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Dynamic consumer value through value co-creation in the context of consumer culture

- An ethnographic study on craft beer consumption in China

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Abstract

Alcohol consumption is important within the research of service management in retail, because it is not only a consumption phenomenon, but also a societal matter. Ugly drinking culture and unhealthy drinking habits can cause serious issues to the individuals and the society. Consumers' drinking habits could be significantly influenced by the value that they perceive and seek for ((Babin, Darden & Driffin 1994; Vargo & Lush 2005) while value co-creation is an important way of value optimization (Kyle Puetz 2015). This thesis conducted an ethnographic study in craft beer consumption in China to explore dynamic consumer value beyond the utilitarian one that are achieved or achievable through value co-creation and within the context of consumer culture. Under the macro background of globalization, the study figures out a strong directivity in consumers' demographic features, and their sense in the identity, lifestyle and taste in the craft beer consumer culture. The consumer culture is an enabler for quality value-co-creation, especially for consumer-to-consumer interactions. On the one hand, a consumer is more open to others who seem to have similar taste, life style, recognized identity. On the one hand, interactions with a consumer outside the segment or in the context of under-developed consumer culture can result in failure and frustrating experience. The key findings also show that Quality value, Aesthetics value and Hedonic value are main stimulus for craft beer consumption, while through the consumer roles of Co-tester, Co-ideator, Co-promoter and Co-consumer in value co-creation, consumers will further gain Social value, Aesthetics value, Altruistic value and Efficiency, with the quality value and hedonic value also increased. Importantly, it is figured out that focusing or emphasizing on quality and utilitarian value leads to a higher risk of alcohol abuse in terms of consumption frequency and amount, while dynamic value co-creation reduces this risk. The study offers a theoretical and analytical support for service management for a healthier wine industry and a society with more rational alcohol marketing activities and consumption behaviors. A generalization from niche market of craft beer to the broader wine industry is appreciated for further research. **Key words: Craft beer consumption, China, Value co-creation, consumer culture, consumer value.**

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1. Introduction

‘I have rich experience in the consumption and my own opinions towards various craft beer products. However I seldom share my experience or recommend the products for others. Because I believe this is a very private matter, and not necessary to discuss with the public whether or not it is a good one and how much you like or dislike it. I usually go for the bars by myself, and more recently, I even skip the retailers and ordered the beer directly from brewers, so they deliver to my home address.’ (Informant Lyu).

‘It is always good to share and drink together with people who also like these products, all things that I like have a common feature: there is a space for taste, and I turn to be a reviewer. That is to say, while I consume a product, I’m used to taste it, comment on it, probably write it down my reviews, probably publish it, then the consumption is done.’ (Informant Xia).

1.1 The background

In the highly developed postmodern material society and with the impact of globalization, consumers have various choices of products and services, yet companies invest in product variety but in many cases it seems difficult to differentiate them. A smart seller should focus on differentiating consumer experience to influence their value perception and create more values (Prahalad and Venkat 2004). This is also an evolution of marketing since the latest decade, which has shifted from management of customers and markets to collaboration with customers & partners to create and sustain value, and the resources are shifting from the operand resources e.g. physical resources and goods to the operant ones e.g. knowledge and skills in the service and for competitive advantage (Vargo & Lush 2005).

Going back to the two consumers that were interviewed and referred in the beginning of this introduction, apparently both of them show a great interesting in the products that they are consuming-The craft beer, yet they still have very different consumption attitude and behavior. The value that they seek for or define upon their consumption also differ from each other very much. It is understood that alcohol consumption is important within the research of service management in retail, because it is not only a consumption phenomenon, but also a

societal matter. Ugly drinking culture and unhealthy drinking habits can cause serious issues to the individuals and the society, which include alcohol abuse, diseases, degenerate, crimes, and even cause of sudden death (HELPGUIDE 2017). A key difference between these two referred consumers are their consumer value (Sánchez-Fernández et al. 2009). The drinking habits could be significantly influenced by the value that they perceive and seek for. If the alcohol consumption is studied in a value-based perspective, to understand what value stimulates consumers in their alcohol consumption and how can the retailers and consumers mutual influence this value creation process, so as to further affect the individuals and the society in the alcohol consumption, will this be an analytical aid for a better service management within the wine industry? The answer is still unknown because there are too few studies within the wine industry that conducted directly with in a value-based research question, which is defined as a previous research gap in this branch.

1.2 Research issues and motivations

Conventional theory views value as created by companies and delivered to consumers through exchange of resources. It doesn't view the consumers as value creator, rather, they are considered as value users. In the latest decade, the value study has shifted from management of customers and markets to consumers' value co-creation to maximize and sustain value, while the resources are shifting from the operand resources to the operant ones including knowledge, skills, and experience. Consumers can participate in the phase of research, design, production and consumption areas to contribute their knowledge and skills to create a better consumption experience. Value is no longer viewed as created by the companies, but built upon the co-creation activities. Companies offer the value propositioning, while the value is final determined and created by consumers (Vargo & Lush 2005).

Previous research in value co-creation covers several interests: These include, for examples, the roles consumers play in the co-creation process (Agrawal and Rahman 2015; Giuseppe et al.2017), consumer's motivations for value co-creation and factors that shape or influence the value co-creation interactions (Tajvid et al. 2017), and consumer engagement in the social commerce etc. (Hollebeek et al. 2014; Hajli et al. 2017).

However, the role of consumer culture in value co-creation activities has not been addressed, especially in the wine or beverage industry. In this postmodern consumer world, consumers mobilize culture to form their social relationships: individuals with similar tastes (on material goods) are easier to become friends, and individuals introduce consumer culture to their friends, meanwhile, individuals learn about new consumer goods from preexistent relationships and become more similar to other people in their personal networks over time (Kyle Puetz 2015). This signals that consumers are more likely to engage in a recognized consumer culture to interact with other people, while value co-creation is basically an interaction-based practice.

More specific, it has been proved in the pioneering study of Tajvidi et al. (2017) that social support and relationship quality significantly influence consumer's intention to co-create brand value through social commerce environment. While consumer culture facilitates social relationship for individuals who have similar tastes (Kyle Puetz 2015), Kyle also claims that consumer culture may be even more important in the wake of social-networking websites that encourage users to catalog their favorite consumer goods. This calls for a research to directly investigate the role of consumer culture in influencing consumers' value co-creation behavior, and possibly not to constrain the value co-creation study in social commerce environment, but to concentrate more in the consumer culture context or environment such as consumers' social circle in the real life.

There is no sufficient study on the inter-relation of consumer value and value co-creation activities within the wine industry either regardless the importance of value study in the service dominant logic of marketing. Consumer behaviors are normally stimulated by value, while consumer values are also the outcome of the co-creation activities (Babin, Darden & Driffin 1994). Dunder (2017) conducted a study in the gaming industry and focus on interactions mainly in the social commerce platform. The study calls for future research in broadening the topic to other industries. Further, there are different roles defined for consumers during the value co-creation process, e.g. co-designer, co-evaluator, co-promoter etc. (Agrawal and Rahman 2015). Accordingly, Giuseppe et al. (2017) call for a further research in the food and beverage industry outside Italy to examine consumers' roles in value co-creation process.

Jointly consider the above two research issues, I decided to conduct a relevant ethnographic study in the craft beer consumption in China to fill the previous research gap in alcohol consumption study and meet the research interest of service dominant logic of marketing. The reason to choose this branch and in China mainly refers to the followings:

- Craft beers as one kind of alcohol products, are meanwhile cultural rich which helps to better investigate consumers' value co-creation interactions under the context of its consumer culture.
- Previous research haven't chosen this branch or this Country in value co-creation and consumer value study. However, several researchers call for a study on it (Dunder 2017; Giuseppe et al. 2017).
- At last, personally, as a research student in retail and service management, I've become interested in the craft beer consumption in China since recent two years. My consistent interest in this phenomenon enables me to immerse in the culture and conduct ethnographic study in this branch to gain rich empirical data and make a creditable research.
- The overall previous research in craft beer consumption is also insufficient, and there is still very rare consumer study on this consumption phenomenon in China as I searched in LUB Search, google scholar, and the biggest Chinese research database CNKI (www.cnki.net).

Accordingly, a brief description about craft beer consumption is presented first of all:

Craft beer as an emerging consumption phenomenon is making changes in the beer branch and affecting consumers' thoughts and choices. On the one hand, it is taking more and more market share at an expanding speed. In the past years, a statistic shows that there were over ten thousand craft beer retailers worldwide by the year 2015, of which 86% are in North America and Europe (Liquor-making Science & Technology 2016). While in the same year, the market share of craft beer in the U.S, for example, is up to 12.2% while a 16% of sales increased (Craft Beer Association, Sales growth 2015). In China, as another example, craft beer in China has shown an impressive growth during the past four years till 2016, the growth came up to 740% (Liquor-making Science & Technology 2016). The prosperity draws more and more researchers to conduct their empirical studies for different research purpose.

On the other hand, craft beer is famous of rich symbolic and cultural meanings. It also contains diversity and various options for experiential consumption; it bears the postmodern consumption characteristics in the society emphasizing individualism and heterogeneous identities for consumers (Firat and Venkatech 1995; Arnould and Thompson et al. 2005; Jaziri and Triki 2014). These imply the relevance and importance to research craft beer consumption under the context of consumer culture. A short introduction to the history and development of the craft beer movements will be given in the next session before formulating the research aim and questions.

1.3 The craft beer movement

1.3.1 The worldwide movement

The movement of micro-brewing began in the United Kingdom in the 1970s while traditional artisanal brewing had existed in Europe for centuries. As the movement has grown and some breweries expanded their production and marketing channels, the more encompassing concept of craft brewing emerged. In the U.S, the craft beer movement spread rapidly, and the growth and market share is leading among other countries.

Craft brewers in the U.S are explicitly defined as small, independent and traditional, where,

- Small means the annual production is within 6 million barrels of beer, which approximately equal to a 3% of U.S. annual beer sales; Beer production is attributed to the rules of ownerships.
- Independent requires that less than 25% of the brewery is owned or controlled by another member who is not a craft brewer.
- Traditional means ‘A brewer that has a majority of its total beverage alcohol volume in beers whose flavor derives from traditional or innovative brewing ingredients and their fermentation. (Craft Beer Association 2017)

There are no clear definitions regarding craft beer in other countries include the UK, Therefore, the term ‘Craft beer’ or ‘Craft Brewery’ is not entirely consistent but gradually came to reflect an attitude and approach to brewing with flexibility, adaptability, experimentation and customer service (Craft Brewing Business 2016).

1.3.2 The growth in China

The first batch of craft beer retailers or firms with awareness of the craft beer trend emerged since 2008. Since then, different periods, magazines and leading Medias both from China and abroad started to report this phenomenon in China. After that, the home brewing aficionados began to appear and have reached to ten thousand people and different kinds of craft beer festivals, competitions appeared as well since 2012. In 2013, the first batch of bottled craft beer produced by a domestic firm was launched and started to enter into the market stream, which influenced on more other retailers and companies to innovate and create new brands (Gao 2016). Consumption of mass-market beer brands has been steadily declining for several years—in fact, beer, in general, has been losing ground to wine and hard liquor—but craft breweries collectively have been registering double-digit annual sales gains. Beijing, Shanghai and other big cities in China are developing beer-snob cultures of their own (Heimer 2017). Still, the import craft beer from different countries in the western world is taking the leading market share of craft beer and proliferated from 64 thousand kiloliters in 2011 to 538 thousand kiloliters in 2015 (Liquor-making Science & Technology 2016).

1.4 Research aim and questions

Based on the previous research issues and the motivations, the research aim of this paper is to explore dynamic consumer value beyond the utilitarian one in the alcohol consumption that are achieved or achievable through value co-creation, and within the context of consumer culture, so as to offer a theoretical and analytical support for service management for a healthier wine industry and a society with more rational alcohol marketing activities and consumption behaviors. The findings should contribute to the theory of consumer culture, consumer value and value co-creation, and also give direct managerial implications for the chosen industry and inspire managers in other industries.

To achieve this aim, I developed three research questions as followings:

Research question 1: What are the main features of consumer culture for craft beer in China?

Research question 2: What overall consumer value do the craft beer consumers in China perceive and gain from their consumption?

Research question 3: How are the consumer value realized through value co-creation process and connected with the consumer culture?

Research question three is directly linked to the research aim but has an additive relationship with research question one and two, which need to be answered properly before proceeding to research question three.

1.5 Delimitations and clarification on some terms

1.5.1 Delimitations

The investigation on consumer culture will mainly go to the sociocultural perspectives which are often the emphasis of consumer culture theory and related to service retail marketing ((Arnould & Thompson 2005; Schiffman, Kanuk and Hansen, 2008). Other domain such as the mass-mediated marketplace ideologies and consumers' interpretive strategies (Hirschman 1997) will not be particularly concerned in order to have a focus; For the value co-creation, the co-creation in products manufacturing and logistics flow will be a delimitation in order to focus in service management; Further, the social commence channel in this study mainly include social media named Wechat in China. The social websites for rating or reviewing are exempted because in the craft beer industry, real-time interactions within a consumer's social circle and everyday life are much more active and productive than the websites or forums.

1.5.2 Clarification on some terms

In this thesis, without particular states, the term 'craft beer consumer' refers to any craft beer consumer with the different level of, for instance, consumption frequency, different degree of being involved in this phenomenon, and different degree of appreciation of craft beer. Thus, it mainly includes both ordinary craft beer consumers and the particular craft beer consumers who may be aficionados; while the terms 'industrial beer' and 'ordinary beer' share the same meaning which is used to describe the market beer other than 'craft beer.' Besides, the term 'consumer' and 'customer' are treated as interchangeable.

2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter provides the theory body for the thesis study. Both the data collection and analysis shall follow this framework of the theory. Then detailed theories under each session will be elaborated.

2.1 Consumer culture as the context to learn about consumers

Consumer culture is the central construct within consumer culture theory which refers to a family of theoretical perspectives that address the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace, and cultural meanings. Thus consumer culture theory is a broad theory family, rather than a unified, grand theory, or aspires to a nomothetic claim (Arnould and Thompson et al. 2005).

Consumer culture denotes a social arrangement in which the relations between lived culture and social resources, and between meaningful ways of life and the symbolic and material resources on which they depend, are mediated through markets (Arnould and Thompson et al. 2005). The term "consumer culture" also conceptualizes an interconnected system of commercially produced images, texts, and objects that groups use—through the construction of overlapping and even conflicting practices, identities, and meanings - to make collective sense of their environments and to orient their members' experiences and lives (Kozinets 2001). According to Lury (2011), consumer culture is a type of material culture, which is, *'a culture of the use or appropriation of objects or things'*.

There are three main perspectives on consumer culture according to Featherstone (2011). First is the view that consumer culture is premised upon the expansion of capitalist commodity production which gives rise to a vast accumulation of material culture in the form of consumer goods and sites for purchase and consumption. Second, the satisfaction derived from goods relates to their socially structured access displaying and sustaining differences within conditions of inflation. The focus here is upon the different ways in which people use goods in order to create social bonds or distinctions. Third, there is the question of emotional pleasures of consumption, the dreams and desires, which become celebrated in consumer

cultural imagery and particular sites of consumption which generate direct bodily excitement and aesthetic pleasures.

Effort to understand the sociocultural aspects of consumption is a main emphasis of consumer culture theory, for example the consumer experiences, which are often shaped by social and cultural dimensions of consumption practices (Arnould & Thompson 2005). Socio-culture dimension of retailing and consumer study entails social and cultural factors that influence the buying behaviour of consumers and are inclusive of culture, language, religion, social class, reference group, family and demographics (age, sex, education, occupation, income and marital status) and geography (Schiffman, Kanuk and Hansen, 2008). Following this essential knowledge, it is important to view craft beer consumers as actors in the context of craft beer consumer culture while their value perception and engagement in value co-creation are influenced and shaped by the sociocultural factors. Key sociocultural aspects in the craft beer consumption been studied and addressed mainly include identity project; taste and social status; lifestyle, and globalization (Arnould and Thompson et al. 2005; Featherstone 2011).

2.1.1 Identity

According to postmodernism, consumption is permitting the consumer's identity construction (Firat and Venkatesh, 1995; Goulding, 2003). Through consumption, consumers can actively rework and transform those symbolic meanings encoded in advertisements, brands, retail settings, or material goods to manifest their particular personal and social circumstances and further their identity and lifestyle goals. In this work, consumers are conceived of as identity seekers and makers (Grayson and Martinec 2004; Holt 2002). Woodruffe-Burton et al (2011) state that consumers' identity can be produced or reproduced through self-defining activities such as the choice of products or stores and self-expression concerning their values and beliefs. As the socio-cultural perspective of research states, the practice of consumption is regarded as a process of producing or reproducing images, experiences, identities, meanings, and values (Naamneh & Al Husban, 2012). Hence, one's self-values, self-identities, meanings, and beliefs are reflected or realized through their choices and decisions like what to buy and where to buy, and so on.

Importantly, under the postmodernism, the individual identity was multiplied. This multiplicity corresponds to the heterogeneity of identities which is the opposite of the homogenization of the modern world, where the individualism is the principal orientation of society (Chakor & Boubkr, 2009).

In the western consumer research, several authors have focused on craft beer consumers' identity projects. Choi and Stack (2005) found a trend in the US, that an increasing number of U.S. customers are choosing to express their preference for taste and individuality through their choice of purchasing alternative beers. Gómez-Corona et al. (2016) found that Mexican craft consumers do not consume the craft beer for its functional attributes, they consume it for what it means, and as a consequence, they build an identity which is perceived as more authentic and unique, in comparison to the mainstream industrial beer consumption. Besides, consumers prefer buying local craft beer to imported ones, and this contributes to the consumers' identity building as well as their local attachment. Craft beer consumers want to differentiate themselves through drinking.

2.1.2 Taste and class status

In material culture, goods are used to reflect on social distance and relationships while taste classifies the classifier (Bourdieu et al., 1984). Lower groups will pursue products which define social status in the upper reaches of society while those in higher groups will have to invest in new goods to reestablish the original social distance. In this context, knowledge of new commodities, knowledge of the social and cultural value as well as how to use them appropriately become important for the consumers. It aspires groups to adopt a learning mode towards consumption, and cultivate a lifestyle to seek to classify and order their social circumstances. They also use cultural goods as means of demarcation and communicators that establish boundaries between some people and build bridges with others. Meanwhile, people turn to identify and judge others based on the classifiable taste (Featherstone 2011, p18, p62).

The intellectuals (the dominated fraction of the dominant class), therefore, use the logic of symbolic systems to produce distinctions which contribute to the reproduction of the existing relations between classes and class fractions. They will therefore always seek to increase the

autonomy of the cultural field and resist moves towards a democratization of culture. They also establish a monopoly to distinguish, judge and hierarchize between what is tasteful and tasteless, between the pure gaze and the vulgar, between aesthetic distancing and direct sensory enjoyment. Emerging middle class is attempting to expand their welfare in intellectual knowledge and symbolic products, and use cultural capital as a rivalry of economic capital. The consumption practice among the middle class is a powerful stream in the consumption society, no matter their pursuance of taste or brands, or their construction of status, they are an important way to reform the quality of consumption in a consumer society (Featherstone 2011, p82-92).

In the context of beer consumption, Maciel et al (2016) found that consumers learn complex systems of taste evaluation to judge their aesthetic experiences of craft beer consumption, and status competition is a dominant type of sociality in taste-centered consumption domains. Accordingly, in China, is craft beer consumption perceived to be a consumption choice of an upper group having a better taste and social status? Or do the consumers spend their efforts to establish distinction towards taste and knowledge of culture? This becomes an interesting point to learn in next stage of data collection.

2.1.3 Lifestyle

The term ‘lifestyle’ has its sociological meaning about the distinctive style of life of specific status groups (Sobel, 1982; Rojek, 1985). Within contemporary consumer culture, it connotes individuality, self-expression, and a stylistic self-consciousness. One’s body, clothes, speech, leisure pastimes, eating and drinking preferences, etc. are to be regarded as indicators of the individuality of taste and sense of style of the owner/consumer (Featherstone 2011, p81).

Liu (2015) states that, the concept of ‘green, leisure, and healthier’ are what craft beer emphasized on, which are aligned with the nature of upper-grade food and beverage consumption in China. Craft beer producer and retailer Gao (2016) claims that ‘we hope to enable our citizens to feel the beauty and quality of our lives through their craft beer consumption.

2.1.4 Globalization

Under the background of globalization, the movement of culture declassification and the deconstruction of long-held symbolic hierarchies points to the world in which the chains of interdependencies between nations and cultures are lengthened and more densely interwoven. As a result, in the consumer marketplace, there is an increasing demand for symbolic goods on the part of new cultural intermediaries to cater for the thirst for new cultural experiences, sensations, etc. (Featherstone 2011, p126). Firat and Venkatesh (1995) argued that consumers are not loyal to brands; rather, their attachment is to the images and symbols of brands. What's more, according to Nuttall et al. (2015), the consumption of foreign brands may operate in local culture.

Maffesoh's (1996) argued that the forces of globalization and post-industrial socioeconomic transformation have significantly eroded the traditional basis of sociality and encouraged instead a dominant ethos of radical individualism oriented around a ceaseless quest for personal distinctiveness and autonomy in lifestyle choices.

Further, consumers' identity construction will also be influenced by globalization. Hermans and Dimaggio (2007) implies in his study that, information and knowledge emerging on a global scale are always transformed and adapted to fit the needs of people in their local situation, while the socio-cultural trends of both localization and globalization have a substantial impact on individual's identity defining. In more details, Hermans and Dimaggio (2007) argues that, globalization results in a development of a bicultural identity for most people in the world, and adolescents in particular: Part of their identity is rooted in their local culture while the other part is associated with the global situation. As a consequence, they may develop a hybrid identity that successfully combines elements of global and local conditions into a mix.

2.2 The term of value and consumer value measurement

2.2.1 The term of value

In earlier study, philosophers and researchers have concluded that value conceptualizations may vary depending on what study context is related (Dodds et.al. 1991). The definition of

value has evolved from 'Value is price' to that more elements been accounted for (Babin, Barry J., 1994). More latest, as discussed by Ralph, B., Perry (2013), value is a function of interest and would consist in the fulfilment of bias or interest. An object would be said to possess value when it fulfilled interest, where fulfilment is used in a generalized sense for the consummation of liking or disliking. If value consists in an object's consummating interest, then to know that the object has a value is to know that there is an interest in the object when it is consummate. In a shopping context, this could be understood as that, for instance, if a consumer perceived a value consists in a product, the existence of such value would be proved by the consumer when there is an interest for the consumer to consume this product, or there would be a value consisted in this shopping process according to the consumer's perception. As Ralph (2013) also states, the term "good" or 'fitness' while defining value cannot signify merely the interest of the subject who uses the term. This also indicates that value is also subjective and situational or conditional.

2.2.2 The measurement of consumer value

Value in consumer researches has been studied in different streams over the years. Value is seen as stimulus for the consumer actions and as an outcome of the consumption experience (Babin, Darden & Driffin 1994), thus it is important in marketing and service management. Consumer value is widely recognised as a key factor in organizational management, marketing strategy and consumer behavior (Sánchez-Fernández, Iniesta Bonillo and Holbrook 2009). To avoid confusions due to that various definitions of consumer value have been offered in consumer studies, Figure 1 presents the classification of the various research streams and tributaries on consumer value (see Sánchez & Iniesta 2007). The consumer value adapted in the analysis in this paper will be based on Holbrook's typology that further developed by Sánchez-Fernández, Iniesta Bonillo and Holbrook in 2009.

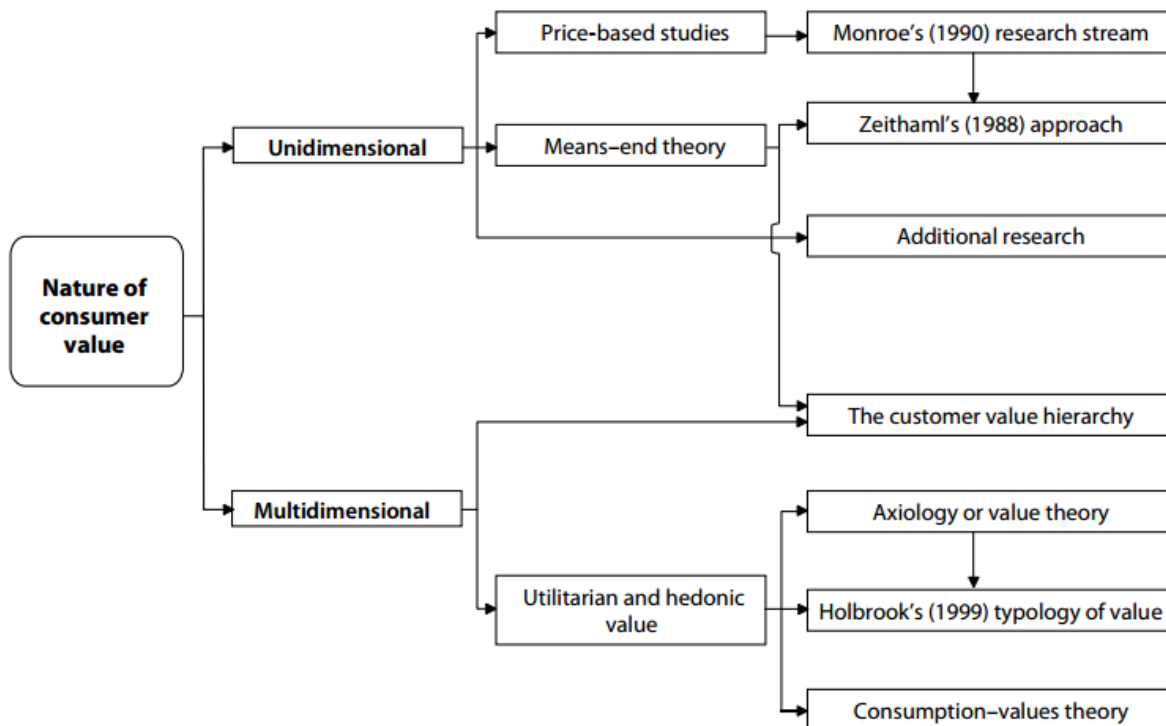


Figure 1: Classification of consumer value (Source: Sánchez & Iniesta 2007, cited by Sánchez-Fernández et al. 2009)

Since Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), there are discussions on the perceived value or consumer value, according to the authors, a consumer's shopping experience can be utilitarian and/or hedonic for the consumer.

Utilitarian value of consumption is based on the rational purchase criteria, the purchasing process is related to the “work mentality” (Babin et al., 1994). It implies that shopping is a rational or task-related process (Babin et al., 1994; Kang & Park-Poaps, 2010; Bakirtas et al., 2015), in which the product is “purchased in a deliberate and efficient manner” (Babin et al., 1994). Therefore, whether the perceived utilitarian value is realized depends on whether the shopping task or consumption is accomplished (Babin et al., 1994) and a utilitarian shopping happens after an overall assessment (i.e. judgment) of functional benefits and sacrifices driven by rational aspects such as price, time saving, quality, location, transportation, and weather and so on (Babin et al., 1994; Overby & Lee, 2006). A typical utilitarian shopper would find, the value of shopping, only if the shopping mission is completed successfully, namely, get everything done, and is even better, if done in a fastidious manner (Fischer and Arnold 1990). However, researchers recognize that consumers' shopping experience and perceived value

cannot be totally explained by utilitarian aspects. Instead, there are also "festive," ludic, or epicurean sides of shopping been studied (Sherry 1990a). Potential values of entertainment, recreation and emotion in the shopping process, and there are plenty of studies trend towards analyzing these hedonic shopping aspects (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003).

Hedonic value is concerned with positive word of mouth, loyalty, emotional value, and psychological satisfaction related with the overall shopping experience (Jones et al., 2006). Hirschman & Holbrook (1982, p.92) define the hedonic shopping or consumption as “consumer behavior that relate to the multisensory, fantasy and emotive aspects of one’s experience with products” and figure out that hedonic aspects are more subjective and personal than its utilitarian counterpart and more often results from fun and playfulness than from task completion. For hedonic shoppers, seeking of the hedonic experiences is often far more significant than the mere acquisition of products and they are more likely to expect high levels of hedonic value (Babin et al., 1994). The purchase of goods for a hedonic shopper may be cited with self-concept enhancement rather than for any utilitarian benefits. The consumers expect not just the products they are looking for but also their shopping experience to be more enjoyable, pleasurable and full of excitement (Yusof 2012), or having fun, adventure, being social and making friends, shopping for stress relief, pursuing fashion trends or shopping for other people, looking for fantasy, stimulation, and excitement and so on (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003). The hedonic value implies potential benefits for consumer engagement and interactions in value co-creation practice and today’s retailers are also working on such components of hedonic value since they are assumed to play strategic role in the customer purchase process. (Chen & Dholakia, 2014; Sánchez-Fernández et. al, 2007).

Holbrook has developed a **consumer value typology** in 1999, according to the author, consumer value can be viewed from self-orientated and other orientated ways, and associates with extrinsic and intrinsic value dimensions. The extrinsic value refers to the economic and social values where the value is derived from the consumer’s external value; while in intrinsic value, the driver comes from inside and can be described with terms such as hedonic and altruistic values (Holbrook 1999). The typology by Holbrook is shown in Figure 2 as below:

		<i>Extrinsic</i>		<i>Intrinsic</i>	
<i>Self-orientated</i>	<i>Active</i>	ECONOMIC VALUE	EFFICIENCY (output/input, convenience)	HEDONIC VALUE	PLAY (fun)
	<i>Reactive</i>		EXCELLENCE (quality)		AESTHETICS (beauty)
<i>Other-orientated</i>	<i>Active</i>	SOCIAL VALUE	STATUS (success, impression management)	ALTRUISTIC VALUE	ETHICS (virtue, justice, morality)
	<i>Reactive</i>		ESTEEM (reputation, materialism, possessions)		SPIRITUALITY (faith, ecstasy, rapture, sacredness, magic)

Figure 2: Typology of consumer value (Source: Holbrook 1999, p12, cited by Sánchez-Fernández et al. 2009).

Based on Holbrook's typology, the consumer value was further developed by Sánchez-Fernández, Iniesta Bonillo and Holbrook in 2009 which was particularly aimed to better suit the service context studies. According to the authors, six dimensions of consumer value shown in Figure 3 could be measured: play, aesthetics, efficiency, quality, social value and altruistic value.

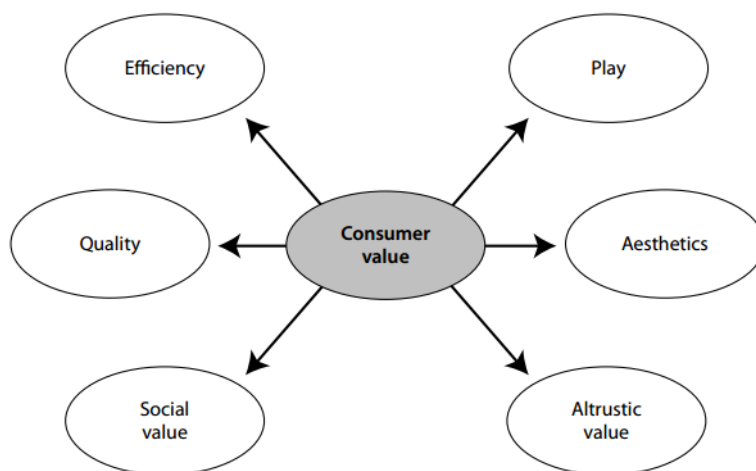


Figure 3: Proposed model for the structure of consumer value (Source: Sánchez-Fernández et al. 2009)

Accordingly, *Efficiency* is measured by comparing what the consumer gets in an exchange relationship with what the consumer gives for the purchase. Thus, it includes the get-versus-give aspects of consumption. Monetary price and convenience are two major dominators in the efficient ratio while the convenience reflects temporal and spatial access to the service space (Heinonen.2006). Normally, the monetary cost, time and effort related to the service experience are elements in the efficiency.

Quality, which is similar to the ‘excellence’ in Holbrook’s (1999) typology - it involves reactive appreciations towards an object’s or experience’s potential ability to accomplish some goal or to perform some function. Hence, this notion has an emphasis on utilitarian value.

Social value could be viewed as a combination of ‘status’ via exhibitionism and ‘esteem’ linked to materialism in Holbrook’s (1999) typology. Thus, it relates to both the active manipulation of one’s consumption to make a favorable impression by others, and the reactive appreciation of the prestige associated with one’s possessions.

Regarding *play*, ‘it typically involves having fun and thereby characterizes the intrinsically motivated side of the familiar distinction often made between work and leisure’ (Holbrook 1999). Thus, it actually refers to the hedonistic, pleasure arousing consumption which could be characterized with terms such as fun and entertaining for the consumer, and is similar with the Hirschman and Holbrook’s (1982, p92) definition of hedonic value.

The relevance of *Aesthetics* was highlighted in art and culture (Venkatesh & Meamber 2006). It constitutes a key aspect of value in the consumption experience whereas individuals are exposed to it on a daily basis – no matter at homes, in retail stores, or especially in such service areas as art, entertainment and other cultural offerings.

At last, *Altruistic value* can be viewed as a join of ethic and spiritual values in Holbrook’s (1999) typology, it is “an other-orientated consumption experience valued intrinsically for its

own sake as an end in itself’ Sánchez-Fernández, Iniesta-Bonillo and Holbrook (2009). By this, the authors mean the consumer’s value drivers are how helping others and concerned for other’s wellbeing, and affects the consumption choices that other consumers make.

2.3 Value co-creation

According to the marketing literature, it is commonly acknowledged that values can be created in the co-creation process where consumers shift from being a passive audience to an active partner and work with the suppliers (Grönroos, 1997; Payne et al. 2009; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2000, 2004; Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Grönroos defines value creation itself as “a process through which the user becomes better off in some respect or which increases the customer’s well-being” (B&F refers Grönroos, 2011, p. 282). Drawing on the customer-centric (Sheth, Sisodia, & Sharma, 2000) and market-driven logic (Day, 1999), Vargo and Lusch (2004) proposed a service-dominant logic and argued that customers can become good values co-creators when they engage in dialogue and interaction activities. The service dominant logic concurs with earlier studies and posits that values are likely to be maximized as firms understand customers’ value creating processes and support them by providing full transparency with respect to product and firm information (Vargo & Lusch, 2004), Vargo and Lusch (2004) further stressed that customers are the sole creators of value while role of enterprises is restricted to delivery of value propositions.

Value co-creation includes not only the consumer-seller interactions, but also consumer-to-consumer interactions (Finsterwalder & Kuppelwieser 2011; Agrawal and Rahman 2015). According to Grover & Kohli (2012), Co-creation processes involving organizations and consumers are exposed to market environmental factors and cannot be strictly regulated by a “governance layer” through contracts and economic safeguards. For instance, consumer sharing is a key environmental factor and needs to be included when examining the effect of consumer co-creation on market performance (Lang et al. 2015). Linda et al. (2009) point out that ‘value co-creation for wine resides in the two-way interactive, experiential nature between one or more agents, whether human or online, and a customer, adding perceived value over and above that offered by the physical product to the individual customer’.

The consumer roles in value co-creation process that defined by Agrawal and Rahman (2015) also include both consumer-seller and consumer-consumer interactions. In more details, this value co-creation process proposed by Agrawal and Rahman (2015) is presented in Figure 4 as below:

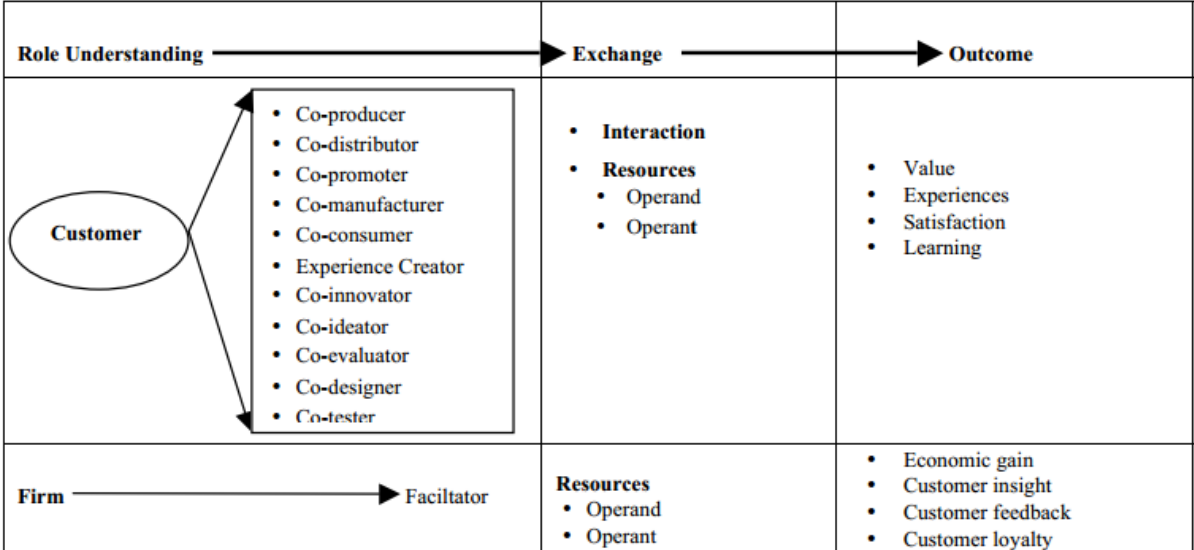


Figure 4: Value co-creation process (Source: Agrawal and Rahman, 2015)

Role Understanding

Regarding the ‘Role Understanding’, as the seller offers the value propositions for the consumers. The consumers will have several assumed roles and responsibilities along with the consumption of the offering to co-create value. These roles basically can be sorted to two categories: consumer-seller value co-creation and consumer-to-consumer value co-creation which will be further clarified in the following:

- **Consumer-seller interactions:**

This includes Co-producer, Co-distributor, Co-manufacturer; Customer as innovator, Co-ideator and Co-designer; Customer as experience creator; Co-tester; and Co-evaluator

By *Co-producer*, *Co-distributor* and *Co-manufacturer*, the customers are involved in designing, developing and delivering value proposition; collaborate with goods or service delivery through self-service mechanism etc., and also use their micro competencies and skills

to actively collaborating and participating for creating value, both for themselves and for others (Vargo and Lusch 2004; Agrawal and Rahman, 2015). These roles are normally performed in the upper stream of the service or goods supply flow, which were delimited in this paper in order to have a focus on the consumption and interactions between the retailers (mainly in form of publicans and brewing pubs) and consumers.

For *Customer as innovator, Co-designer, or co-ideator*, the firm can use customer brainstorming idea, product knowledge and innovation in the development of offerings (new product and service, processes and idea) along with marketing and delivery of offerings (Agrawal and Rahman, 2015). According to the empirical study by Giuseppe et al. (2017), small business enterprises in the beverage and food industry have very little and limited interactions in these three roles.

For *Customer as experience creator*, the service dominant logic emphasizes that the customer are value creator, and it is the seller's responsibility to collaborate with customers to co-create value. They can collaborate with in the domain of consumption by generating richer experiences for the customers and in return the seller benefits by gaining access to their latent perceptions and preferences, and capitalizing on them (Agrawal and Rahman, 2015).

By *Co-evaluator*, the evaluations are initially performed by a closed management circle and then are opened for customer evaluation. Customers as co-evaluators enjoy being part of the evaluation process and it also generates free publicity and word of mouth by turning customers into the firm's brand ambassadors while they may spread the idea within their social circles to further involve their friends and family members to join the evaluation for a particular idea (Füller et al., 2011; Russo-Spena and Mele, 2012).

By *Co-tester*, it basically means customers are involved in the testing of new offerings prepared to be launched in the markets in the near future (Agrawal and Rahman, 2015). The roles of Co-evaluator and Co-tester are the particular focused roles in the small beverage and food business (Giuseppe et al. 2017).

- **Consumer-to-consumer interactions:**

This category consists of Co-promoter and Co-consumer

By *Co-promoter*, it points that the rising level of doubts and disengagement has rendered the customer inert and resistant to the mass-media campaign has increasingly turned the customer into a self-promoter, reviewer or brand evangelist. The advent of social media has enabled the customers to share their experiences for good or bad goods and service. Word of mouth of customers is influencing the behavior of other customers even at far away distances (Agrawal and Rahman, 2015).

As for *Co-consumer*, there are pre-use consumption phase involving mutual identification of the customer and firm as actors in the process and the during-use consumption phase, where the customer as a practitioner creates value by following conventional practices while simultaneously introducing new ones, as well as post-use consumption process comprising the experiences undergone by the customer, then consumers are sharing their experience of a product or service, helping a large number of people in their purchase process (Agrawal and Rahman, 2015). The pre-use and during-use stages are much consumer-seller-oriented interactions while the post-use is more in the direction of consumer-to-consumer interactions.

Additionally, when consumers are gathered together physically to share the consumption experience, or involved digitally to discuss on a product or service for instance, the consumer role as *Experience creator* becomes consumer-to-consumer meaning.

Exchange during the value co-creation

Regarding the 'Exchange', 'co-creation of value in a service network requires the integration of both operand and operant resources from the provider and the customer, who are better known as resource integrators in service-dominant logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Vargo, 2008; Edvardsson et al. 2011). 'The customer lives in the vicinity of neighbouring customers, communities and organisations. Proximity between actors leads to interpersonal relationships and development of social structures. Growth of interpersonal relationships largely depends

on the exchange and sharing of resources amongst the resource integrators' (Agrawal and Rahman, 2015).

Outcome of the value co-creation

As for 'Outcome' of value co-creation, consumers gain value, experiences, satisfaction and knowledge, while the seller will achieve economic gain, receive more customer insight and feedback, as well as higher customer loyalty.

2.4 The role of consumer culture and consumer value in value co-creation

In the academy, it has been 12 years since the term 'consumer culture theory (CCT)' was offered by Arnould and Thompson et al. (2005) for the first time. Within it, the consumer culture is the central construct (Arnould and Thompson et al. 2005; Featherstone 2011, p11-12). Still, the studies are much more theoretical and philosophical oriented without purposively situating it in a specific industry to understand the role of the consumer culture in influencing the consumer's inter-activity behavior (Jaziri and Triki 2014). However, more recently, Kyle Puetz (2015) finds the consumer culture plays a role in shaping and forming consumers' social relationships that people use consumer culture to connect with others. In this sense, to what extent the consumer culture is developed may influence the result of such relationship quality, which could further refer to the study by Tajvidi et al. (2017) who find out that relationship quality significantly influences consumer's intention to co-create brand value through social commerce environment, though it is not tested in other co-creation purpose than brand value.

2.5 The channels for value co-creation

Bolton and Saxena-Iyer, (2009) claims that while the marketing channel type for interactions may be limited, consumer's other involvement and interactivity such as in the web interface may be significant (Bolton and Saxena-Iyer, 2009). The scope of the value co-creation concept may be extended to encompass not only different types of human interaction generating consumer value perceptions, but also human interactions with interactive media offering options for customised and/or personalised content communications (Ho, 2006). This

theory encourages the study of craft beer consumers' interactions through multiple channels including not only the social media Wechat with sellers and consumers, but also the consumers' everyday interactions with sellers, and other consumers.

3. Methodology

This chapter presents the methodological position and approaches that this thesis stands in, also explains the strategies and research design process. Then the data collection and analysis methods and process are interpreted in detail through answering questions like how empirical data was collected through what methods, techniques and sequence, and how the practical research was implemented. Lastly, chosen methods were evaluated and criticized to reflect the implementation limitations in this thesis.

3.1 Methodology outline

A ‘Research Onion’ shown in Figure 5 contributed by Saunders et al. (2009) is helpful to structure the methodology in my study. Accordingly, mainly six areas will be covered in this outline and methodology is designed from the outer to the inner layer of this onion: from research philosophies, research approaches and strategies, method choices and time horizons, to techniques and procedures for data collection and analysis. In this research onion outline, the bold texts represent the chosen approaches in this thesis.

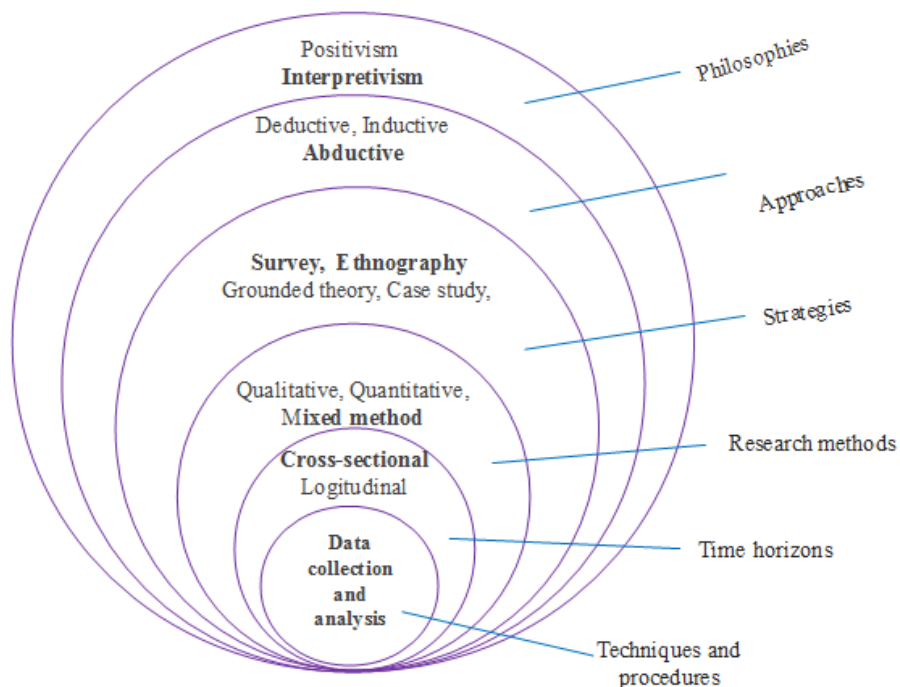


Figure 5: Methodology in the research onion (Source: Saunders et al. 2009)

3.2 Research Philosophy: Interpretivism

Research philosophy, also suggested as scientific perspective, contains important assumptions about how the researchers view the world and underpin the research strategy and methods subsequently (Saunders et al. 2009). It tells the role of the values of authors and paradigms of the research. Research philosophies mainly consist of four different types: Positivism, realism, interpretivism, and pragmatism.

Comparing with positivism which views the nature of reality being independent of social factors (Saunders et al 2009), and is based on the beliefs that the world around us is real, and that it is possible to discover these realities of the world, interpretivism views the world as constructed and may change (Saunders et al 2009). It is associated with the philosophical position of idealism, and is used to group together diverse approaches containing social constructivism, phenomenology and hermeneutics; Interpretivism emphasizes the importance for the researcher as a social actor to appreciate differences between people and usually focuses on meaning and may employ multiple methods in order to reflect different aspects of the issue (Research methodology 2016).

Interpretivism is more appropriate for this study, as I agree that the society is constructed, complicated, and changing. I view that people's consumption choice and behavior are possible to be understood and interpreted based on relevant theories and multiple methods of data collection and scientific analysis. Further, primary data generated via interpretivism studies could be associated with a high level of validity as data in such studies tends to be trustworthy and honest (Research methodology 2016). Though some subjectivist epistemology might be involved, interpretivism will enable qualitative research areas and data to be studied in a high level of depth (Research methodology 2016), I also triangulated with some quantitative data to assure a minimal subjectivity.

3.3 Research Approach: Abductive

When a research approach starts from a relevant theory and designs a research strategy to test it, it is highly relevant to deductive, while an inductive approach is that theory is for building

or developing based on the data collection and analysis (Smith 1998; Saunders et al. 2009). The combined use of both is called an abductive approach (Smith 1998).

Normally, when a topic on which there is a rich amount of literature from which to define a theoretical framework and/or hypothesis will lean more readily towards deduction (Creswell 2002). A research topic that is new and with much debate and on which there is little existing literature may be more appropriate to work inductively by generating data and analysis and reflecting upon what theoretical themes the data figure out. It is also entirely possible to apply both a deductive and abductive approach within the same research (Saunders et al. 2009).

In this study, since the previous research are more fragmented and insufficient as mentioned in the Introduction, the most adaptable approach for this thesis is ‘abductive’ where I need to go ‘back and forward’ between potential theories and the data collection process to structure the most suitable framework. I illustrate this ‘back and forward’ approach in Figure 6.

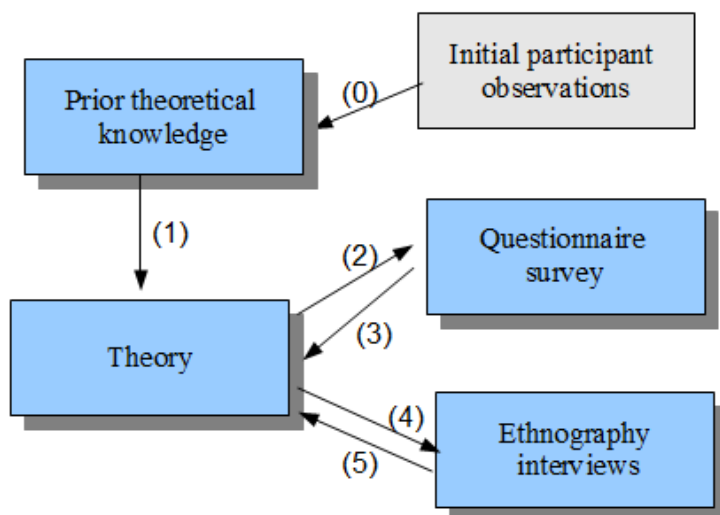


Figure 6: The abductive approach with ‘back and forward’ route (Source: my own)

3.4 Research Strategy: Survey and ethnography

Research strategies could be used for exploratory, descriptive and explanatory research (Yin 2003). For a social science research, the following strategies are more relevant. Thus a comparison is conducted in Table 1.

Table 1: An overview of different research strategies (Summarized by my own)

Research strategy	Description	Applications
Survey (Saunders et al. 2009:144; May, 2011:94)	studies the sampling of individual units from a population through survey techniques/applied statistics	Often associated with deductive approach and used in quantitative data collection.
Ethnography (Saunders et al. 2009:149, 150, Brian Hoey 2017)	a qualitative research process or method (one conducts an ethnography) and product (the outcome of this process is an ethnography) whose aim is cultural interpretation	Often for social research or in business study, to gain insights about a particular context and interprets it from the perspectives of those involved.
Case study (Robson, 2002:178; Saunders et al. 2009:146)	An empirical inquiry in investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context and multiple sources of evidence are inquired.	Often in explanatory and exploratory research.
Grounded theory (Goulding 1998; Saunders et al. 2009: 149)	Helps to predicts and explains behavior and emphasizes on theory developing and building.	‘Theory building’ through a combination of induction and deduction

Accordingly, I choose questionnaire survey and ethnography together for this thesis. As on the one hand, ethnography as a cultural study matches well the interpretivism philosophy and the research aim, while on the other hand, the questionnaire survey could not only answer the demography questions about consumer features but also assist the ethnography study to reduce the risk of being much subjective. Further, the survey also functioned to figure out some implications for theories construction before the ethnography interviews started. Thus this choice enables me to collect rich data as timely as possible for in-depth analysis. More detailed interactions and relations between my two strategies will be further interpreted in sessions 3.7 and 3.8.

3.5 Research methods and design

Quantitative and qualitative are two research methods widely used in social science research. Quantitative uses predominantly numerical data and is more useful as a natural science technique but also applicable in social sciences and business management. Qualitative uses mainly non-numerical data and is mostly used in data collection for understanding how people perceive reality (Silverman 2013). In the practice of research, a mixed method in combination of both is commonly used and advantageous as well.

The research is designed with a combination of different data collection methods, including an online questionnaire survey; 12 in-depth ethnographic interviews with the semi-structured format; as well as some document analysis which performs as an extra data resource to supplement findings or provide additional evidence for relevant analysis.

3.6 Time Horizon: Cross-functional

Cross-sectional and longitudinal are referred as time horizon in the research onion by Saunders et al. (2009). Cross-sectional studies, also known as one-shot or status studies are best suitable for finding out the prevalence of a phenomenon, situation, problem, attitude or issue, by taking a cross-section of the population. Longitudinal studies can be used to study the pattern of change in relation to time. It involves visiting the study population at regular intervals for data collection (Kumar 2005). The change is less measured in a cross-sectional horizon while longitudinal can measure such changes yet require a more extended time for the study and could suffer from the conditioning effect (Kumar 2005). This is a situation in which the respondents may respond to questions without thought after they have been contacted frequently.

According to the time frame of this thesis, the cross-sectional time horizon is more suitable and realistic. Further, societal and cultural perspectives are not going to change in a fast way. To the contrary, it is a rather slow process which allows the findings in this topic to be valid and useful.

3.7 Data Collection-Survey

Survey aims to describe and explain characteristics or opinions of a population through a representative sample (May, 2011), and it has the capacity of generating quantifiable data on

large numbers of people who are known to be representative of a wider population to test the theories (Bryman, 2004,p.11).

Before performing the method, I had also carried out some initial participant observations at three craft beer bars to gain a sense towards the craft beer consumption phenomenon, and obtain an overall impression about the consumers. The purpose is to develop my thesis interest and determine on related research questions, meanwhile gain some practical knowledge and experience about craft beer, which will help me to better design my survey questions and interview guide in the next step.

3.7.1 Sampling

Sampling is a vital step in doing questionnaire as it needs to be representative of the population (May, 2011). One method in deciding the survey sample and is to choose samples according to known characteristics the researcher is investigating (Wrench et al., 2013) and features related to the research topic (May, 2011; Silverman, 2013). Such purposive samples lie in its ability in selecting participants examined in the study, which enables researchers to efficiently collect information (Wrench et al., 2013, p.322). However, there are risks that respondents might give answers they assumed the researcher expects. Thus, it might be difficult to defend the representativeness of the sample because of the subjectivity (ibid.). Therefore, it would be easier for an online questionnaire to counter this weakness and the respondents are not seen, and the answers are anonymous.

In this study, I define the population as craft beer consumers who consume craft beer in any frequency in China. According to my previous practical knowledge, I noticed that compares with other consumer commodities, the retailers of craft beer such as publicans and restaurants operators are having more closed relations and interactions with their consumers. Many craft beer publicans build their consumers group through the most popular Chinese social media ‘Wechat’ to facilitate their communications and exchanges. Therefore, craft beer consumers that gathered through social media of ‘Wechat’ became my targeted samples after that I had double checked with those publicans to make sure that any of their consumers has equal chance to join the group. These samples are representative of the population of craft beer consumers. Finally, I got access to about eight relevant ‘Wechat’ groups distributed in different cities in China.

3.7.2 Question design

Generally speaking, there are open-end or closed-end types of questions constructed in a questionnaire. Open-end questions are those questions in which participants feel free to provide their appropriate answers, no possible answers or response categories are predetermined by researchers (Peterson, 2000). As discussed with the “How do you get to work?” question, it allows the respondent to provide any answer they choose without forcing them to select from options (Fluid surveys 2013). Closed-end question limits the participants’ responses to a set of predetermined answers (Peterson, 2000).

In this research, I designed a combination of both types of questions in the questionnaire based on the research interest. In total, there are 14 questions. Questions 13 and 14 are completely open-end questions to collect consumers’ additional comments and opinions about craft beer, craft beer consumption, and feedback on the questionnaire; question 12 is based on closed-end type, yet combined with open-end options to see why the respondents choose that answers. Questions 3, 7, 9 and 11 are also closed-end structured, yet provide an additional open-end choice in case the close-end options that provided do not cover all answers. Other questions are completely closed-end constructed mainly about factual questions (May, 2011) such as gender and age, as well as classification questions (May, 2011) such as salary level, educational level, consumption habits in terms of frequency, time, average spending hours per time and so on (May, 2011). The questionnaire with full questions is attached in Appendix 1.

Importantly, some questions, mainly the question 9 play a role to reflect on the theory and inspire further ethnography interviews in revealing the consumer value for the consumption. Table 2 shows the links between theory and relevant question design. Regarding the Efficiency and Altruistic value, it was more difficult for me to assume suitable questions, so I chose to pay attention on these two aspects in interview.

Table 2: Link between theory and the questionnaire about consumer value (Source: my own)

value suggested by the theory	Choice in question 9
Efficiency	K (Shop online and keep at home), interview
Quality	D(variety of tastes and style), E(excellent taste and quality)
Social value	J(belongingness/build social network), G(staff)

Play/Hedonic responses	A(have fun),B(socialize),C(Relax),K(hospitality) L(others)
Aesthetic value	G(retail surrounding) H (aesthetics designs), I (cultural experience), F(everyday habit), M(healthier manner), N(minority sense)
Altruistic value	K (Purchase for friends), interview

Nevertheless, the interviews shall dig further than just sticking to similar questions asked in the questionnaire, for example, the identity, and consumers' taste and class status, or lifestyle, all require in-depth qualitative interviews to answer, which will be further clarified in session 3.8.

3.7.3 Wording and language of questions

According to (Peterson, (2000, p.50), it's important to have clear, ambiguity-avoided, objective and grammatical rules-obeyed questions to receive trustable answers at best efforts. Accordingly, the questions for sending to respondents need to be written in Mandarin, which is also my mother language, for the respondents to thoroughly understand them and make correct answers. Meanwhile, vague words, ambiguous or prejudicial words were double checked to be avoided. The question 9 asking about the critical reasons that the consumers like to consume craft beer couldn't be an entirely objective form due to the nature of this question, it's based on some assumptions derived from the theories to build the options. These assumptions are about why the consumers like craft beer. Thus, it is about their subjective opinions. Still, I managed a same attitude for different answers, which was considered very important. Further, when I started to formally analyze the data the questions were translated into English again, which is required by this thesis.

3.7.4 Survey delivery and responding results

The questionnaire is designed on a webpage through a Chinese online survey platform 'Sojump' (www.sojump.com) which is a useful tool that not only facilitates the survey but also provides some desired analysis functions.

Before sending the survey to the sample consumers, I sent it to three persons first of all to conduct pilot tests. One is a publican who has good knowledge about craft beer and his consumers. He could feedback to me some suggestions regarding the questions design; one is an ordinary craft beer consumer, to experience the answering process to see if everything works for her and the questions are clear and easy to follow; The last is myself, to go through it to make sure it works well. After this pilot testing, the questionnaire was improved with small issues and feasibility was proved.

To the next, the link of the survey was sent to the sample consumers in the eight different groups gathered through 'Wechat'. In the message, I adequately explained my research purpose and the anonymous of the answers to encourage the consumers to respond and answer truly. There are more than one thousands consumers who received the link to my survey through 'Wechat' groups. As a result, I received 147 valid respondents answered to the questionnaire. I kept basic analysis on the results of the questionnaire on the way, to see if the consumer features are getting stable and visible. When the total respondents were at around 100, I reminded the link to them once again to draw the attention of those who haven't answered it, so that it reached to 147 in total, which, according to my evaluation, is an appropriate number and would be valid for the use for this thesis.

3.8 Data collection- Ethnographic interview

Ethnography is the study of culture and has become a fundamental tool for understanding ourselves and the multicultural societies of the modern world. It is about learning from people, rather than studying people, and the essential core of ethnography is the concern with the meaning of actions and events to the people we seek to understand (Spradley 1979, p3).

Derived from the view that our culture is not a homogeneous culture, that people who live in modern, complex societies are living by many different cultural codes, it is necessary to go beyond surveys or experiments for learning the meanings of consumer behavior in their daily consumption (Spradley 1979, p12). Thus, the ethnographic interview is a most appropriate choice besides participant observations. However, through participate observations, there are no communications regarding language between observer and consumers, certain meanings about the consumption cannot be revealed or confirmed to fully understand the consumers. Thus, I conceive ethnographic interviews are necessary, relevant, and most appropriate for

this study to understand what factors and in what way drive consumers' craft beer consumption in China.

3.8.1 Language

Language helps to construct reality while different languages create and express different realities, using informants' native language as interview language enables informants to act as an informant and fully describe and express their experience, feelings, thoughts (Spradley 1979, p25). Ethnographic research depends more fully on the language of the informant (Spradley, 1979, p31). Therefore, Chinese Mandarin was a beneficial language to strength the interview quality since this is the mother tongue both for me as the ethnographer and the informants that I selected from China.

3.8.2 Interview principles and question design

There are three essential elements for ethnographic interview including explicit purpose, Ethnographic explanations and Ethnographic questions (Spradley 1979, p59-60):

Explicit purpose

Both ethnographer and informant are expected to realize that the talking is supposed to go somewhere while the informant may have a general idea about this purpose, and the ethnographer must make it clear and remind the informant where the interview is to go. The ethnographer should take more control of the talking to lead to discovering the cultural knowledge of the informant.

Ethnographic explanations

It is necessary for the ethnographer to repeatedly offer explanations through the ongoing process. Explanations facilitate the process for the informant to become a teacher in informing his/her culture. Generally the explanations consist of project explanations which is the general statements about what the project is all about; recording explanations about writing things down and reasons for recording the interviews; and native language explanations, which is the encouragement for informants to speak and express in the same way they would talk to others in their cultural scene; interview explanations including the type of interview that will take

place; as well as question explanations to provide detailed information for the informants to understand what is going on.

Ethnographic questions

There are many kinds of ethnographic questions out of which three main types are most often used and identified as Descriptive questions; Structural questions; and Contrast questions.

- *Descriptive questions*

This question style asks the informant to collect an ongoing sample and is considered as the easiest to ask and broadly applicable for all interviews. For examples, could you please describe the craft beer bar that you went to? Do you still remember the first time you knew about craft beer?

- *Structural questions*

This type of questions try to discover information about domains, the basic units of an informant's cultural knowledge and help to find out how informants have organized their knowledge. Question such 'What are all the different brands of craft beer that you like, or dislike?' This kind of questions is often repeated to dig further.

- *Contrast questions*

It is a sort of questions to help discover the dimensions of meaning which informants employ to distinguish the objects and events in their world. A typical example, what are the differences between craft beer and industrial beer? What is a craft beer bar different from other night pubs?

In this study, all three types were considered useful in this study. Thus I combine them into the semi-structured interview guide. Regarding the question designs, since the answer to the research questions in this thesis is highly explanatory and descriptive relevant, both semi-

structured and structured interviews are possible to be used to realize the research aim (Saunders et al. 2009, p320-323). Thus, I prepared semi-structured interview guide which was based on updated theory and improved and became clearer after the survey. Taking an example, the theory suggested that social groups seek to classify and order their social circumstances and use cultural goods as means to establish boundaries between some people and build bridges with others (Featherstone, M., 2011, p18, p62). Yet the questionnaire pointed out that majority of the consumers wished craft beer to be mainstreamed without boundaries. In this way, in order to explore consumers' sense of distinction and status, it wouldn't be appropriate to keep asking whether the informant would wish the craft beer to be popularized. I then turned to another direction that the sense of distinction and identity may also be cultivated through having rich knowledge about craft beer and craft beer cultural meanings. Accordingly, this question was constructed. The design of interview guide is shown in Appendix 3.

3.8.3 Informants

In ethnographic study, the term 'informant' is used instead of 'respondents' or 'interviewee' as here the ethnographer acts as a student to learn from the informant to understand from the informant's position, and importantly to go beyond cultural-bound (Spradley 1979, p25-32). The informants were selected after the survey through questionnaire has been conducted and an impression about common features of craft beer consumers was obtained. This ensured that informants did not go beyond the criteria of the samples, while the samples are representable of the population of consumers. The trustworthiness of the questionnaire results was assured first through that I have interviewed publican Hua, and craft beer business owner Ly to compare the information of my questionnaire with the reality that their consumers have.

On the one hand, I referred to the structure of questionnaire respondents to choose my informants. For instance, the questionnaire showed that most of respondents have salary higher than 3000 CNY, Male represented over 80% of the total number, and people who consume craft beer at frequent level were around as twice many as those who consume very often like almost every day. Then the informants that I selected basically have similar structure like this.

On the other hand, I also referred to Spradley’s suggestions regarding how to choose a good informant (1979, p45-54), like that the informant would better to be thorough enculturation, current involvement, having adequate time and nonanalytic and so on.

Regarding the number of informants, it was not pre-determined, rather, when I had interviewed the tenth informant for instance, if I obtained a valuable point that I hadn’t have before, then I would prefer to have one more suitable informant enabling me to draw a relevant conclusion. As a result, there were 12 informants in total been interviewed and afterward I felt satisfied and confident with the findings. The overview of the 12 informants’ basic information is shown in Table 3:

Table 3: The summary of informants’ information in this thesis (Source: my own)

#	Name or Family name	Living City	Gender	Age	Consumption Frequency	Work field or occupation
1	Yin	Shanghai	Male	35-44	Often	Freelance
2	Sha	Beijing	Male	25-34	Very often	Media
3	Xia	Beijing	Male	25-34	Often	Freelance
4	Xu	Beijing	Male	35-44	Often	White-collar
5	Hua	Hefei	Female	25-34	Very often	Publican
6	Zheng	Quanzhou	Male	25-34	Often	Manager
7	Liu	Sichuan	Male	18-24	Often	Student
8	Lyu	Sichuan	Male	25-34	Often	Freelance
9	Ly	Mianyang	Male	35-44	Often	Entrepreneur
10	Yun	Shenzhen	Female	25-34	Once a while	White-collar
11	Wang	Jining	Male	25-34	Once a while	Blue-collar
12	Jiang	Beijing	Male	35-44	Very often	Environment

Among these informants, two informants highlighted in blue color have business in craft beer. They are sponsors of two ‘Wechat’ groups that I joined, so they also received my questionnaire. Hua is a publican to her craft beer bar, while Ly owns craft beer bar, restaurant, and other business. Except for their opinions as consumers (for they also consume craft beer at their free time and during social life), more importantly, is that they could also help me to

triangulate the data collected from the questionnaire to increase the overall credibility through their knowledge about consumers. This is how I determined to select them too. Therefore, I state here, this thesis is about an academic consumer research, the research aim and questions were designed since the beginning before knowing any informant. Although two informants are from the business field, it doesn't necessarily mean that the study aims to serve their interests for market study or so. All other informants are definitely craft beer consumers with a possible best combination of different background representing the sampling and population. Additionally, I had also a friendly conversation with an American craft beer consumer Fuller for a comparison purpose, which is, however, not counted as a formal interview.

3.8.4 Interviews implementation

As shown in Table 3, I had tried to have a good combination of the cities where the informants live and consume craft beer as well, to collect richer and more efficient data than having a town and consumers from same craft beer bar who might have much similar consumption experience and opinions. Due to this reason, and also that during the period of data collection I was physically in Sweden, the interviews were conducted through 'Wechat' web camera in the way of one-to-one online interview. Each interview lasts between 35 to 70 minutes, with an average length situated at around 45 minutes or longer.

Before the interview started, I always explained the purpose of my study and the areas that would be interesting for my research, gave the explanations to make sure that the informant has an overall idea about where the talking is supposed to go and speak in the same way they would talk to others in their cultural scene (Spradley 1979, p59-60). Meanwhile, I made sufficient preparation, not only the interview guide but also reviewed the questionnaire the informant had answered. Through question 15 that informants left their contact info when they were interested in the interviews, it was easy to find informants' questionnaire, and if informants haven't filled out the questionnaire, I often suggested them to do it before we meet in the interviews. These preparations helped me to control the interview process better and make the interviews more efficient and qualified, for instance, by avoiding asking same questions like the factual or classification questions, but asking more relevant and valuable questions.

Spradley (1979, p84, p92) had claimed that in ethnographic interviews, both the questions and answers must be discovered from the informants and each time when we proceed to the next interview it would be necessary to analyze the collected data in order to discover questions to ask in future interviews. It encouraged me to keep thinking and analysis based on the completed interviews to see if any questions become obsolete or new questions need to be added for the next interview. Meanwhile, during the interviews, I concentrated in the pattern of the informant's words to fit in appropriate questions to explore more relevant information. Thus, the semi-structured interview guide was not used as a task list to be asked in the ethnographic interviews, rather, it assisted my ethnographic interviews and allowed some flexibility for them.

3.8.5 Interview transcription

The quality of transcriptions gets to influence the quality of the research (Silverman, 2013). Thus it was treated very carefully. In my study, all the 12 interviews were recorded based on the consent of the informants. Due to the time difference between Sweden and China, I usually got to interview no more than 3 informants on the same day. Therefore, it made it natural to transcribe the recorded interviews every day after I conducted certain interviews, instead of waiting the last day to do the transcription and get exhausted or affect the quality. This habit enabled me to keep thinking and improve interview quality for future interviews as well. Transcriptions were written in Chinese since the interviews were conducted in Chinese. In total it reached nearly 40 pages of transcriptions written in Chinese. I translated them into English again when to use in text in this paper.

3.9 Data collection-Document analysis

The questionnaire and ethnographic interviews were designed as formal data collection methods, while the document analysis was used only as a complement to the findings at a necessary case. This includes the following ways:

- 1) During the interviews, some informants may mention some information within the branch such as associations, brands name, brewery names, or cultural meanings and so on, when I felt necessary to explore better the meanings that the informants expressed, I did relevant document analysis.

- 2) Since the interaction platform between the informants and me is the social media 'Wechat'. I also took a look at the informants' craft beer posts on their timeline named 'Moment'. These posts are mainly about people's daily activities and everyday life that they want to share with 'Wechat' friends. These studies provide some supplements to the interviews or analysis.

3.10 Data Analysis

The data analysis consists of quantitative data analysis for the questionnaire and qualitative analysis includes the open-end questions in the survey, the interview transcriptions, and those additional data obtained from document analysis. These two analysis methods will be presented respectively.

3.10.1 Quantitative data analysis

The quantitative analysis was mainly conducted directly in the survey website 'Sojump'. As mentioned earlier, it has the analysis functions needed for this study. Mainly was the univariate analysis refers to the analysis of one variable at a time, and crossover or multivariate analysis that refers to the analysis of one variable as a function of another variable (Bryman, 2008). This questionnaire was editable only by me with account log in.

When the respondents reached 147, I started to translate the questions into English in full sentences. Then I profiled the questionnaire both in Chinese and in English versions and kept them for traceability. Afterward, I simplified those longer questions into shorter codes at the website of 'Sojump.' This is mainly for the question 9. Then I performed the analysis accordingly:

For univariate analysis, they were profiled one by one for traceability, when to display the relevant results required in the thesis text body, mainly related to research question 1, I freely choose the diagrams like histograms and pie charts to show.

For multivariate analysis, any variable is possible to be analyzed as a function of another. Yet this requires logic to pre-evaluate whether two variables have potential correlations. For instance, when I started to study the consumers' occupations, I would wonder the correlations with their incomes, their consumption habits, or the consumption rate, etc.; when I looked into consumption frequency, I wonder if any other variable correlated to this? Then I check

different variables, such as income, gender, age, time length that they had known about craft beer etc. Based on such logic, much cross-over analysis was conducted. For the significant results, I would involve them in the analysis. If the correlations were easier to describe in text, I mentioned in the text, but if some correlations are based on two changing variables and a developing trend need to be shown, I presented them in Figures or tables.

For question 9, I did two additional tests: Trustworthiness and correlations between every two factors in order to check the stability of the answers and whether the factors are inter-related. This helped to direct the most appropriate method for further analysis. Details will be presented in the Analysis chapter.

3.10.2 Qualitative data analysis

According to Bryman, 2008, p550-551), coding is a way to generate an index of terms that help to interpret and theorize the data, and coding is about digging beneath and the surface to discover the hidden treasures contained in the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p.66). To best match the theoretical framework which was constructed through different dimensions and divided into certain ‘themes’ such as ‘identity’, ‘lifestyle’, ‘hedonic’ and so on, I also adopted the coding method for the qualitative data processing or mining. Key steps include the followings:

Early transcription and keep thinking

Both Spradley (1979, p92) and Bryman (2008, p.551) support an early transcription and doing the coding at first stage as soon as the data were collected. Accordingly, I work with transcription every day when I finished the planned interviews, usually was two to three interviews a day. Then I transcribed them. Meanwhile, I was keeping listening and thinking to the interview records, so that through my way of thinking I may get some idea and themes, then I wrote the down beside the text transcriptions, though this wasn’t any formal analysis.

Back and forward with theory

During the early transcription and thinking, I compared the thoughts with the theory, if there was a new theme that hasn’t been covered in theory, I started to search relevant theory and update the theory chapter based on my abductive approach (Smith 1998). This new theory returned to guide my further interviews or help me to better understanding the collected data.

For example, the theory about ‘consumption upgrade’ was a new part mainly resulted from questionnaire through open-up answers.

Coding and analysis

One begins to analyze only after collecting all the data (Spradley 1979, p93). When all interviews were completed, the transcriptions were completed as well at the same day. Then I started to concentrate on the work of coding and analysis. Open-end question answers were also processed in the same way of coding and analysis. Generally, the following techniques were applied:

- *Constant comparison*

The technique “Constant comparison” is to compare between incident with incident in the data for their similarities and differences, and then classify them into the categories or themes (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p.73). This was often used in my data analysis. For example, informant Lyu stated that:

‘I go to experience as many as possible like doing my ‘stamps collection’, I could accept all kinds of styles, and brands. It’s purely tasteful that satisfies me, and the variety of this drinking that fills me so much feeling. Regarding the cultural meanings and spirits behind it, I don’t think I care that much.’ (Lyu)

While Xu claimed that:

‘When I drink craft beer, I don’t like to get myself drunk, I wish that I could taste different kinds gently and slowly, keep brain awake and rational to check and understand the efforts that the brewer spent on the beer, his creative thoughts and the feelings he expresses...’ (Xu)

When I looked into and compared these two texts from two informants, they had both similarity and differences. The similarity was that both of them like to experience the variety of craft beer. Thus they were categorized to the ‘Experiential consumption’ under the theme of ‘Desires and experience of the diversity’. Yet they had differences: Lyu emphasized that he doesn’t care much about the stories and cultural meanings behind the beer, while Xu was the contrary who particularly cares about the cultural meanings. Thus, within this theme, I divided the analysis under this theme into two parts: One was about pure desires and

experience of the diversity of craft beer tastes'; the other was the experience for both the tastes of beer and the cultural meanings attached to the product.

- ***Examining relationships among parts***

Analysis of any data involves a way of thinking referring to the systematic examination of something to determine the parts, the relationship among parts and to the whole (Spradley (1979, p92). For example, when to analyze the consumers' sense of identity, I first found that different informants seemed to have different impressions and comments towards the entire group of craft beer consumption. Then I discovered that these comments mostly were positive ones; Further, from their descriptions, they were just one of the group that they described. These small parts of information were interrelated and linked up by me, and then I figured out a bigger picture that consumers have a strong sense of their belongingness to this group. This was one aspect of their identity image. The other aspect was that I then found that different informants more or less had a sense about themselves and this 'self' was expressed in the informant's talking. Yet different informant seemed to have quite different sense about such 'identity', thus made the parts seem fragmented. When I examined on these parts, I finally figured out that they were exactly about the heterogeneity of identities. Thus, the relations between parts were worked out and the theme of 'Identity' as a whole was seen.

- ***Analysis triangulation***

The triangulation of data could refer to both data collection and data analysis. (Golafshani 2003). Taking the example of Lyu and Xu under the theme of 'Desires and experience of diversity', when I divided this theme into two parts, I also turned to the questionnaire and conducted cross-over analysis to see how many consumers were to be categorized into different parts under this theme, pure desires and experience of the tastes only, or experience of both the cultural meanings and the tastes of beer? Some qualitative data were also used to consolidate the quantitative findings. For example, use the publican Hua's answers to examine the quantitative findings regarding consumers' features. At last, when there were insufficient or unclear patterns in the informants' interview data, I also did some basic document analysis on their 'Moment' to find some more evidence.

3.11 Credibility in Research

'Validity' and 'reliability' are key attributes of credibility in research. A study is reliable if another study can reproduce the results using the same methods and in a similar setting; a

study is valid if it measures what it was originally intended to measure (Golafshani, 2003). ‘Triangulation’ is a key strategy to address the credibility, transferability, conformability, internal or external validity, reliability as well as objectivity is that of “triangulation” in a qualitative research (Armstrong et al., 1997, p.597).

3.11.1 Triangulation

Triangulation entails applying more than one methods or sources of data in the study of social phenomenon (Bryman, 2008; Silverman, 2012). It helps to make social researchers feel more confident about their studies (Webb et al., 1966, cited in Bryman, 2004), meanwhile can improve the reliability of a single method (Silverman, 2013) through a variety of data sources. In this thesis, the triangulation of data collection and analysis has been fully described in earlier sessions from 3.7 to 3.10. Here is a summary: The questionnaire was in line with the theories and inspired by previous participant observations. Some questions, especially question 9 helped to indicate some themes for further interview study. While in turn, interviews on two business informants supported the questionnaire results as representative of the population. Document analysis helped to supplement the interviews data. Four methods were fully triangulated and to be more consolidated and reliable than a single method. Each research question is answered through three sources of data. This is visualized in Figure 7.

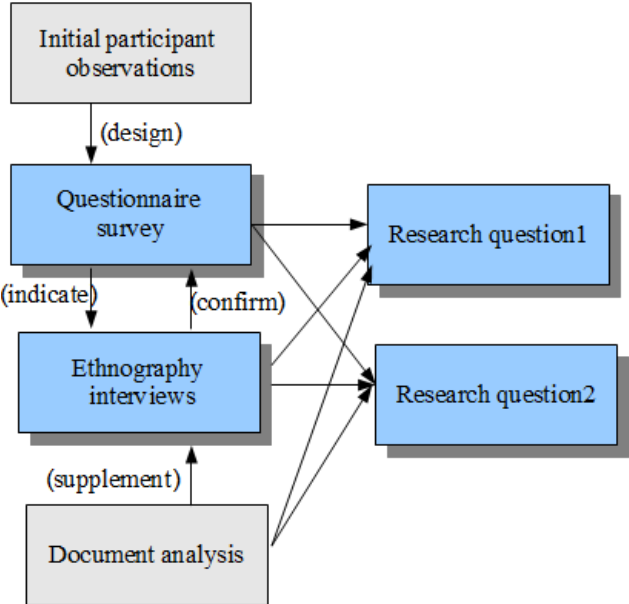


Figure 7: Triangulation of data collection and analysis methods (Source: my own)

3.11.2 Reliability

As Saunders et al. states (2009), there are three measures considered crucial to achieve the reliability of a study. Firstly, the study should be reproducible on another occasion with the same result. Secondly, another observer should obtain the same observations as the researcher. Thirdly, a sense regarding how conclusions were formulated from the conducted data should be presented. If all these conditions are fulfilled, the study would be seen as reliable. These three aspects are all fulfilled in this research: first of all, the collected data are well kept in forms of field notes, interview records, full written transcriptions; questionnaire results were downloaded from the website and kept in Word files. 'WeChat' conversations with informants are also traceable. These ensure the study is reproducible as the first measure. The report is also reviewed by the tutor at several stages of the research process, while the data collection and analysis methods were presented in a detailed way; both the collection and analysis of data were fully triangulated. These fulfill the second and third measures and enhance the reliability.

3.11.3 Validity

In more details, validity refers to the issue of "how we can be sure that a measure really does reflect the concept to which it is supposed to be referring" (Bryman (2004, p.29). In this study, the purpose is to understand the phenomenon of craft beer consumption in China through revealing the consumer features and the driving forces that sustaining and pushing forward the consumption of craft beer. It was a clear concept since the early stage of the study and the methods were carefully chosen in order to best measure this phenomenon that is supposed to be measured. To understand the consumers' collective features, a quantitative study is the most appropriate because it relies on the certain size of samples. While ethnographic interviews are the most useful method to elicit the pattern of meanings from consumers' daily consumption experience, motivations through immersing in their culture, to reveal the relevant driving forces. Sampling is crucial to be representative of the population of craft beer consumers to assure the validity, thus, it was carefully examined during the selection of samplings and informants. This representable of sampling had been presented earlier in details under the session of Data collection. Further, Golafshani (2003) explains that a combination of different methods for data collection will enhance the validity of data. The triangulation efforts in this thesis have just been presented in the previous session as well.

3.12 Critiques on methods implemented

The interviews of this study were conducted through 'Wechat' web camera instead of face-to-face style. This was due to the geographic distance, as I chose them this way in order to be more representable for the population. Their living cities cover the north to south, west to east of China while I was in Sweden. Thus the shortages of internet interviews could not be perfectly overcome. The first shortage was the time difference, resulted that I could only interview them at my morning before noon. The second was the internet signal which effected on the conversation quality to some extent. Thirdly, for ethnographic study, having involvement in the culture physically would be by all means better than having this distance between ethnographer and informants. To minimize these influence on my thesis quality, I got a good quality of record pen, instead of using a phone to record. The recording quality turned out to be clear and stable. Besides, for some patient informants, we agreed upon to send the transcriptions to them for further check and see if they had additional points to add. Some informants showed interest and cooperated in a way.

3.13 Ethical considerations

This study is about alcohol consumption, thus, there were some sensitivity and ethical considerations I needed to cope with. First, I should conduct the ethnography studies immersing in the consumer culture. I tried to adopt a more neutral attitude about the consumption, neither criticizing nor exciting over the craft beer. During data collection, I tended to concern about the consumers' attitude and behavior towards health in terms of the control of up taken volume of alcohol, etc. I also particular checked the ages of consumers and tried not to include teenage people who are younger than 18 to become informants. One consumer who just filled her 18 years old has contacted me, but considering her age, I decided not to take her from my ethical concerns that I do not wish teenage people to have much experience about alcohol consumption. Regarding my data collection, basically I had fully communicate my research purpose with respondents and informants, also asked for consents for recording, and the way I would use the data in this study. Thus, ethical issues had been carefully treated in this study.

4. Analysis of findings

This chapter analyzes the results guided by the structured theories. Data from both quantitative survey and qualitative ethnographic interviews, together with those open-end question answers, and document analysis on Wechat conversations and moments complement each other to interpret and answer the research questions properly.

4.1 What are the main features of consumer culture for craft beer in China?

The beer brewing and drinking culture in China is commonly conceived originated from western world. The consumer culture is therefore largely influenced by the western one and similar in many aspects, yet it is tailored to the local culture in China and thus could turn out own features over time.

4.1.1 The strong directive property of consumer segment

Consumer segment is interesting for sociocultural aspects of retailing and consumer culture exploratory. It may related to the social class and demographics (age, sex, education, occupation, income and marital status (Schiffman et al. 2008; Kyle Puetz 2015). Table 4 shows the results from questionnaire regarding the demographics of craft beer consumers.

Table 4: The demographics of craft beer consumer segment (Source: My own)

		%		CNY/M	%
Gender	Male	82.99	Salary	<=3000	12.24
	Female	17.01		3001-10000	52.38
Age	<18,	1.36	10001-15000	12.93	
	or>55		15001-20000	9.52	
	18-24	10.88	20001-30000	6.12	
	25-34	56.46	>=30000	6.8%	
	35-44	26.53	Education	High school	15.65
45-54	4.76%	3 years of bachelor		27.89	
Occupation	Manager/white collar	38.78		4 years of bachelor	37.41
	Self-employed	11.56	Higher than bachelor	19.05	
	Freelance	28.57			
	Blue-collar	3.4			
	Student	6.8			
	Other	10.88			

These data was further checked with informants who are publicans to compare with the actual situation in their bars/pubs, and was proved that the results of questionnaire are reliable.

Basically, the results show that the majority of craft beer consumers are male, and from the generations of the 1970s and 1980s in China. Their age distribution reaches its peak somewhere between 25 to 34 years old, prove that the Chinese 1970s and 1980s are the dominant consumers for the upper grade of food and beverage consumption Liu (2015) because of their personalities, values, buying power and demand, as well as better experience and accept ability towards foreign products and cultures. Still, this relies on their overall financial standing points or material status.

From the income structure, it figures out that the consumers are mainly from the Chinese middle-class as the government defined people with yearly income between 60,000 to 500,000 CNY per year as middle-class, equal to monthly income between 5000 and 41667 CNY. Accordingly, 31% of the Chinese urban population is classified into middle class in 2013 (CSIS, 2015). Thus, according to statistics rule, it is reasonable to calculate the percent of income between 5000 CNY to 10000 CNY according to formula: $52.38\%/7 \times 5 = 37.4\%$. As a result, consumers who have their monthly income lower than 5000 CNY share around $(52.38\% - 37.4\% + 12.24\%) = 27.22\%$ of the total number of consumers. This indicates that about 72% of craft beer consumers are from Chinese middle-class among which a few might be positioned in the higher class. Matching with the income structure, the occupations are majored in manager/entrepreneur, white-collar workers and freelance while blue-collar which are recognized as lower-income class in China is nearly absent in this segment.

At last, there are only 15.65% of consumers who don't hold a college degree, this points that the craft beer is mainly demanded by consumers who have relatively high educational level which influences on their certain demands and desires for quality life and cultural taste, etc.

Comparing this structure with the western world, such as in the study by Gómez-Corona et al. (2016), the overall demographic feature is similar, except that the consumer segment in China is narrower than that in the western world, for instance, Mexican female consumers take part

of around 40% and their lower income consumers come up to 33%. As craft beer has just been introduced to China for a few years, it is not difficult to understand the consumer segment currently is narrowed than other countries which have a longer history in this industry.

4.1.2 Identities, tastes and lifestyle

The strongly directive and narrow segment with outstanding characteristics enables the consumers within this group to have a strong sense of group belongingness in terms of identities, tastes and lifestyle, they are viewed as seekers or maker of these symbols (Grayson and Martinec 2004; Holt 2002).

Identity

It is always not easy to make an interview question to explore everything about a consumer's sense of his/her identity. On the one hand, this sense is not always explicit and clear for the consumer (Belk 1988; McCracken 1986). On the other hand, it is not a direct question to ask. So when I tried to ask some structural questions and contrast questions to elite their impression about, for instance, craft beer drinkers, it figured out that most of the informants are having some positive perceptions about the craft beer consumers' overall quality. This quality includes their financial status; educational or cultured level, higher mental and material demands; their attitude towards life; their taste; their ability to accept new things; as well as their broader vision and experience, etc. Meanwhile, according to the interview contents, they are just one of what they described, in other words, they are talking about themselves; they accept these features and have a sense of belongingness to it. Given two examples:

‘About the craft beer consumers in my social life scope, they have a better tolerance and spirit of sharing. Tolerance means they are easier to appreciate different tastes, different styles of craft beer; sharing means, for example, friends around me, like 30% to 40% of us actually like to go for a beer alone, then meet some acquaintances around the bar by coincidence and have some chat, it's quite free and tacit. Sometimes, if the beer bar is a newly opened one, that the publican is still not very professional and there is a consumer needs help, we would

help the publican to offer some tips, some recommendations for the consumer. This is a sharing process, it is not our job, just we feel that everyone deserves a glass of good wine, everyone gets what they look for.’ (Sha)

‘First of all, most of the craft beer consumers are people who pursue certain high quality of life; then we don’t have much financial pressure either. Overall it’s middle and upper classes of people’. (Yin)

This positive impression or reputation over a groups formulates identities that could be differentiated from other people in the mainstream market. Some consumers enter this group while their prior interests might not be the beer itself, rather, is more important to cultivate a lifestyle; a leisure time; belongingness; or self-expression, either for themselves or for others. However, the study also reveals that, the more a consumer immerge in the craft beer consumer culture, the more they tend to attach more individual values to their individual identities and produce heterogeneous identities to be further outstanding_(Chakor & Boubkr, 2009). A typical example here: Jiang feels himself is becoming quite an infusive person in the Craft beer field, through his active sharing drinking moments among group chat, and also works from time to time as a volunteer to organize different craft beer activities.

There are also a few consumers, however, show strong rational attitude towards the consumer culture and dislike the identity attached to them as a craft beer consumer. For example,

‘So how about the common features of craft beer consumers that you would say?’ (I asked)

‘I don’t judge people’s identity according to what they drink. Craft beer is not to distinguish people or show off a good taste. Just like the coffee, one should like it truly, rather to make oneself conspicuous by drinking this drinking. For me, drinking craft beer is a pure interest, nothing to do with social tasks, nothing to do with else.’ (Liu)

‘I don’t think that I drink craft beer in any purpose of wanting to be distinct. And I don’t feel necessary to think that I’m drinking craft beer so I’m having a better taste or likewise.’ (Lyu).

Taste and status

In craft beer consumption, one's sense of taste could be identified from two criteria. The first criterion is a taste about a 'better concept' of beer. The second criterion is about cultural and knowledge aspects, as well as the taste talent within the craft beer area.

Some consumers drink craft beer and don't drink ordinary beer as a principle, or drink ordinary beer as less often as possible. In this case, craft beer surpasses ordinary beer and becomes a symbol of better taste which further drives the consumer to find people with similar tastes for social.

In the other criterion, some consumers learn complex systems of taste evaluation to judge their aesthetic experiences of craft beer consumption, or status competition in this area. This taste ability can be realized through some professional training and lessons like informant Yin experienced; or simply born with the talent, like informant Xia mentioned. Most of them believe that both the taste ability and knowledge are important and hence have adopted a learning mode for themselves (Featherstone 2011, p18, p62; Maciel et al 2016). For these consumers, craft beers are called 'cultural commodities'.

Accordingly, taste is an important driving force for these people to consume the commodity and even becomes a reference for some of them to select friends, allowing the taste to judge and classify people (Bourdieu et al., 1984). In this case, the taste is also related to their sense of identity, both for themselves and for others.

Within this segment, a small portion of consumers (the bourgeoisie) may seek to increase the autonomy of the cultural field and resist moves towards a democratization of craft beer consumer culture (Featherstone, M., 2011, p82-92). Question 12 in the questionnaire gives the evidence that some consumers do not wish the popularization of craft beer in China, with reasons that it will lose its mystery, or that prevalence will cause vulgar (Xia). Nevertheless, there are just 5.44% of consumers choose No in question 12. This may indicate that consumers tend to social with other people who have similar tastes to form the consumer culture, but it doesn't necessarily mean the segment need to stay narrow. Sharing can help to

realize social value, which will be analyzed in further session when answering research question two.

Lifestyle

Following the sociological meaning of 'lifestyle' about the distinctive style of life of specific status groups (Weber, 1968; Sobel, 1982; Rojek, 1985), craft beer consumption enables consumers to quest for personal distinctiveness and autonomy in lifestyle choices. (Maffesoh's 1996). On the one hand, there are a more distinct taste and a spoken identity for craft beer consumers. On the other hand, the dining or drinking environment and atmosphere offered at the consumption places are usually favored by the consumers, like Yun's comments.

'As you mentioned, you don't have any addiction to alcohol, just want to have a different dinner or a more exquisite consumption way, does it mean craft beer is a decoration for your life?' (I wondered)

'For example, when I just want a nice dinner or a relaxing evening, I may feel like to have a glass of wine. Craft beer is not very expensive, yet has higher quality grade than ordinary beer. Besides, when the dinner isn't that formal, craft beer is much appropriate. One more example, if some friends want me to invite them for dinner or drinking next time, I think I will also go for craft beer place, in this way, the price performance is high, while the taste is not low. Especially if the friends haven't tasted craft beer before, it would be quite nice for me to take them there.' (Yun)

This message indicates that craft beer plays a role in a wanted lifestyle (here, dinner atmosphere for Yun) in the everyday life. Besides, through arranging a nice lifestyle for friends, Yun's own identity is also produced.

Within this craft beer consumer culture, the identity, tastes and life style are interrelated, when a consumer is seeking one of these symbols, they usually tend to seek the other two as well, and vice versa.

4.1.3 The changing drinking manner and habit

Chinese craft beer consumers behave a relatively better manner than general beer consumption. The major difference can be generalized in two aspects as reported by different informants and publicans through their observations on their consumers:

- 1) The consumers adapt a more restraining drinking manner and ingest less volume of beer and total alcohol at a time comparing with ordinary beer drinkers. This manner is cultivated both by the nature of craft beer which contains higher hop, ingredients, as well as alcohol contains that makes it difficult to tuck away largely, and the consumers' sense of lifestyle and identity, as well as the atmosphere and surroundings of craft beer consumption place which is often pleasing, comfortable and somewhat with aesthetic sense.
- 2) The drinking culture of craft beer nearly eliminate the negative drinking culture of ordinary beer through which people drink heavily due to the light taste and lagging awareness of total alcohol ingestion. A Chinese drinking culture such as 'bottle blowing', that the drinkers mean to drink up one bottle of beer at a time without using a glass, was eliminated in the craft beer consumption manner.

4.1.4 The impact of globalization and geography

Globalization is a key external factor facilitating the development of craft beer in China and it contributes to consumers' increasing demand and interest to experience foreign cultural meaning and symbolic global products. From the ethnographic study, consumers specially appreciate those western brands or breweries which are with good reputation and rich stories, such as Goose Island, Brewing Dog etc. Consuming them seems to offer a bicultural identity (Hermans and Dimaggio 2007) for some consumers. Normally, the thought of the consumers is that, beer as a foreign consumption commodity introducing to China, it doesn't make sense to motivate a local protective attitude towards the variety of options unless the local brand is indeed superior.

However, this consumer culture doesn't seem as homogeneity in China. To which degree the craft beer consumer culture is developing in different cities turn to be very different and uneven. This is the nature of China which has a large territory yet differentiated local culture in food and drinking and different developing progress for urban cities. Generally speaking,

Beijing as the political and cultural center of China, its craft beer consumer culture is the most prosperous one, probably equal to the sum of all the other cities (Commented by informant Xia who is a Beijing local). As reported by informant Sha, they like to visit several craft beer bars in Beijing in the same evening when they gathered together, and the distance between is convenient and comfortable, while in other geography except Shanghai, the total craft beer bars in a city are countable or just one or two. The next, cities near the coastline of China have better developing consumer cultures than those in the inland cities. In the rural area, simply no craft beer brick-and-mortar retailers are available. Relevantly, the interactions appear to be very different for different degree of consumer culture maturity as well, which will be further presented in related to research question three.

4.2 What consumer value do the craft beer consumers in China perceive and gain from their consumption?

4.2.1 Overview of factors from survey

Derived from the prior theoretical guide and my knowledge about craft, I have designed a multiple choices question to the questionnaire to gain a basic impression regarding the most critical reasons for the consumers to choose craft beer, which shall imply the relevant consumer value that they perceive and gain from the consumption. To present the result clearly, I use key words or coding instead of full sentences in Figure 8 as below. The options were written in full sentences and available in Appendix 2.

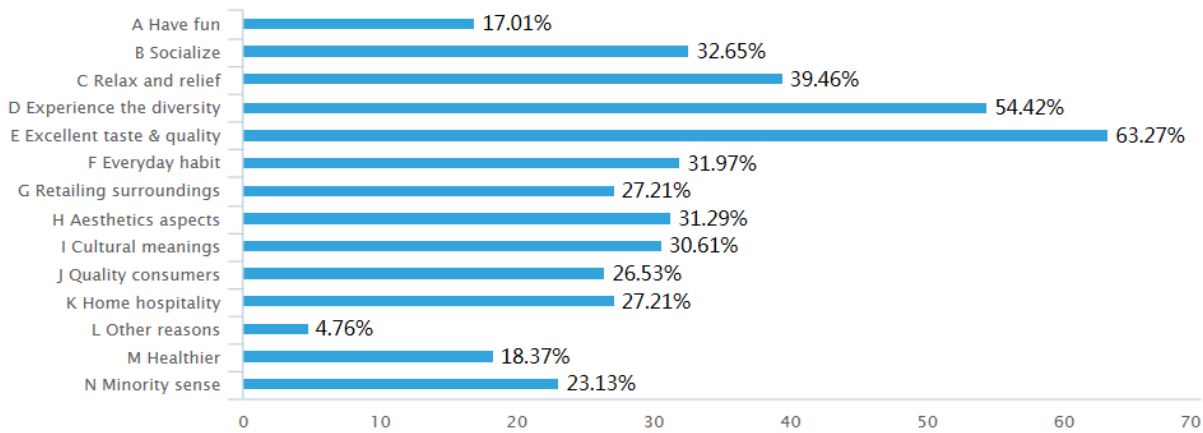


Figure 8: Overview of the main driving forces (Source: Survey)

Regarding the options in this question, two tests are performed before proceeding the analysis.

Trustworthiness

As mentioned in the methodology, some respondents of the questionnaire have left their contact information in question 15. Thus, their answers are traceable. Some weeks later I reached a small sample of them to fill out the question 9 once again through the same channel so that I compare their answers between two times and see the difference:

Table 5: Small test of trustworthiness of question 9 (Source: my own)

Respondent for this test	Answer in first time	Answer in second time	Difference 2-1
#1	B,C,D,E,F,H,I,K,M,N	C,D,E,F,H,K,L,M,N	-B
#2	E, F	C,E,F,I	+C, +I
#3	D,E,F,G,H,I,J,M,N	B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,M,N	+B,+C
#4	B,C,D,E,K	D,E,H,K	-B,-C,+H
#5	D,E,G,H,I,J	C,D,E,G,H,I,J	+C

Although this is a small sample, for larger sampling test is difficult to reach. It shows some instability of the answers such as in the hedonic criteria in B and C, but more stable in the quality and diversity of craft beer such as D and E. Reflects the weakness of this question design or the limits of the questionnaire in answering more complex research question accurately. This proves the significance of in-depth ethnography interviews in the next stage. However, after one month gap between two responding times, the fluctuation of the answers is still relatively stable and reasonable, which supports that the use of the questionnaire to gain an impression of relevant factors derived from the theory is valid.

Correlations between options

In case some factors might highly rely on other factors, the analysis may need to take both into account or analyze them together. Thus, a correlations test is performed through SPSS, while the 147 respondents' answers to question 9 are coded into Excel one by one, and the correlation results tested by SPSS are also kept for traceability. The test shows that majority of the correlations are lower than 0.3. A few have correlations between 0.3 to 0.5, such as E (Excellent taste and quality) and C (Relax and relief). And there are four correlations higher than 0.5:

D (Excellent taste and quality) and E (Experience the diversity), which is 0.59;

H (Aesthetics aspects) and M (Healthier drinking manner) have correlation at 0.504;

H (Aesthetics aspects) and I (Cultural meanings) receive the highest correlation at 0.68.

H (aesthetics aspects) also has a correlation with N (Minority sense) at 0.52.

Fundamentally, every correlated pair has been sorted under same consumer value when derived from the theory of consumer value (Sánchez-Fernández et al. 2009) without referring to the correlation results. Review the question design in Table 6 as below. Therefore, the correlation does not disturb the understanding and analysis on any consumer value, but the statistical results should be jointly considered.

Table 6: Link between theory and the questionnaire about consumer value (Source: my own)

value suggested by the theory	Choice in question 9
Efficiency	K (Shop online and keep at home), interview
Quality	D (variety of tastes and style), E (excellent taste and quality).
Social value	J (belongingness/build social network), G (surrounding & staff)
Play/Hedonic responses	A (have fun),B (socialize),C (Relax),K (hospitality) L (others)
Aesthetic value	G(retail surrounding) H (aesthetics designs), I (cultural experience), F(everyday habit), M(healthier manner), N(minority sense)
Altruistic value	K (Purchase for friends), interview

4.2.2 Consumer value in craft beer consumption

The six consumer value will be analyzed one by one in this session based on the quantitative results of question 9 and interviews.

Efficiency

Although there are some consumers purchase craft beer and reserve them at home either for themselves or for hospitality, it is not the 'Efficiency value' that they perceive and gain as the time and monetary costs spent on this purchasing process are more than buying industrial beer at any nearby grocery shops or online. Availability of craft beer in China is far lower than the industrial beer. There is seldom an evidence point at this consumer value for craft beer consumption. For instance, no one claims that they purchase craft beer just because there was one such retailer downstairs or so. However, efficiency is achievable through value co-creation, which will be further introduced in next sub-chapter in connection with research question three.

Quality

Generally, there are 63.27% consumers choose the excellent tastes and good quality of craft beer as essential reason, which makes it as the top factor. Experience the variety of craft beer is the second determinant factor according to the questionnaire chosen by 54.42% consumers. These two factors are correlated, from statistics test, correlation is 0.59; from logic, without the quality being approved and liked, it won't make much sense to enjoy the variety.

The quality value is explained as consumers' admire of the beer's potential ability to serve as a mean to a self-oriented end in the performance of some function, which has an emphasis on the utilitarian value (Holbrook 1996; Sánchez-Fernández et al. 2009). Hence, the quality value is achieved only when the consumption mission is successfully completed (Babin et al., 1994; Kang & Park-Poaps, 2010; Bakirtas et al., 2015). Accordingly, this kind of consumers do not care much about other meanings than the beer itself.

However, the appreciation of the variety of craft beer does not always point at the Utilitarian value. Rather, this could be described in two criteria:

The first criterion is about pure desires for the variety of tastes of craft beer (Utilitarian). Among those 54.42% of total consumers who choose the diversity of craft beer as a critical reason of their consumption, there are 40.74% of them choose cultural meanings as a critical consumption stimulus as well, leaving that 59.26% of them consider tastes experience only. That is to say, roughly, there is about 32.25% of total consumers fall into this criterion.

The second criterion is about the experience of not only the craft beer but also the cultural aspects. On average, 30.61% of total consumers consider that the rich cultural meaning in craft beer is one critical reason for their consumption which refers to the aesthetic value.

Social Value

When the consumers are using their consumption behavior towards the other-oriented end to make a favorable impression by others, or having a reactive appreciation of the prestige associated with one's possessions expressed in the consumption, social value is relevant, which often connected to symbolically oriented consumption behavior (Holbrook 1996; Sánchez-Fernández et al. 2009). This value is important for people who don't particularly appreciate the Utilitarian value of craft beer, and vice versa, consumers who perceive the Utilitarian value/Quality is the main reason of their consumption, are not likely to peruse social value as purpose. Among 39 survey respondents who choose option J in question 9 that looking for group belongingness, there were 28 persons choose Quality value as well. It implies a small portion of consumers (11 out of 147) in this case perceive that social value is a stimulus and they do not go for the utilitarian value/quality. Otherwise, the social value is more or less important for the consumers but not the prior motivation or determinant one for their consumption, as judged by the business owner, informant Ly. Social value could be increased through interactions with retailers and other consumers, which will be further discussed in next sub-chapter related to research question three as well.

Play/hedonic value

In the craft beer consumption, there are several aspects of hedonic responses (Yusof 2012), which is translated to play in the consumer value theory by Sánchez-Fernández et al. (2009). Several behaviors can realize the hedonic value according to Yusof (2012) including the followings:

- Having fun

This is relatively the lowest value (17.01% in questionnaire) among other aspects. It indicates that consumers usually have a quite clearer purpose or reason to consume craft beer other than just look for fun.

- Being social and making friends

Being social and making friends are an important hedonic response for many craft beer consumers. They are doing socialization and making friends through their craft beer consumption. On the one hand, the nature of beer as an accompany consumption object enables consumers to be outgoing and have a sharing spirit. Within a consumer's own social network, for instance, it is a good reason to have a glass of beer with their friends. When it comes to the question 11 regarding what time do the consumers usually consume craft beer, over half of total consumers will let it depend on their social life and activities. On the other hand, there are quite a several craft beer associations in China being active and accessible for the public craft beer consumers, such as 'Beijing Home Brewing Society', as well as different kinds of craft beer events held every year in different cities. Further, the publicans usually create a consumer group in the social media platform to gather their consumers for free communications and ideas exchange. Thus, consumers are easily involved in these social networks beyond their own social circle. As informant Jiang describes, he had never had a social network being as active as the craft beer one.

- Stress relief

Even higher than socialization, stress relief is chosen by nearly 40% of respondents as a critical reason for craft beer consumption. For the young working class in China, stress is almost inevitable, while the craft beer consumption is a moderate solution for them to release stress and be relaxed. Some consumers will go for a craft beer after work in workdays and in weekend, as a routine habit, some go there more randomly.

- Pursuing fashion trends

In the eyes of some young people in China, craft beer consumption is a quite fashionable behavior, thus some of them may have an attached identity of fashion when they consume craft beer, especially for those who do not consume often but more interested in a lifestyle. A representative comment to the open-up question in the questionnaire tells this motivation:

'Craft beer is a trend of fashion, with various changing tastes, makes people want to know more about it'. (Respondent No. 127)

- Shopping for other people

For the mentioned lifestyle seekers of consumers in above, their socialization through craft beer usually is completed at the craft beer places, thus, less often buy them home for hospitality reasons. For some other consumers who consume craft beer often on the one hand,

they shop craft beer home more often as well, while sometimes they shop home for hospitality reasons to prepare for friend visits.

- Excitement

The excitement here mainly refers to stimulation during the consumption process. Besides, the craft beer events or activities held by certain associations are perceived much exciting, for consumers could experience something new that they wouldn't experience the same way and the same beer brands at any other craft beer bars.

Overall, among the craft beer consumers in China, the hedonic value is concerned with positive word of mouth, emotional value, social life driving, and psychological satisfaction related to their overall consumption experience (Jones et al., 2006). There are 56% females choose the relaxing and stress relief as one consumption purpose, while for males, this is chosen by 36%, support the result by Gómez-Corona et al (2017).

Aesthetic value

Another fascination of craft beer is expressed regarding its aesthetic value. The crafting process gives more aesthetics feelings, while its logo and packaging designs are often stylish and stories rich. According to the experience of informants, many consumers become attractive in craft beer at first sight because of its appearance. Some other consumers make consumption decisions according to the logo designs and overall appearance of the beer as a habit. As an example, Sha believes that it is a good idea to use aesthetics criteria to attract a fresh consumer to start craft beer consumption. Even for himself, when he starts to taste some new beer, he will pick up a few bottles that have cool packaging which attract him at first sight, then start to read text information to determine if he wants to consume it. In the questionnaire, there is also a broad distribution among consumers with different consumption frequency to choose this option, on average 31.29% of total respondents.

There are consumers cultivate a hobby to collect the different aesthetics parts of the craft beer designs. Some collect the logo designs, some collect the capsules, and some collect the empty glasses such as informant Yin.

While the design of craft beer packaging is one aspect of aesthetic (the art), the cultural meanings attached to breweries and direct at countries of origin, the retailing surroundings, minority sense and consumers' better drinking manner, etc. would be relevant cultural offering contributing to the aesthetic value for the consumers through the consumption (Venkatesh & Meamber 2006). The several pairs of correlations among these factors also indicate the importance of this aesthetic value in the perception of craft beer consumers.

Altruistics value

A craft beer consumer's Altruistics value is often realized through interactions with others, This will be further analyzed in the next sub-chapter in related to the research question three.

4.3 How are the dynamic consumer values realized through value co-creation process and connected with the consumer culture?

According to the previous analysis, the main value that craft beer consumers perceive and gain from craft beer consumption mainly cover most of the consumer value defined by Sánchez-Fernández et al. (2009) but some of them rely on further value co-creation. As illustrated in Figure 9 below, the self-orientated value in terms of Quality, Play and Aesthetics value are dominant values for a large proportion of consumers to choose craft beer, hence, they are viewed as initial stimulus or driving forces for the craft beer consumption, especially the Quality value which stimulates up to 63.27% consumers. The Efficiency, social value, altruistic value and Hedonic value in terms of 'being social and making friends' usually require for value co-creation and interactions to gain. All these value will be further discussed in this session in the context of consumer culture and in related to value co-creation process.

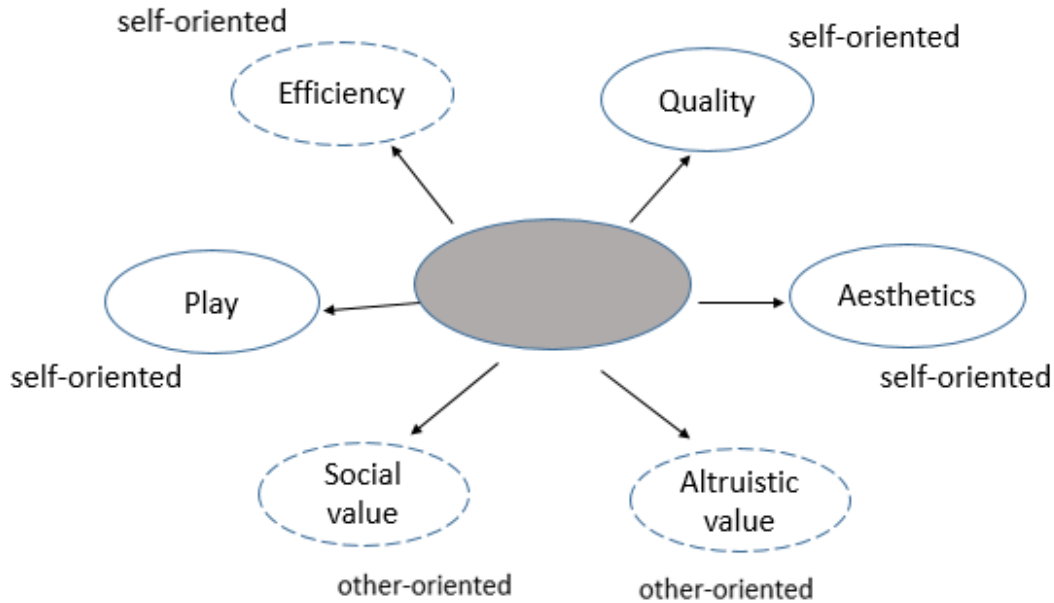


Figure 9: Overall consumer value gained in craft beer consumption and value-co-creation (Source: adopted from Sánchez-Fernández, et al. 2009)

4.3.1 The context of consumer culture.

The studies show an important link between the dynamic consumer values and consumer culture analyzed in last two session. Overall, it reveals that an appropriate context for value co-creation to be carried out, especially the consumer-to-consumer interactions, is a context where the relevant consumer culture is well communicated and developed. In more details:

First, the consumers tend to actively exchange resources especially operant resources with each other when they feel like they are among ‘right’ people who have similar taste, life style and status in the socio-cultural society. In a context where the symbolic images of consumer culture for craft beer have been communicated and developed sufficiently, the consumer-to-consumer interactions happen naturally and are more actively and vice versa. For example, the craft beer consumer culture in Beijing has been developed very well and much better than other cities in terms of number of crat beer retailers/bars, consumers’ knowledge on the products, craft beer activities/festivals, and craft beer associations and so on. The Wechat consumer groups in Beijing are the most active ones which often create several times more messages and conversations to exchange resources among members than a group with similar size but based on another smaller city. Consumers in some other cities where the consumer

culture for craft beer were not sufficiently built tend to be more passive in the interactions as well. Instead of freely exchange resources, they are more often just receiving value propositions from the retailers (one-way informing instead of two-ways interaction).

Second, it becomes more difficult or frustrated to co-creation value with a consumer who doesn't belong to the craft beer consumer segment which was figured out in 4.1.1.

Informant Lyu was frustrated in his experience to recommend a craft beer to his father and his father's colleagues. Because they concluded that it's a beer tastes too bitter and unacceptable. Lyu has never recommended any craft beer to anyone else or positively seek for other consumer-to-consumer interactions since then.

Third, craft beer consumer culture is changing the way of interactions among drinker, which further influences on the Chinese alcohol drinking culture. In the mainstream of Chinese drinking culture, their main interactions is to urge others to drink more, while in the craft beer culture, this habit is to some extent eliminated. The utilitarian value of alcohol plays a smaller role in the craft beer consumption interactions.

4.3.2 The inter-relation between consumer value and value co-creation activities.

Consumer value is stimulus for value co-creation behaviors and often determine the role that the consumers are likely to play in their value co-creation process, as a result, the consumer value is increased and/or additional value is generated as an outcome of the co-creation ((Babin, Darden & Driffin 1994; Agrawal and Rahman, 2015).

First, consumers who have an emphasis on Quality value tend to actively interact with retailer through the role of Co-tester. Because co-testers will need to taste different newly designed craft beers and rate for them. This co-creation activity adds the utilitarian/quality value for the consumers. Meanwhile, these consumers who still focuses on quality and utilitarian value are not particularly interested in consumer-to-consumer interactions of value co-creation. It also

means the social value in their motivation is almost missing. As a result, they are risky to drink too much and too often along with the growing of addiction to alcohol. A co-relation between Quality appreciation and consumption frequency exists: the desires for experiencing the variety of craft beer increase as the function of the consumption frequency. These could be viewed in Table 7:

Table 7: Two driving forces as a function of consumption frequency (Source: Survey)

Frequency/driving forces	Experience of the variety	Excellent tastes & quality
Rarely	0%	50%
A few times in total	38.46%	46.15%
Sometimes	48.84%	48.84%
Frequently	59.68%	70.97%
Almost every day	66.67%	74.07%

This finding implies that, when the consumers experience more and consume more often, their satisfaction is more likely to rely on the quality value. Here is an example described by Lyu about such desires-inducing consumption:

‘I go to experience as many as possible like doing my ‘stamps collection,’ I could accept all kinds of styles, and brands. It’s purely tasteful that satisfies me, and the variety of this drinking that fills me so much feeling. Regarding the cultural meanings and spirits behind it, I don’t think I care that much.’ (Lyu)

As already referred in the introduction chapter, Lyu also has little interest to recommend or share with others regarding his consumption, empirical evidences figure out that consumers who state an emphasis on the quality or utilitarian value of alcohol consumption are more liable to lighten other consumer value such as social value, aesthetic value, and altruistic value. What’s more, utilitarian value seekers suffer a higher risk of overtaken alcohol ingestion each time they consume the beer. Several informants that have an emphasis on the quality value, give an appreciative comment on the feelings of getting drunk or somewhat drunk. Lyu mentioned that one out of ten times when he consume craft beer, he will get drunk easily for the appreciation of the taste. To the contrary, consumers who particularly seek or create other value turn to have a serious critical on alcohol abuse or inappropriate amount of ingestion for getting drunk. Both on themselves and on others:

‘Once I have tasted a beer, commented on it and probably written down the review, the consumption is completed, I seldom drink that beer twice after that.’ (Xia)

‘I sometimes feel like to make friends and learn about a person through wine, our Chinese have a proverb – ‘drinking behavior tells about character’, wine is a media to deliver these signals to me. It is not a problem that one likes drinking (wine), however, one should have strict self-control. If three bottles are your best volume and you already know it, why would you take the forth? If I really need to be a friend of these people, I will leave the place or try to stop it as soon as I see that he/she starts to abuse.’ (Zheng)

Second, consumers who weight more for the social value plays an important role of co-ideator, co-promoter and co-consumer. They view the other-oriented social value importantly and in their everyday life, they tend to influence some retailers and other consumers through the operant resources that they can offer, such as their experience, professions, knowledge on products and skills of writing a review, etc. Their social value is maximized as an output as they become a popular and influential figure in the branch and receive esteem status and particular respects from others.

‘Among consumers who do not work in this industry, I’m probably the most knowledgeable one on craft beer, because whatever cultural products I like, I usually dive into it. Friends in the branch call me Master Xia, and the retailers invite me as a consultant (not the commercial one) to give advice for their products selection, retail scape design and some other business ideas.’ (Xia)

Meanwhile, Xia is also one of the most active consumer in the Wechat group and his personal timeline to offer information and reviews about the craft beer.

Third, some consumers motivate to create the altruistic value through the role of co-promoter. One example is provided by informant Xu:

‘Sometime I actually spend my own money to make opportunities for other beer consumers to choose craft beer instead of industrial beer. Thus, I buy craft beer at my own expense for them

to enable them to gain a broader cognition towards beer and beer culture. I often do it this way, and indeed bring many people around me into this craft beer group'. (Xu)

Therefore, according to Xu's opinion, he is expecting other beer consumers to know more about craft beer and get additional aesthetics value. Some consumers may not spend monetary costs-the operand resources directly for others in order to gain the Altruistic value, however, they may also spend operant resources, such as time, knowledge, experience to influence on others and gain Altruistic value along with their own consumption.

At last, value co-creation enable the achievement of economic efficiency and brings additional hedonic value (Play) through other roles such as co-consumer, an example is the weekly meeting held by Yin:

'I usually public the information to gather some close friends or new friends for a weekly meeting in which we pay less money and taste more great beers together, meanwhile we share our experience, exchange our opinions and learn new things and have more fun.' (Yin).

5. Conclusions and reflections

This chapter presents the conclusions from the main findings through analysis and summarizes answers to the research questions. The contribution to research and practical implications for society are discussed as well. In the end, possible further research in the relevant field is proposed.

5.1 Conclusions

This thesis achieves its research aim through an intensive ethnographic study. Consumers in wine industry are better understood from a value-based perspective and service-informed logic. Consumer value that means a lot for a consumer and retailers is comprehensively studied and the ways how it stimulates a consumer's consumption behavior as well as how dynamic value can be realized through value co-creation process is well analyzed and interpreted in relation to the role that consumer culture plays. Highly concern was also paid to the difference between quality value seekers and other value appreciators, with a faith in the construction of a healthier alcohol consumer culture and better consumption behaviors where the dynamic values other than utilitarian value are addressed, emphasized, and encouraged. In more details, the thesis answers three research questions through the followings:

1) The consumer culture of craft beer consumption in China is revealed: The craft beer consumers in China are having strong directivity in physical aspects, financial standing points, and sociocultural perspectives. Majority of them are from young males, well-educated and well-being social class. The consumers turn to appreciate the identity, distinct life style and taste bringing from craft beer consumption. The consumers also behave a relatively better manner with less alcohol ingestion and better quality of interactions. Meanwhile, the globalization is outperforming the localization of craft beer in China, yet different cities have a significant different degree of development of the consumer culture.

2) From the findings, it is figured out that the Quality value, Aesthetics value and Hedonic value are main stimulus for craft beer consumption. Value co-creation that performed mainly through the consumer roles of Co-tester, Co-ideator, Co-promoter and Co-consumer can

further generate Social value, Aesthetics value, Altruistic value and Efficiency, while the quality value and hedonic value is also increased after value co-creation. An emphasize on quality and utilitarian value leads to a higher risk of alcohol abuse in terms of consumption frequency and amount of ingestion each time, while dynamic value through value co-creation reduces this risk. It's worthy to address that Aesthetics value could have been co-created through the role of Co-designer according to some informants, however, there is still rare propositioning for this.

3) The consumer-to-consumer interactions particularly require for an appropriate consumer culture as the interaction background or context. On the one hand, a consumer is more open to others who seem to have similar taste, life style, recognized identity. On the one hand, interactions with a consumer outside the segment or in the context of under-developed consumer culture can result in failure and frustration in the co-creation experience.

Accordingly, this study achieves several solid contributions for the research and society, which are further addressed in coming two sessions.

5.2 Contribution for research

The study contributes to service-dominant of marketing and retail management in the field of consumer culture, consumer value and value co-creation. First, inspired from previous theories that consumer culture facilitates social relationships for individuals who have similar tastes (Kyle Puetz 2015), and that relationships quality significantly influence consumer's intention to co-create brand value (Tajvidi et al. 2017), this study collects empirical evidence to prove that the consumer culture is as important as an enabler for active value co-creation. Within a sufficiently developed context of consumer culture where the symbolic images, texts, meanings, as well as a collective sense of the environments are communicated, the consumers and retailers will be able to conduct the two-way interactions more easily and smoothly, and carry out value co-creation activities successfully. Second, this study spends effort in analyzing the consumer value generated in alcohol consumption and value-co-creation activities. It answers the call by Dunder (2017) to conduct a study beyond game industry to compare how consumer value shapes consumers' value co-creation interactions and as a result it reveals that the Efficiency, Social value, Altruistic value and Hedonic values are key consumer value stimulates the consumer-to-consumer interactions in the alcohol

consumption through Co-promoter and Co-consumer, while Utilitarian value and social value stimulates consumers to play a role in consumer-seller interactions through Co-tester and Co-ideator. Hence, it also complements to the findings by Agrawal and Rahman (2015) as well as Giuseppe et al. (2017) to examine what roles consumers play in value co-creation process in the food and beverage industry which craft beer belongs to and extends it to a consumer value-based study. More importantly, this study reaches the research aim – to fill the research gap in alcohol consumption through the service-dominant logic and value-based discussion, and explore dynamic consumer values beyond the utilitarian one in the alcohol consumption, which are achievable through value co-creation and within the context of consumer culture. Thus a theoretical and analytical support for service management for a healthier wine industry and a society with more rational alcohol marketing activities and consumption behaviors is offered. The implications to society and service management in the alcohol industry will be addressed in next session 5.3.

5.3 Implications for society

On the one hand, insufficient or inappropriate value co-creation could constrain the consumer value much in the utilitarian aspect. When it's about the alcohol consumption, this may easier result in addiction to alcohol and irrational alcohol ingestion that affect the consumer's health and cause social issues. On the other hand, an emphasis on other values such as social value, aesthetics value and play through value proposition and co-creation may help to weaken the utilitarian value and reduce the consumption frequency or alcohol ingestion per time. Because an esteem status that win these consumer value is being knowledgeable in the wine culture and cultivated with good tastes meanwhile does appreciate alcohol abuse in the consumption. A focus on value-based marketing would help to improve the alcohol drinking culture, encourage more rational drinking habits and create a better drinking atmosphere for consumers. More possible value positioning is also achievable through value co-creation and expected by some informants, such as the Co-designer for aesthetics aspect of the product to realize consumers' aesthetics value.

Additionally, this study also implies that, retailers could spend effort to attach more symbolic elements to products and enrich a consumer culture to facilitate value co-creation among consumers and become more competitive through successful value proposition and co-

creation. If retailers start new business, it is also important to analyze the consumer culture, choose the right location to start the business, then gather relevant consumers to form an interactive social group. Retailers also need to prevent inappropriate value co-creation activities which may frustrate the consumers.

In the end, two informants of this study are from the craft beer business field, showing certain interest in this result. As stated earlier, my study primarily aims to contribute to the research and society, yet it this study also has a potential to help the business people to progress the craft beer branch in China while the growth of craft beer industry will be able to create more positions for Chinese labor market in different fields such as brewing, retailing, media, marketing, designers and so on.

5.4 Limitations and further research

This research is mainly conducted in a value-based ethnographic study with method of coding for analysis. Consumer value is referred to the models mainly offered by Holbrook (1999, p12), and Sánchez-Fernández et al. (2009). There are different ways to define value and consumer value, which becomes a limitation of this study without revealing other possible value. Similarly, the outcome of value co-creation is also dynamic and not limit to value. There are also satisfaction, learning, and experience etc. considered as value co-creation achievements for consumers (Agrawal and Rahman 2015), which were not particularly discussed either as this research primarily intends to have a focus on value-based perspective. Additionally, the craft beer is a niche mark

et in the wine industry. A generalization of the findings in the broader industry will be the most appreciated further research, and if appropriate, also include the discussion of more possible value, experience and satisfactions as the value co-creation achievements.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 Questionnaire

First, briefly introduce what the survey is about, and the study purpose.

1 What is your gender?

A Male

B Female

C Other

2 How old are you?

A Younger than 18

B 18-24

C 25-34

D 35-44

E 45-54

F 55 or older

3. What is your current occupation?

A Enterprise or manager

B White-collar worker

C Blue-collar worker

D Self-employed

E Freelance

F Housewife or unemployed

G Student

H Other _____.

4 What is your educational background?

- A High school or lower
- B 3 years-bachelor degree
- C 4 years-bachelor degree
- D Higher than bachelor degree

5 Which of the followings represents your current monthly incomes?

- A 3000 CNY or less
- B 3001-10000 CNY
- C 10001-15000 CNY
- D 15001-20000 CNY
- E 20001-30000 CNY
- F 30001 CNY or more

6 How long has it been since you knew about craft beer?

- A Less than 6 months
- B 6 months to one year
- C One to two years
- D Two to three years
- E More than 3 years

7 How did you know about craft beer for the first time?

- A In another country
- B Been told by friends
- C In a beer event
- D Through internet
- E Tasted it at the bar
- F Other answers _____.

8 How often do you usually consume craft beer?

A Almost never

B A few times in total

C Sometimes

D Frequently

E Almost every day

9 what are the most critical reasons that you choose to consume craft beer? (Multiple options allowed)

A Have fun

B Accompany, social life, or make new friends

C Relax and relief

D I like the various choices of craft beer

E I like the good taste and high quality of craft beer.

F Tasting craft beer has become a habit in my everyday life.

G I like the environment and settings, and quality of staff at the craft beer consumption place.

H Craft beer shows certain aesthetics values in its craft process and design aspects.

I Craft beer is a culture carrier, leads me to experience regional cultures in a way.

J Overall, the craft beer consumers have good quality and tastes, I like to joint them or build social network with them.

K Sometimes I also like to shop online and keep some craft beer at home either for myself or prepare for friends visiting.

L Other reasons _____.

M Craft beer cultivates the spirit of drinking well and drinking less, which is relatively healthier.

N Craft beer can be regarded as minority and independent consumption goods, I like it's uncommon.

10 How long do you usually stay at the consumption place when you taste craft beer?

A Less than 1 hour

B 1 to 2 hours

C 2 to 3 hours

D 3 to 5 hours

E Longer, often until the closing time

F I choose to shop online or take-away more often

11 What time do you usually consume craft beer?

A After work at the workdays

B During the weekend

C During vacations

D Depends on my social life and activities

E Other times _____.

12 Basically, do you wish that craft beer becomes a mainstreamed product in China one day in the future? Which means the availability, accessibility would be much better than present, and meanwhile, anyone might become a craft beer consumer or aficionado?

A Yes, because _____.

B No, because _____.

C It doesn't sound much realistic

D I don't really care

E I'm not sure

F Other answers _____.

13 Is there other information you would like to add or share regarding craft beer?

_____. (Within 1000 words)

14 Is there other information you want to add or feedback about this questionnaire?

_____. (Within 200 words)

15 At last, I wish to interview a few craft beer consumers, and/or aficionados (no restriction on geographic locations, we could use social media such as 'Wechat' to conduct this one-to-one interview which might take around 45 minutes) with purpose to learn your consumption experience and opinions to build data base for my research. Your personal information will be highly protected, and you have the right to know more about the purpose, even the results of the study. If this sounds interesting for you, kindly fill in below with your contact information. I will get to contact you ASAP. Thank you!

Appendix 2 Semi-structured interview guide

First, greeting; introduce each other; communicate the ethnographic study purpose.

- Do you still remember the first time you knew about craft beer, what aspects does it different from industrial beer, and how have you become a craft beer consumer/aficionado after that? do you still drink industrial beer sometimes? For what reason?
- Would you like to describe a normal event when you consume craft beer, (e.g. reasons to consume, with whom, which place, how do you guys usually order, and what you like to talk, how much you usually drink, and how long you usually stay?) How is the consumption experience comparing with other non-craft beer alcohol consumption that you had experienced/heard?
- There is much diversified craft beer, countless microbrewery, bringing different tastes and designs, how do you sort out and determine what you like, and what you don't? How do you usually share it with others?
- Would you please describe your main interactions with other consumers or retailers in the craft beer industry?
- How do you influence other people around you who still don't know or haven't tasted craft beer? How is it going, and what does it mean for you? Are there any other changes in your social life after you become one member of craft beer consumers/aficionados?

- How do you consider the relation between alcohol consumption and one's health?
- Does it make sense whether it's a domestic brand or a foreign brand? Any other comments about this criterion?
- How often do you usually get drunk, and why?

Is there anything else you would like to add or inform me?

At last, thanks for the interview and tell that the report could be available for the informant if interested in.