After a thorough analysis of the article by Martinsons & Westwood (1997), the acceptance and use of management information systems (MIS) within Chinese business culture is extremely low. The main ideas discussed by Martinsons & Westwood (1997) are a key difference in philosophy between Western and Chinese society’s values and beliefs. Furthermore, Martinsons & Westwood (1997) consider impacts between values and beliefs on the individual and society as a whole. In conclusion Martinsons & Westwood (1997) reveal the implications in differences may have with the increase of globalisation and cross-cultural dealings.

The important questions that need to be answered surrounding this are does the acceptance or use of MIS depend on culture or society? Within this culture or society do other individuals or organisations play a key role in the acceptance and use of these systems? Will the growth in cross-cultural organisational dealings influence change in the level of acceptance and use? In Martinsons & Westwood (1997) article this seems to be the case.

The combination of Western beliefs and values gives justification for MIS within Western society organisations. Martinsons & Westwood (1997) state the beliefs with a Western society are a formal organisation, impersonal interaction, democratic tradition and a firm relationship with environment - ‘man can control nature’. This is justified by showing a direct relationship between the beliefs and values of Western society and characteristics of a good MIS. For this reason Western society organisations can successfully conduct adequate business planning.

However, the beliefs and values of Chinese society differ quite substantially to that of their Western counterpart. Martinsons & Westwood (1997) uses the same comparison aforementioned to compare the beliefs and values and characteristics of MIS. Martinsons & Westwood (1997) state the beliefs with a Chinese society are personal relationships, trust is preferred when business information is to be shared, decision making is centralized due to the power hierarchy, intuition and experience is shared more willingly than research or information sharing, information tends to be a major instrument of personal power and people within the society should adapt to the environment.

When Chinese organisations conduct business planning, the process relies on prior knowledge, experience and tuition rather than the individual knowledge or information. When an issue arises, rather than seeking information from lower level individuals or other external avenues the Chinese merely use the aforementioned values and beliefs. For this reason Martinsons &
Westwood (1997) believe that the use and acceptance of MIS within Chinese society is substantially lower than that of their Western counterparts.

Martinsons & Westwood (1997) have written a well structured, clearly understandable and moderately easy to read article. The article has been written in a logical sequence, starting from an introduction into the Chinese global business influence, the Western and Chinese culture and it values and beliefs, the impact of these values and beliefs on individuals within the culture as well external organisation who having dealings with them. Finally Martinsons & Westwood (1997) mention how moving into the future with factors such as globalisation and cross-cultural dealings will eventually effect either the Chinese organisations or the organisations that have dealings with them.

Martinsons & Westwood (1997) have used a language that is suitable for this type of article, which makes the article moderately easy to read. Martinsons & Westwood (1997) have targeted the article to knowledgeable audiences with knowledge in either business or information technology, allowing a greater understanding of the content. Martinsons & Westwood (1997) when explaining Chinese business culture utilize adequate language as well as tables to help the reader gather a greater understanding. For these reason a clear understanding of the level of acceptance and use by Chinese organisations can be gained by the reader.

Martinsons & Westwood (1997) both come from similar academic backgrounds allowing them to have similar values on Chinese business culture. Martinsons himself, an Associate Professor of Business and Management at the University of Hong Kong with major studies in strategic management, it-enabled organizational change and cross-culture technology transfer. For these reasons Martinsons is a reputable author of a moderate standard for writing this article. Westwood is from similar background as Martinsons, although Westwood has been a resident in the Asia-Pacific region for the last 13 years. Both Martinsons & Westwood (1997) are reputable sources, though with Martisons expert knowledge, and Westwood’s inter personal knowledge, they form a knowledgeable and reputable source.

Contradictive to Martinsons & Westwood (1997), C. Sheu et al. (2004) article entitled ‘National differences and ERP implementation: issues and challenges’, states that country’s with
the Chinese society such as Taiwan and China there is a close link between culture and language. Additionally C. Sheu et al. (2004) survey discovered that implementation within Chinese Society took approximately a third less time than that of their Western counterparts, hence showing that within Chinese society acceptance and use of information systems can be achieved.

C. Sheu et al. (2004) study ‘reviewed several issues critical to the success of international ERP implementation.’ C. Sheu et al. (2004) survey criteria consisted of six main cultural differences and the impact this had on the implementation. The criteria was formulated by six key aspects; culture/language, management style, government/cooperate politics, regulations/legal requirements, internal technical/personal resource/labor skills and geography/time zone. Chinese society fairing best in culture language and management style and failing due to diplomatic relationship in Government/corporate politics as well as a lack of IT technical based skills.

However Engestrom & Hong (2004) article ‘Changing principles of communication between Chinese manager and workers’ argues, that problems in communication are reinforced by Chinese culture is largely reported in western literature. Although Engestrom & Hong (2004) argue what has been documented by the Western literature has a strong emphasis on negatives of Chinese business culture. Engestrom & Hong (2004) use the example of Guanxi, and his philosophy; the respect for authority, age and social norms to support their findings.

In summary Martinsons & Westwood (1997) article shows a clear and concise overview of Chinese business culture and its affect on MIS’s. Martinsons & Westwood (1997) article has a good flow of logical aspects as well as using concise language to express their findings. All relevant material surrounding the study has been included although some findings have been contradicted by C. Sheu et al. (2004) study. Due to the back up from Engestrom & Hong (2004) as well as Martinsons & Westwood (1997) being of reputable backgrounds, the acceptance and use of MIS at the present time is extremely low.
Reference List

