep structure of the Chinese culture, characterised as 'a grammar of Chinese culture' and considered to be a synchronic cultural structure, will not be changed by the time. It is not what Piaget (1984) claimed to be a diachronic socio-psychological structure which will do self-transformation constantly driven by received external sources of information'. This is as stable as ammonites (ammonites are excellent index fossils); although they are hidden within complex stacked-stone crevices and are almost undetectable, the entire period could be presented through it as it is the congelation of thousand years (Hwang, 2000 quoted Levi-Strauss, 1955).

Each Chinese value, equalled with words and conforming to the deep structure of Chinese culture, can present a tremendous culture (or Chinese cultural phenomenon). As words can be modern, antique or contextual, sentences are modern, antique or contextual while grammar is not

changed by the time. Similarly, Chinese values can be contemporary, traditional, contextual or situational. Depending on particular circumstances or as a function of a time period, there is a tendency for certain cultural values to become more predominant while others become suspended or latent until such time when they are 'primed' (Hong *et al.*, 2000). Therefore, culture can be contemporary or traditional and it is impossible to consider culture without considering the time period, situation, and context of each cultural dynamic.

5.3 Discussion on the Model of Reasons Against Consuming a Specific Product Category – the 'How' Question of RQ1 and how are these reasons are cognitively processed?

This study lead 'The Model of Reasons Against Consuming a Specific Product Category' (Figure 12) to answer the 'how' question in RQ1, it is a structural equation model. It suggests that both 'reasons for and against' are impacted by anti-consumers' cultural values (including the values and values orientations) in a Chinese context. Values can be characterised as desirable, trans-situational goals that motivate people's reasoning; values, as the core of culture, have been considered as a central concept for determining, guiding and explaining social and personal behaviour (Rokeach, 1979; Kunda 1990; Schwartz 2006). Indeed, the current study finds that the function of cultural values as significant antecedents directly affect people's reasoning in relation to their anti-consumption behavioural decision towards tampons.

Regarding the anti-consumption of a specific product category, the cognitive processing of 'reasons against' is explored in the present research. A set of cultural values influence and interpret the attribution of product features and product categories; they further, correspondingly, influence and interpret the perception of the product's (de)benefits then, consequently, the reasons for and against consuming the specific product.

This finding is consistent with BRT theory – reasons mediate the influence of anti-consumers' values on behaviour. The link between values and reasons constitutes a deeper cognitive processing that enables anti-consumers to better justify their decisions (Westaby 2005).

In light of this model, tampon marketers and decision makers on the market (re)entry strategy cannot ignore cultural values, especially for emic cultural values that impact people's reasoning on anti-consumption practices. In the next section, the implications of these findings for marketing and the market (re)entry strategy will be discussed.

5.4 Implication for Marketing and Market (Re)Entry Strategy

The findings of this research hold key implications for the market (re)entry strategy of tampon marketers and decision makers who aim to promote tampons or launch a new product, especially for a culturally sensitive product in a different cultural context.

In the case of tampons in China, the findings of this research suggest that the reasons against tampon consumption, and the cultural antecedents that prompt these reasons deviate from historical and current tampons market activities in three ways.

5.4.1 The Lack of Emic Cultural Element Consideration in a Specific Targeted Cultural Context

First, the findings of this research are in line with previous research suggestions, which is that not all etic elements are valid from an emic one within a particular culture; an awareness of the emic elements of culture provides a more accurate insight into the complex factors within a particular cultural site, and combining etic and emic elements will provide a more holistic explanation of a culture than any single approach (Berry, 1990; Matsumoto *et al.*, 1996; Segall *et al.*, 1999; Leung *et al.*, 2005; Lu and Yang, 2006; Punnett, 2017).

Focussing only on the etic element (vaginal insertion in the case of tampons in China), is not enough for international managers to build up the whole picture of the targeted culture. However, tampon marketing promotion has focused on the etic element, and has overlooked the emic element and local adaptations of etic elements. A typical example is the global expansion of Tampax in the late 1980s.

According to Wall Street Journal articles (1997, 2000), in the late 1980s, only 100 million (6%) of the 1.7 billion eligible women in the overseas market used tampons, a fact which presented a potential springboard for Tampax's planned expansion into the global market. Tampax claimed that *'[t]he greatest challenge in the global expansion of tampons is to address the religious and cultural mores that suggest that vaginal insertion is fundamentally prohibited by culture'* (WSJ, 2000, p.2) and, subsequently, divided the global market into three clusters (each constituting numerous countries) based on how resistant women in those countries were to using tampons. The goal of Tampax was to market each cluster in a similar way. Cluster 1 included the USA, UK and Australia and constituted consumers who were familiar with, and keen buyers of, the product. Cluster 2 included France, Israel, and South Africa where approximately half of the constituent nation's tampons eligible population used tampons. Cluster 3, the most challenging,

yet potentially the most lucrative group, included nations such as China, Brazil, and Russia, where tampons were an entirely new product. Cluster 3 nations were identified as those with the greatest resistance to this product. In Cluster 3, Tampax conducted similar marketing activities to overcome the issue of vaginal insertion, an etic cultural barrier in China, Brazil, and Russia, three countries with significantly different cultures.

Tampax's assumption was that 'vaginal insertion' was a common and unifying etic cultural barrier across Cluster 3 nations. Whilst resistance may seem to present itself identically in differing cultural contexts (in this case, with the greatest resistance to tampons in all Cluster 3 locations), the underlying reasons for its manifestation may be radically different in each of the discrete localities; it is equally possible that (one of) the underlying reason(s) is common to all or some locales (e.g. concern about the 'loss of virginity' in all Cluster 3 nations), but possesses various degrees of influence and importance in these differing cultural contexts. Even if a similar factor structure is determined, the facets that compose the factors may contain culture-specific elements (Cheung *et al.* 2008).

Given the results of the current study, the cultural schemata underpinning 'vaginal insertion', in China are Confucianism and Taoism; they are radically different in Brize and Russia, where there are discrete national and cultural settings. The significant influence of emic values on anti-consumption found in this study does not support the identical approach to marketing in China, Brazil, and Russia. Other countries in Cluster 3 use an identical approach without embedding tampons in a specific targeted cultural context and without considering the potentially huge variations in local cultural adaptations in relation to the use of this product.

5.4.2 The Lack of Symbolic Added Value Interventions

Second, the findings suggest that the greatest potential to perform anti-consumption change towards an inconspicuous foreign product is in the product's symbolic added value interventions – specifically those of attractive symbolic value to the anti-consumers in their local cultural context.

This finding is consistent with previous research, suggesting that even for privately consumed product items, among the dimensions consumers normally consider in the purchase of these foreign product items, symbolic value is more desirable than quality or utilitarian values (Zhou and Hui, 2003). However, in China, tampon marketing activities are mainly concerned with promoting to consumers the functional benefits of tampons and utilitarian values. Two examples are Tampax and o.b.'s websites.

Chapter 5

After an 18-year hiatus, in January 2017, P&G re-entered Tampax into the Chinese market, and the product was only sold online through cooperation with China's top two online sale platforms, Taobao.com and Jingdong.com. On its website, P&G only provides three sections of information (no more could be acquired from the website and there were no other marketing activities); these were, in the main, very similar to the marketing approach adopted 27 years previously, as reported by the Wall Street Journal (2000):

- Instructions: which detail the product's method of use and which seek to reassure women of the product's safety and ease of use.
- Functional advantages: Listing three key functional advantages of Tampax compared to sanitary pads: users can still swim and bathe, its use promotes cleanliness and freshness, and its use guarantees invisibility.
- Reassurance: To mitigate Chinese women's concerns about the loss of virginity by reinforcing the notion that tampons are suitable for use by virgins and will not result in a broken hymen.

The three marketing foci, as summarised above, demonstrate that the functional benefits of tampons have been mainly promoted by P&G, and little has been changed in Tampax's marketing approach since their initial and unsuccessful attempts to enter the Chinese market in 1989.

Meanwhile, 'o.b.', the only non-applicator tampon available on Chinese retail platforms, has a website that provides similar information to Tampax and has engaged in no further marketing (obwoman.cn, 2017), keeping its market share at just 1% over the last 25 years (O.B. China, 2014).

As discussed, Western products are likely to be consumed to present the Chinese's social identity (Wei 1997; Wong and Zaichkowsky 1999). Not only luxury products consumption, such as Hermes and Dior, but also some non-luxury brands or products have been a pursuit driven by the symbolic values added in, like MacDonald's, Starbucks coffee and Coca-Cola (Wong and Ahuvia, 1998). These non-luxury brands 'dominate their local counterparts not because of price or quality, but because they symbolise status, modernity, and Western civilisation' (Yan 2000, p.11).

'The salience of symbolic value may vary with different product types and consumption situations' (Zhou and Hui, 2003, p.40). *'For conspicuous foreign products, a high salience of symbolic value in consumers' purchase decisions is not surprising; accordingly, the high salience of symbolic value in a particular situation could be attributed to the conspicuousness, rather than the foreignness'* (Bearden and Etzel, 1982, p.91). While Zhou and Hui (2003, p.45) determine that *'symbolic value*

is a salient determinant of consumers' intentions to purchase inconspicuous products of foreign origin' (Zhou and Hui, 2003, p.47).

Their research results state (Zhou and Hui, 2003, p.46) that although *'consumers perceive Canadian pork sausages to have higher utilitarian values (better quality, better hygiene, and higher nutrition) than their locally made counter parts, symbolic attributes (modernity, popularity, novelty, and associations with foreign lifestyles) are more important determinants of purchase intention than utilitarian attributes'*. They also have revealed that *'for Chinese consumers, symbolic value may be important for both conspicuous products and inconspicuous products of foreign origin'* (Zhou and Hui, 2003, p.47). These notable findings provide extra supports for the research of Yan (2000) and Chee (2000) in that, symbolic value is more desirable than quality and utilitarian values, even for consuming private products. In a broad sense, *'consumers draw from all available sources global and local, new and old, as they use products to construct and communicate their identity, to relate to people, to make social differences, to seek comparative status, and to pursue emotional and aesthetic pleasure'* (Ger 1999, p. 67).

It is not unique to China; for people in non-developed countries, their motivation of consumption is more to express their social significant identity instead of the qualities of products delivered in developed countries (Friedman, 1990, p.16). For example, Ger and Belk (1996, p. 72) describe that:

'Coca-Cola, makes it a practice to advertise in English, despite the small number of English speakers in the target country [in the case of their study, Romania]. This practice is intended to sell Coke as a high status symbol of modernity and Western consumer culture'. 'The apparent increase in demand across the world for certain well-known brands such as Coca-Cola and Levi's may be largely because they are seen by consumers as symbols of the freedom and affluent lifestyles of the West, and not because they are seen as global brands per se'.

Batra et al. (2000) also found that the consumption of no-local products in India has been attributed as the sign of social class improvement. Apart from the perception of quality and the utilitarian value of products, the symbolic meaning perceived in the local cultural context of product, especially for foreign products, have been revealed as the significant influence for performing consumption practice, especially in non-developed economies regions.

This research proposes that, surpassing the utilitarian value of foreign products, the symbolic value is a fundamental element for the consumer whether or not to perform consumption practice towards foreign products in non-developed regions.

5.4.3 Emic Cultural Values-Based Symbolic Added Value

Third, in line with BRT, the findings in the current study suggest that cultural values are important antecedents of anti-consumers' reasoning, especially in relation to emic cultural values. As we discussed previously, reasons are cultural-context-specific and are embedded in the anti-consumers' cultural contexts. Accordingly, addressing reasons against tampon consumption is likely to work best in a localised cultural context.

Emic cultural values-based symbolic value interventions can make aspects of tampon consumption more salient to Chinese women with values that are manifested by tampon consumption. For example, tampons marketers can impart a label about being a tampon consumer (e.g. fashion, intellectual, upper class, which are recognised as valuable social or relational labels by Chinese women). If such a label was added, this could make the tampon consumers more attractive to others. In this way, emic cultural values-based symbolic value interventions can be an effective way to influence people's cultural labelling of tampon consumers (e.g. immoral women) and establish a sense of group identification for new tampon consumers; this group could be designed as a reference group that anti-consumers would like to follow or desire to be a member of.

Practical implications for marketers are that anti-consumers find symbolic value in supporting tampon product consumption, with a more valuable and attractive symbolic value attributed to the product along with a higher willingness to consume it.

Furthermore, the valuable symbolic value can be amplified by attributing signals for tampon consumption; for example, by improving the power of status motivations, it is possible to move the needle from anti-consumers who are intrinsically motivated to a much larger, broader consumer base, thereby achieving real impact.

5.5 Theoretical Contribution

This study contributes to the literature related to culture, anti-consumption, and BRT theory.

5.5.1 Theoretical Contribution on Culture

First, a set of emic values related to anti-consumption identified in the current research (including a values pattern, two orientations and 25 values), offers a more accurate insight into the phenomenon of anti-consumption; timely updates on the Chinese values list provide a valuable resource for further scale development in measuring contemporary Chinese values related to

(anti)consumption, and future studies seeking cultural explanations of Chinese anti-consumption behaviours.

Notably, more than half (14 of 25) of the values identified in this study have not been captured by prior research; in particular, values related to physical health and sexual relationships have been heavily neglected. The new emic values identified in this research fill this gap in the field.

The findings of these new emic values benefit from an emic approach; as Buckley *et al.* (2014) noted, emic approaches and qualitative methods can generate new conceptualisations and interpretations of complex contextual factors involved in international business research and practice, especially in emerging economies. Furthermore, the emic approach provides a foundation and source of etic research and development. The Chinese emic cultural values of anti-consumers identified in this study will serve as a foundation and source for further etic research. The etic and emic approaches are complementary (Morris *et al.*, 1999); these emic cultural elements, combined with etic elements (e.g. vaginal insertion for tampons), provide a more holistic explanation of culture than any single approach and the richest view of a culture or society can be understood (Berry, 1990; Leung *et al.*, 2005; Lu and Yang, 2006; Punnett, 2017).

This research identifies anti-consumers' values patterns, personalism, and two orientations: 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational self' orientations. Chinese women aim to maximise their 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational self' personal gains, and these gains centre on the women themselves. This finding supports Chinese indigenous research, which counters the views of Western scholars who claimed that Chinese culture is a highly collectivist culture (Hofstede, 1991; Triandis 1991). From a theoretical perspective, this finding confirms 'the deep structure of the Chinese culture', and Chinese values as 'a grammar of Chinese culture', which is a synchronic cultural structure that will not change with time.

5.5.2 Theoretical Contribution on Anti-Consumption

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, this study is the first piece of research that has been conducted on cultural antecedents of a national-level anti-consumption phenomenon towards a certain product. 'Anti-consumption comprises a plethora of manifestations' (Lee *et al.*, 2020). In terms of actors, in this study, this can relate to a single actor (individual anti-consumer) or manufacturers, marketers or public policies involved as multiple actors. In terms of motivation, including individual level antecedents or micro concerns, and collective level antecedents or macro concerns such as national cultural antecedents or social, environmental concerns, the phenomenon level can be individual, group, community, regional or national (Makri *et al.*, 2020).

While anti-consumption research mainly focuses on single actors and individual level antecedents, the non-individual level antecedent and national level phenomena of anti-consumption have been largely overlooked (Lee *et al.*, 2020; Makri *et al.*, 2020). This study, theoretically, fills the gap non-individual level antecedent predictors, and the national level phenomenon of anti-consumption, and explores anti-consumption from multiple perspectives to 'take a more complete approach to the different phenomena comprising anti-consumption' (Lee *et al.*, 2020).

This study explores three fundamental reasons against tampon consumption and investigates why they motivate anti-consumption within the context of China. Risk aversion is one of the reasons; this finding confirms that this reason is applicable in a Chinese cultural context. Risk perception and risk taking attitudes (Weber and Milliman, 1997), as two main concepts for understanding risk aversion have, fundamentally, been illustrated in tampon anti-consumption and have been well interpreted by Chinese cultural values.

Another two reasons identified in the research – undesired 'Ren' in relationships and situations and the lack of emic culture recognised symbolic value added for in-conspicuous foreign product consumption – are not consistent with the 'reasons against' in the literature; these are heavily Chinese emic culture-related reasons. The findings in the current study suggest that culture is an important antecedent of anti-consumers' reasoning. This extends to the reasons that motivate anti-consumption from an etic (e.g. risk aversion) to an emic approach (e.g. undesired 'Ren'). Moreover, this study also underscores that culture is an important antecedent of anti-consumers' reasoning, and shows that endowing emic cultural meaning with reasons that motivate anti-consumption enriches the anti-consumption research approach and provides a more localised and accurate explanation within a cultural context.

5.5.3 Theoretical Contribution to Behaviour Reasoning Theory

'The Model of Reasons Against Consuming a Specific Product Category' offers a cognitive processing model of 'reasons against' to advance the understanding of anti-consumption decisions towards a specific product category.

This finding reveals that, regarding the anti-consumption of a specific product category, a set of cultural values influence and interpret the attribution of product features and product categories; they further correspondingly influence and interpret the perception of the product's (de)benefits then, consequently, the reasons for and against consuming that specific product.

This model confirms the premise of BRT in a Chinese context, with the reasons being an important link between cultural values and behaviour (Westaby 2005). It extends the knowledge about the

cultural influence of emic elements on consumer behaviour, offers a valuable basis for the cognitive processing of the (anti)consumption, more importantly, provides model guidance for further research on the anti-consumption of a specific product category – a culturally sensitive product; further research might apply this model to evaluate the relationships of cultural values, product features and categories, product (de)benefits, and ‘reasons against and for’ on the (anti)consumption, especially for a culturally sensitive product category.

5.6 Limitation and Further Research

The aim of this research was to better understand the cultural antecedents of a national-level anti-consumption phenomenon towards a specific product category, taking the case of tampons in China as an example. Drawing on the BRT theory, although this study has advanced understanding of the reasons against tampon consumption and the relative influence of emic cultural elements, unlimited antecedents to anti-consumption have not been considered. This is the study’s first limitation. This research is concerned with the reasons and emic cultural values and their influence on anti-consumption behaviour. Future research could be conducted with the inclusion of well-demonstrated antecedents of behaviour, such as global motives (including attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control), intention, and moderators (e.g. economic factors). These antecedents or factors could also be added to the future modelling of anti-consumption towards a specific product category.

The second limitation is related to the fact that study focuses more on anti-consumers’ ‘reasons against’ (including a few tampon consumers) and less on tampon consumers’ ‘reasons for’. Another fruitful direction for future research would be to explore tampon consumers’ ‘reasons for and against’ as the reasons for both can aid the exploration by using the same person (a tampon consumer); and why and how the ‘reasons for’ outweigh the ‘reasons against’ tampon consumption, and the similarities and differences in cultural antecedents.

The third limitation stems from the chosen population and sample. The product in this case is a feminine hygiene product, the interviewees were all female, and the reasons, cultural elements and interpretations were all from a feminine perspective. Further research could include the views of men, couples, or mothers and daughters interviewed together, to explore the views of different genders and various other relational or situational roles. In addition, interviewees were mainly urban residents; the results may have been biased towards Chinese urban residents and might not be generalised to the entire population. Future research sampling could be more

inclusive and could include rural areas and different level cities, such as first- or second-tier or other less-developed cities.

Furthermore, the results of the study are not free from researcher bias, due to the qualitative method and emic approach used; the researcher's involvement brings their subjectivity, personalities and predispositions to the data analysis process, and its interpretation and findings (Creswell, 2013). This study applied triangulation (Patton, 1999) to reduce bias and ensure data validity. In addition, the researcher, a Chinese female, shares a thorough understanding and knowledge of Chinese culture, cultural values, society, and (anti)consumer behaviours possessed by the research, which support a quality research process for the validity of the findings.

Future studies could adopt the set of emic values identified in this research to develop a scale for measuring Chinese cultural values related to (anti) consumption. Further theoretical explorations could be conducted to evaluate the values pattern (personalism) and two orientations ('personal physical health' and 'relational and situational self'), which will contribute to a better informed theory of Chinese cultural values. By applying a quantitative design, future research could examine and verify the links between the set of emic values and (anti)consumer behaviours via questionnaire survey data and conjoint analysis.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

Understanding both the emic and etic elements of culture represents a potential challenge that could either lead to greater success in the target market or undermine marketing efforts. As an example, this research took the case of tampons in China, a global market expansion that proved unsuccessful due to cultural barriers, to understand this un-researched national level phenomenon of anti-consumption. The study's particular aim was to identify its emic cultural antecedents and the role of emic elements in marketing activities. Moreover, in an effort to provide a more direct interpretation of anti-consumption, it sought to explore the reasons against consuming a specific product category. Most importantly, this research attempted to provide a model of 'reasons against' to offer researchers a guide to further research on the intentional and meaningful rejection of the consumption of a specific product category.

To this end, this research drew on an emic qualitative approach, and Behaviour Reasoning Theory (BRT), to explore the reasons against the consumption of tampons (RQ1 - What), identify the Chinese cultural elements at the root of these reasons (RQ2), and lead a model of 'reasons against' consuming a specific product category (RQ1 - How).

On conducting 37 semi-structured interviews, this research resulted in three findings:

(1) There are three reasons motivating the anti-consumption of tampons (to answer RQ1 - What): risk aversion, undesired 'Ren'(person) in different relationships and situations, and the lack of emic cultural values-recognized symbolic benefits added for the consumption of the product. These 'reasons against' are emic culture based.

(2) A set of emic cultural values (to answer RQ2) consisted of a values pattern, two values orientations, and 25 values (Table 12). The values pattern is related to personalism. Two orientations of personalism are 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational self' orientation. Through (anti)consumption, Chinese people aim to maximise their 'personal physical health' and 'relational and situational self' personal gains; these gains centre on the person her/himself. From an (anti)consumption perspective, this finding supports Chinese indigenous research and counters the views of Western scholars on Chinese collectivism culture. Notably, of the 25 values identified in the current research, more than half (14) have not been captured by prior research.

(3) A model of 'reasons against' (Figure 12, to answer RQ1 -How) presents the cognition processing of 'reasons against' consuming a specific product category. The model comprises a set

of cultural values to influence and interpret the attribution of product features and product categories; they further correspondingly influence and interpret the perception of the product's (de)benefits, then, consequently, the reasons for and against consuming that specific product. The 'reasons against' tampon consumption in a Chinese context outweigh the 'reasons for'. In addition, tampon marketers have not attributed a recognised or valuable symbolic meaning to tampon consumption to motivate Chinese women to overcome the reasons against tampon consumption or the product de-benefits with a view to their use of the product.

The findings indicate three key views: (1) 'reasons against and for' are important links between cultural values and consumer behaviours; (2) 'culture' is an important antecedent of anti-consumers' reasoning, especially for emic cultural values, which provided more accurate insight into the case; and (3) an qualitative emic approach can generate new conceptualisations and interpretations of the complex contextual factors involved in international business research and practice, especially in emerging economies.

Grounded in these findings, the current study made four important theoretical contributions, identified practical implications, and suggested a fruitful direction for future research.

First, this research filled the gap in the literature related to the under researched phenomenon of tampon anti-consumption in China. A set of emic cultural values provided a more accurate and sufficient interpretation of the case than etic ones. The 14 newly identified values in this research, which timely updated the Chinese values list, provide a valuable resource for further scale development in measuring contemporary Chinese values related to (anti)consumption, and future studies seeking cultural explanations of Chinese anti-consumption behaviours.

Second, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, this study is the first piece of research conducted on the cultural antecedents of a national-level anti-consumption phenomenon in relation to a certain product. This study, theoretically, fills the gap in non-individual level antecedent predictors, and the national level phenomenon of anti-consumption. Further research might explore the issue from multiple perspectives to take a more complete approach to the various anti-consumption phenomena.

Third, this study provided an invaluable model base for further research; the conceptual approach taken by this study could be used to evaluate the relationships between cultural values, product features and categories, product (de)benefits, and 'reasons against and for anti-consumption', especially in relation to the intentional and meaningful rejection of the consumption of a specific product category.

Finally, this research holds key implications for tampon marketers and decision makers with regard to the market (re)entry strategy, which aims to promote tampons or launch another culturally sensitive product in a foreign cultural context. The findings have challenged tampon marketing activities, which overlook the consideration of the emic culture, and which are mainly concerned with promoting tampons' functional benefits or utilitarian values to consumers. Instead, the findings suggest emic cultural values-based symbolic added-value interventions. This suggestion also serves as a proposal for the market (re)entry strategies of other products.

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Appendix A Statistical Table of the Interviewees

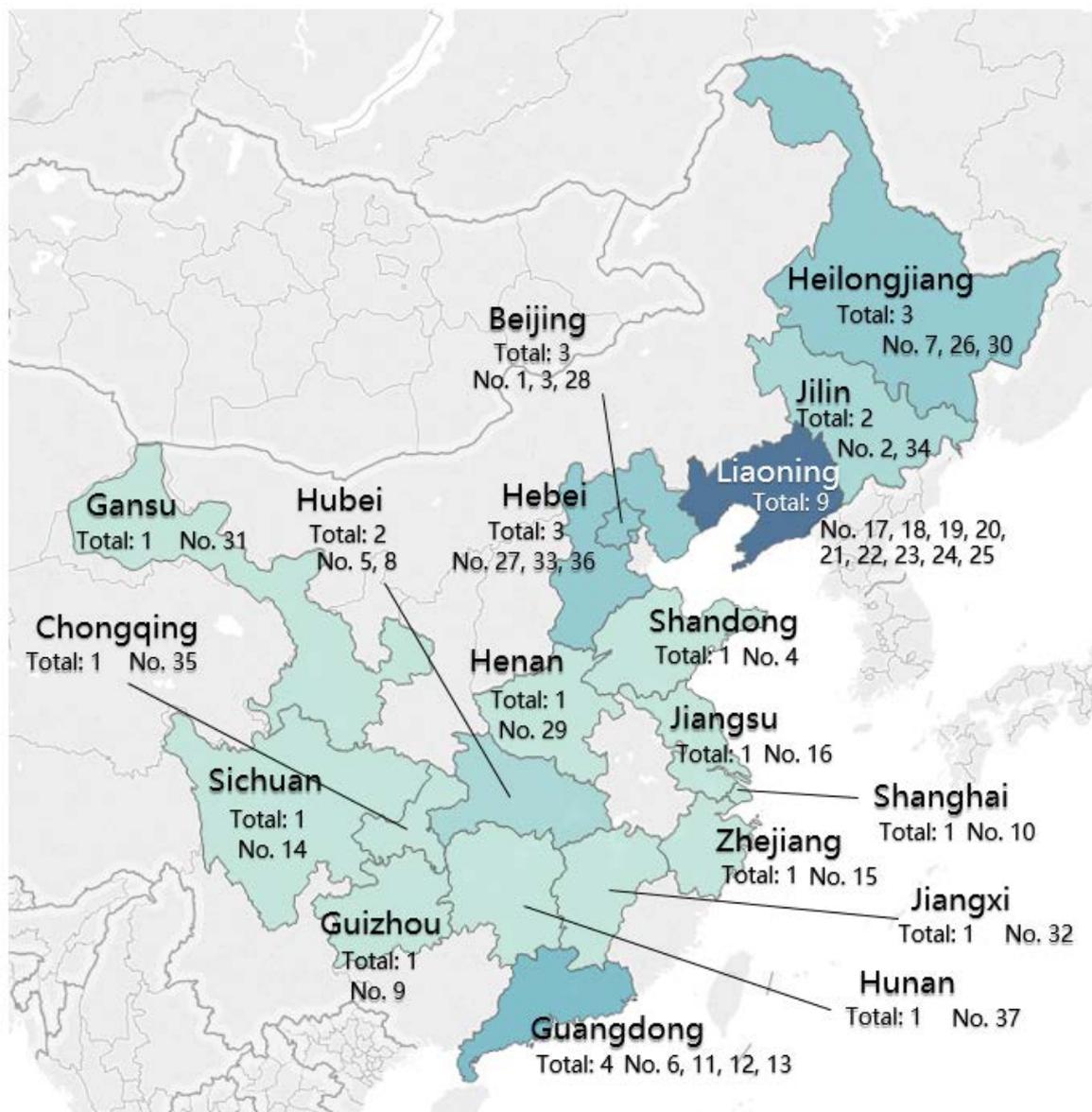
Interview stages	No.	Age Group	Gender	Occupation	Education	Interview Time	Interview Venues (If In the UK- how long) & (where form China)	An awareness of Tampons (Yes/No)	Knowing Tampons (Yes/No)	Tampon Buying /using (Yes/No)	Interview Duration (Hours)	Follow-up Interview (Y/NA) Interview Time; Starting using Tampons after interviewed (Y/N)	Interview Recorded (Yes/No)
Stage one: Pilot study	1	35-40	F	Lecturer	PhD	20170810-14	UK 4Ys (Beijing)	Yes	Yes	Yes. Long-term using (Before coming to UK)	3.5	NA	Yes
	2	31-35	F	Self-employed	PhD	20170821	UK 8Ys (Jilin)	Yes	No	No	2.2	NA	Yes
	3	21-25	F	Student	Master	20170822	UK 1Y (Beijing)	Yes	Yes	No	1.5	NA	Yes
	4	25-30	F	Volunteer	Master	20170823	UK 1Y (Shandong)	Yes	Yes	Occasionally Buy & Use (Before coming to UK)	2.0	NA	Yes
	5	21-25	F	Student	Master	20170823	UK 30Ds (Wuhan)	Yes	No	No	1.5	Yes. 201807. N	Yes
Stage two: Main study	6	26-30	F	Student	PhD	20170826	UK 1Y (Guangzhou)	Yes	Yes	Tried once but failed before coming to UK	0.75	NA	Yes
	7	21-25	F	Student	Undergraduate	20170906	UK 3Ds (Haerbing)	No	No	No	0.75	Yes. 201807 N.	Yes
	8	21-25	F	Student	Undergraduate	20170906	UK 2Ds (Wuhan)	Yes	Yes	No	0.75	Yes. 201807 N.	Yes
	9	21-25	F	Student	Undergraduate	20170906	UK 3Ds (Guizhou)	Yes		No	0.75	Yes. 201807 N.	Yes
	10	21-25	F	Student	Undergraduate	20170906	UK 5Ds (Shanghai)	Yes		No	0.75	Yes. 201807 N.	Yes
	11	31-35	F	Property Manager	Undergraduate	20181020	China (Guangzhou)	No	No	No	1.5	NA	Yes

	12	45-50	F	General Manager	Undergraduate	20181020	China (Guangzhou)	Yes	Yes	Yes. Using in 20 years ago, but do not use now.	1.5	NA	Yes
	13	31-35	F	CPO	Master	20181021	China (Guangzhou)	Yes	No	No	1.5	NA	Yes
	14	25-30	F	Office clerk	Master	20181023	China (Chengdu)	Yes	No	No	1.0	NA	Yes
	15	21-25	F	Office clerk	Master	20181024	China (Hangzhou)	Yes	No	No	2.0	NA	Yes
	16	21-25	F	Intern	Master	20181024	China (Jiangsu)	Yes	No	No	1.5	NA	Yes
	17	21-25	F	Office clerk	Undergraduate	20181025	China (Shenyang)	Yes	No	No	1.2	NA	Yes
	18	21-25	F	Office clerk	Undergraduate	20181025	China (Shenyang)	Yes	No	No	1.2	NA	Yes
	19	45-50	F	General Manager insurance company	Undergraduate	20181027	China (Shenyang)	Yes	No	No	1.5	NA	Yes
	20	45-50	F	Director of Beauty Salon	High school	20181027	China (Shenyang)	Yes	No	No	1.0	NA	Yes
	21	40-45	F	Teacher of Primary School	College	20181029	China (Shenyang)	Yes	No	No	1.5	NA	Yes
	22	30-35	F	Teacher of Primary School	College	20181029	China (Shenyang)	Yes	No	No	1.2	NA	Yes
	23	40-45	F	Teacher of Primary School	College	20181030	China (Shenyang)	Yes	No	No	1.2	NA	Yes
	24	35-40	F	Lecturer	Master	20181102	China (Shenyang)	Yes	No	No	1.5	NA	Yes
	25	30-35	F	Lecturer	Master	20181102	China (Shenyang)	Yes	No	No	1.5	NA	Yes

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26	26-30	F	Retoucher	Undergraduate	20181115	China (Heilongjiang)	Yes	No	No	1.2	NA	Yes
27	26-30	F	Retoucher	Undergraduate	20181120	China (Hebei)	Yes	No	No	1.2	NA	Yes
28	31-35	F	Interpreter (Korean)	Undergraduate	20181130	China (Beijing)	Yes	No	No	1.5	NA	Yes
29	26-30	F	Project coordinator	Undergraduate	20181213	China (Henan)	Yes	No	No	3.0	NA	Yes
30	26-30	F	Graphic designer	Undergraduate	20181214	China (Heilongjiang)	Yes	No	No	1.0	NA	Yes
31	21-25	F	Intern	Undergraduate	20181217	China (Ganshu)	Yes	No	No	1.2	NA	Yes
32	31-35	F	Cashier	Undergraduate	20181217	China (Jiangxi)	Yes	No	No	1.0	NA	Yes
33	26-30	F	IT coder	Undergraduate	20181218	China (Hebei)	Yes	No	No	1.0	NA	Yes
34	20-25	F	Editor	Undergraduate	20181219	China (Jilin)	Yes	No	No	1.0	NA	Yes
35	30-35	F	IT Coder	Undergraduate	20181221	China (Chongqing)	Yes	No	No	1.0	NA	Yes
36	26-30	F	Product manager	Undergraduate	20181221	China (Hebei)	Yes	No	No	1.0	NA	Yes
37	21-25	F	GM assistant	College	20181221	China (Hunan)	Yes	Yes	Yes	1.0	NA	Yes

Appendix B Geographic Distribution of the interviewees



Note that the label on the map is showing 'province name', 'total: N' which is the total number of interviewees in this province, and 'No. A, B, C' which is the detailed list of the interviewees' in this province. A deeper colour indicates more interviewees.

Appendix C Participant Information Sheet

Study Title: The influence of cultural on consumer buying behaviour: the case of tampons in China

Researcher: Hong LIN

ERGO number: 30339

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. You may like to discuss it with others but it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

I am Hong LIN, an MPhil/PhD student at the University of Southampton, the United Kingdom. This interview is part of my PhD research, which focuses on the interaction between culture and consumer buying behaviour (CBB) by taking tampons in China as example. Therefore, this interview will investigate what the influence of Chinese culture on Chinese females' CBB towards tampons. You will be interviewed to interpret the reasons why you do/did not buy tampons.

Why have I been asked to participate?

This interview focuses on the CBB of the Chinese female, who are the tampons eligible users, more than 18 years old with menstrual products consumption experience, excluding pregnant or breastfeeding, otherwise vulnerable adults. 50 participants will be interviewed individually in this study, 5 of participants who arrived in the UK less than 8 weeks will do a follow-up interview 6 months later. As a Chinese female who meets the above criteria, your voluntary participation in this study is greatly appreciated and your responses will be highly valuable as it will help in terms of collecting the appropriate and needed data for this study.

What will happen to me if I take part?

This study uses individual interview case study research method. You will be interviewed to answer semi-structured open-ended interview questions by the researcher in a quiet and safety public place, such as a cafe, library. It should take around 60-75 minutes. You are welcome if you wish to spend more time to provide more information. 5 of participants will be contacted again 6

months later to do a follow-up interview to answer part of the same questions, which takes around 20-30 minutes. Your responses are required to be recorded using audio for data transcription purposes.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

You might not get any direct benefit from participating in this study personally, but it is hoped that this study may help improve our current understanding of CBB under the influence of Chinese culture.

Are there any risks involved?

There will be no major risk involved. However, when you explain your views of rejection tampons or discuss the usage of tampons, some words, such as vagina, insertion, menstruation or sexuality related words, might be involved. If you dislike or discomfort to use such words, you can use other words instead, or you can withdraw at any time.

What data will be collected?

In order to identify whether you meet the participant criteria of this interview, the following data will be confirmed by the researcher first: your age range, whether you consume menstrual products, whether you are not vulnerable adult and not in pregnant or breastfeeding. Next, you will be allocated an interview number for your participant. Then the following data will be collected by the researcher via answering interview questions:

- Your general consumer buying behaviour, especially towards menstrual products.
- Your interpretation on the interaction between Chinese culture (egoism, relationism and situationism or others) and her awareness, knowledge and the first impression of tampons.
- Your interpretation on the interaction between Chinese culture (egoism, relationism and situationism or others) and your buying behaviour (including non-buying and buying behaviour) towards tampons.

When you explain your views of rejecting/using tampons, any data (may include your private data) for rejecting/using tampons you provided initially to the researcher will be collected as your response.

There is no personal information will be collected except the contact details of five participants who do a follow-up interview. The contact details collection is for a fellow-up interview purpose and only used for this purpose, not for any databases used or passed to any third parties. The

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contact details will be handled securely, using encryption and password protected access. These five contact details and consent forms will be kept separate from non-identifiable data, participants' data will be coded to reduce the risk of identification, and only the researcher can access it.

Will my participation be confidential?

Your participation and the information we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential.

Only members of the research team and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data about you for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your data. All of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

Your participation is linked to anonymity.

- Participants' audio recording will be transcribed and then the recording will be destroyed. Audio recording (before destroyed) and its transcription data will be coded so that participants are not identified by researchers, but the interview allocated a number of participants, which could be linked to their data.
- All data named 'the database of interviews of Chinese females' consumer buying behaviour towards tampons' will be stored securely using encryption and password protected access on a computer, which will be protected by password.
- The consent form will be stored securely in the locked filing cabinet (separate from non-identifiable data), the key to the lock will be stored securely and only the researcher can access it.
- The contact details will be handled securely, using encryption and password protected access on another computer, which will be protected by password. They will be kept separate from non-identifiable data and the consent form, only the researcher can access to it, and they will be destroyed after the study.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you can directly inform the researcher when you are invited, and you will need to sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part.

What happens if I change my mind?

You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without your participant rights being affected. You can directly email researcher h.lin@soton.ac.uk to withdraw it with your interview allocated number. If you withdraw from the study, at the point of withdrawal the final thesis has not been submitted to university or not within the process of publication, any of your data collected up to the point of withdrawal will be destroyed. Otherwise, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained for the purposes of achieving the objectives of the study only.

What will happen to the results of the research?

This interview is part of my MPhil/PhD research, the whole of my MPhil/PhD research will be written up to a thesis and maybe published. The participant will not receive a copy of the results, but the final thesis or the publication(s) of this research is/are accessible publicly. The contact details of five follow-up interviewees will be destroyed after the study. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify you without your specific consent. 'The database of interviews of Chinese females' consumer buying behaviour towards tampons' is wished to use for future empirical academic research and learning because this research is the first of CBB academic research towards tampons products, it is a launch pad for further possible research in consumer behaviour related fields. This database will be deposited in a data repository, the UK Data Archive, in the form of anonymised transcripts, no access restriction will be applied to the data in the future. If you file a complaint, please contact the researcher (h.lin@soton.ac.uk), or the University's Data Protection Officer (data.protection@soton.ac.uk).

Where can I get more information?

If the participants have any question about this study after reading this information sheet, you may contact the researcher via email at h.lin@soton.ac.uk.

What happens if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researchers (h.lin@soton.ac.uk) who will do their best to answer your questions.

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If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (023 8059 5058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Data Protection Privacy Notice

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, 'Personal data' means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University's data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/Is/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf>

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University's policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason ('lawful basis') to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the 'Data Controller' for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it

properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information - may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your personal data is used, or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University's data protection webpage (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer (data.protection@soton.ac.uk).

Thank you.

Thank you for taking the time to read the information sheet and considering taking part in the research.

Appendix D Consent Form

Study title: The influence of cultural on consumer buying behaviour: the case of tampons in China

Researcher name: Hong LIN

ERGO number: 30339

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet (2805 Version 2) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.	
I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be used for the purpose of this study, and understand that the interview will be recorded using audio and written notes.	
I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw (at any time) for any reason without my rights being affected.	
I understand that I should withdraw from the study then the information collected about me up to this point may still be used for the purposes of achieving the objectives of the study only.	
I understand that I may be quoted directly in reports of the research but that I will not be directly identified (e.g. that my contact details will not be used).	
I agree to take part in the interview for the purposes set out in the participation information sheet and understand that these will be recorded using audio. I understand that the audio recording will be transcribed and the destroyed.	
I give permission for the interview data that I provide in 'the database of interviews of Chinese females' consumer buying behaviour towards tampons' to be deposited in a data repository in anonymised transcripts form as described in the participant information sheet so it can be used for future research and learning in consumer behaviour related fields.	
(For the follow-up interviewee only)	
I understand that my contact details will be collected to do a follow-up interview to achieve the objectives of the study. My contact details collected by the researchers	

will be kept confidential and will not be maintained in the above/any database(s) or passed to any third parties. After the study, my contact details will be destroyed.	
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Name of participant (print name)

Signature of participant and Date

Name of researcher (print name)Hong LIN.....

Signature of researcher and Date

Appendix E Debriefing Statement

Study Title: The influence of culture on consumer buying behaviour: the case of tampons in China

Researcher Name: Hong LIN

Ethics Number: 30339

Thank you so much for participating in this study. Your participation was very valuable. It has been acknowledged that you are very busy and very much appreciate the time you devoted to participating in this study. There was some information about the study that could not be discussed with you prior to the study, because doing so probably would have impacted your actions and thus skewed the study results. This form explains these things to you now.

What is the research about?

The research questions are: what are the main cultural influences on Chinese females' 'not buying' tampons behaviour, and how do they impact it. This research is based on the research problem which is that most Chinese females do not buy tampons. The aim of the study is to investigate the interaction between cultural influences and CBB in a specific target market and cultural context, using tampons in China as an example to exemplify this central aim. It is the first study on the interaction between culture and CBB towards tampon products.

Use of active deception or misleading participants

No active deception or misleading participants is utilized in this study.

We hope this clarifies the purpose of the research, and the reason why we could not tell you all of the details about the study prior to your participation. If you would like more information about the research, you may be interested in the following:

Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact me:

Mrs. Hong LIN (h.lin@soton.ac.uk).

It is very important that you do not discuss this study with anyone else until the study is complete. Our efforts will be greatly compromised if participants come into this study knowing what is about and how the ideas are being tested. Once again results of this study will not include your name or any other identifying characteristics.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel that you have been placed at risk, you may contact the Research and Integrity Governance Manager, University of Southampton, Southampton, SO17 1BJ. Phone: 02380 595058, Email: rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk.

Appendix F Interview Questions Guide

Study title: The influence of cultural on consumer buying behaviour: the case of tampons in China

Researcher name: Hong LIN

ERGO number: 30339

Interview questions guide (Semi-structured face to face individual interviews)

Guide to the three semi-structured interview topics:

Topic 1: Participant's general consumer behaviour, especially towards menstrual products and general product categories.

Asking general questions about participant's consumer behaviour, mainly about their consumption of menstrual products, general product categories (such as innovation, new, foreign, luxury products).

Examples of topic 1 interview questions:

Bracketed (Why) means to ask 'Why' question but avoids using the word directly.

1.1 Could you tell me about how you shop? Where, when, how, why and with whom? Or, what is your list of things students should bring from China to the UK (things that you think you will not be able to buy easily in the UK)?

1.2 How does the situation and the person who is with you affect your choice, and why?

1.3 How do you shop for menstrual products? Where, when, how, why and with whom? Could you tell me about your tight life circle of menstrual products consumption, who are they, why are they and how do they impact you or your influence on them? Why and how do this impact or influence you?

1.4 Based on your usage, how would you rate your overall satisfaction of these products and (why)?

1.5 Do you buy any foreign or new/innovation product? What are the reasons to buy or not? What do they mean to you?

Topic 2: Participant's interpretation on the reasons against consuming tampons, and the cognitive process of reasons related with tampons and its product category.

Mainly asking the questions about participant's awareness, knowledge and first impressions of tampons, tampons product category, the reasons for rejecting tampons and their cognitive process related with tampons and its product category.

Examples of topic 2 interview questions:

Bracketed (Why) means to ask 'Why' question but avoids using the word directly

2.1 Are you aware or do you already know about tampons, and do you use them? Or could you tell me about how many kinds of menstrual products you are aware of?

2.2 What is your awareness / knowledge of tampons? How did you come about this awareness/knowledge? (Why and why not)?

(If the participant does not have any awareness /knowledge of tampons, the researcher will show tampons to her)

2.3 What are your first impressions of tampons (and why)? Could you explain more?

2.4 What the tampons is in your point of view (and why)? Could you explain more?

2.5 What does 'what the tampon is in your point of view' mean to you (and why)? Could you explain more?

2.6 Do you think tampon is the foreign or new product, it is the same as other with foreign or new products what you have mentioned? Could you explain more?

2.7 What do you think you will perceive by (not)buying or (not)using foreign or new new/innovation product? (and why)? Could you explain more?

2.8 What are the reasons you not buy/use tampons? (Why and how)?

Topic 3: Participant's interpretation on Chinese culture antecedents underlying their reasons and the cognitive process.

Appendix F

Mainly asking the questions about participants' cultural reasons for 'the reason against consuming tampons' and the cognitive process. If the participant does buy and use tampons, more questions about their views to compare before and after buying/use.

Examples of topic 3 interview questions:

Bracketed (Why) means to ask 'Why' question but avoids using the word directly

3.1 The reasons you not buy/use tampons? (Why and how)? Could you explain more?

3.2 How does your awareness/knowledge/ first impressions of tampons impact your buying or not buying them or the reasons what you mentioned above, (and why)?

3.3 How does "what the tampon is in your point of view" impact your rejecting or buying towards tampons, and why?

3.4 If you have a daughter, which kind of menstrual products will you recommend to her, why and why not?

3.5 Are the buying or not, and using tampons or not your own idea or do others play a part in this?

3.6 If you use tampons, a person you care about a lot is against it, would you like him/her to know that you use them, (and why)?

3.7 What does rejecting/using tampon mean to you and significant others in your life? (Why and why not?) What do you think you will perceive by (not)buying or (not)using tampons, or other will perceive when you (not)buying or (not)using tampons?

3.8 When or in what situation do you think you will (not) buy/(not) use tampons?