GLOBAL V TABOO TRACKER 2020



We are committed to creating a world where women can live the life they want by breaking the taboos that can hold

But we know this is no in our societies is endemic and embedded.

We won't stop until taboos have been challenged, understood and accepted by society.





BY SHOWING SINGING



VULVAS, WE WANTED TO HELP



WOMEN UNDERSTAND THAT



THEY NEEDN'T BE ASHAMED OF THEIR INTIMATE AREAS.



BY SHOWING WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES, WE WANTED TO GIVE A VOICE TO THE UNSEEN, UNSPOKEN AND UNKNOWN TRUTHS ABOUT WOMEN'S BODIES.

We've created the **Global V Taboo Tracker** to help women break free from the V-Zone* discrimination that can bring shame, pressure and embarrassment to their daily lives.

We are listening to the experiences of taboos to drive institutional change across the world, tracking and representing their experiences in an open and honest way, enabling cultural changes.

The Global V Taboo Tracker is a long-term commitment that will inform, inspire and help positively impact the conversation around women's V-Zone.

* The V-Zone is what we use to describe the vagina and vulva and the V-shaped front you can see. Everything inside your pants, that's the V-zone.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the strategic knowledge and framework developed by Kitchen8 to understand the nature of V-Zone taboos and how they affect women worldwide, Ketchum Analytics conducted an online survey among a total of 14,089 men and

women across seven
markets: the U.K., France,
Mexico, Argentina, Russia,
China, and Malaysia.

The survey was fielded between January 15th, 2020 and January 23rd, 2020.

The margin of error at a 95% confidence level is +/- .83%.





For this research we conducted secondary research and identified the benchmark at which a topic or action is generally considered a taboo is 20%, or one in five.

However, we understand that taboos do not always

affect everyone in the same way.

For us, if even one woman feels stigma or shame towards an issue, that's one woman too many.

Our ambition is to shine a light on these important issues and to not stop until all taboos have been tackled.





While 66% of women say that periods are being portrayed in adverts in a more normalised way, they are just as likely as men to hold taboos surrounding menstruation.

Moreover, a third of women and men both believe vaginal discharge is gross and further perpetuate taboos surrounding women's intimate area.

THE TOP TABOOS THAT MEN & WOMEN EQUALLY PERPETUATE:



54%
OF WOMEN AGREE

52%
OF MEN AGREE

PERIOD PAIN IS JUST SOMETHING WOMEN HAVE TO DEAL WITH

51% 52%OF WOMEN AGREE

OF MEN AGREE

WOMEN SHOULDN'T
HAVE SEX DURING THEIR
PERIOD BECAUSE
IT'S GROSS

45%
OF WOMEN AGREE

43%



33% OF WOMEN AGREE

32% OF MEN AGREE

WOMEN WHO HAVE SEX
WHEN ON THEIR PERIOD
ARE LOOSE SEXUALLY

29%
OF WOMEN AGREE

35% OF MEN AGREE

NOTES:

Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements?

Q: Indicate your level of agreement regarding current efforts in your country to improve perceptions of women's intimate areas?

BASE:

All women: n = 7,055 **All men:** n = 7,034

In an ideal world,
women and men would
both abandon societal
conventions about
womanhood.

However, there are instances where women continue to perpetuate taboos against themselves.

Although women hold these taboos, men continue to perpetuate the stigma.

THE TOP TABOOS THAT WOMEN ARE FUELING:

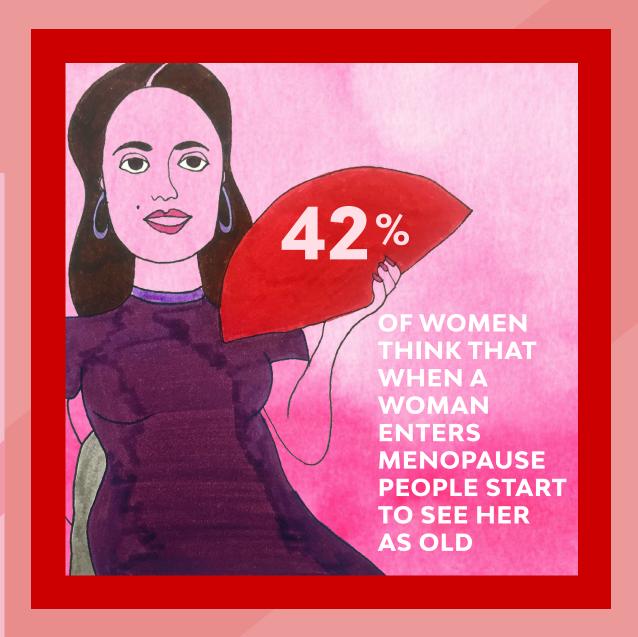
540 OF WOMEN AGREE

THAT WOMEN SHOULDN'T HAVE SEX DURING THEIR PERIOD BECAUSE IT'S UNHYGIENIC

45%

OF WOMEN AGREE

THAT WOMEN
SHOULDN'T HAVE SEX
DURING THEIR PERIOD
BECAUSE IT'S GROSS



NOTES:

Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements?

BASE:

All women: n=7,055

THE TOP TABOOS HELD BY MEN AGAINST WOMEN GLOBAL V TABOO TRACKER

In an ideal world,
women and men would
both abandon societal
conventions about
womanhood.

There are several instances where men hold these stigmatizing views, with menstruation featured in *three of the top five* taboos men perpetuate against women.

THE TOP TABOOS THAT MEN ARE FUELING:

52% OF MEN

SAY WOMEN SHOULDN'T

HAVE SEX DURING

THEIR PERIOD BECAUSE

IT'S UNHYGIENIC

51% OF MEN

AGREE IT IS

EMBARRASSING FOR WOMEN

TO TALK ABOUT THEIR

INTIMATE AREA OPENLY

43% OF MEN

AGREE THAT WOMEN

SHOULDN'T HAVE SEX

DURING THEIR PERIOD

BECAUSE IT'S GROSS

51% OF MEN

AGREE IT IS EMBARRASSING

FOR WOMEN TO

TALK ABOUT THEIR

MENSTRUATION OPENLY

32% OF MEN

AGREE IF A WOMAN

HAS AN ABORTION,

SHE SHOULD BE

ASHAMED OF HERSELF

NOTES:

Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements?

BASE:

All men: n=7,034

Women's intimate area causes the most shame and embarrassment for women.

One in two women find the subject embarrassing to discuss, with one in five women reporting feelings of shame attached to their intimate area.

THE TOP TABOOS AMONG WOMEN RELATED TO THEIR INTIMATE AREA:

5900

OF WOMEN

say it is embarrassing for a woman to talk openly about her intimate area

OF WOMEN

say they have felt the need to apologise for the way their intimate area looks or smells when being with a partner

OF WOMEN

say they have been shamed by their partner for the way their intimate area looks or smells



Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements'



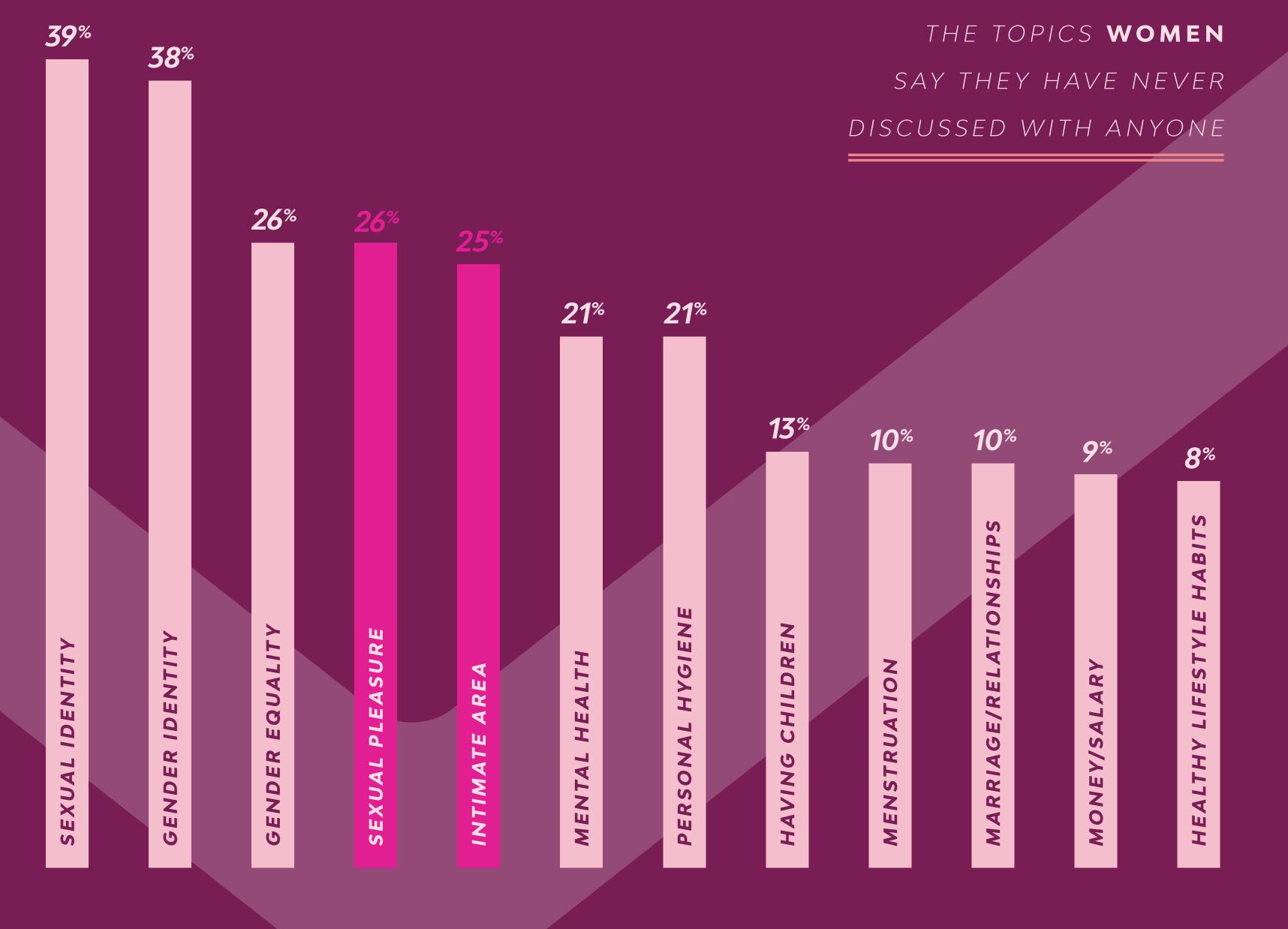
BASE:

All women: n = 7,055

A QUARTER OF WOMEN
SAY THEY HAVE NEVER
DISCUSSED THEIR
INTIMATE AREA OR SEXUAL
PLEASURE WITH ANYONE

There are some areas of a woman's physical and emotional wellbeing that she doesn't share with anyone.

A *quarter* of women have never discussed their own sexual pleasure and intimate area, more so than money/salary.



NOTES:

Q: Which of these have you ever discussed with..

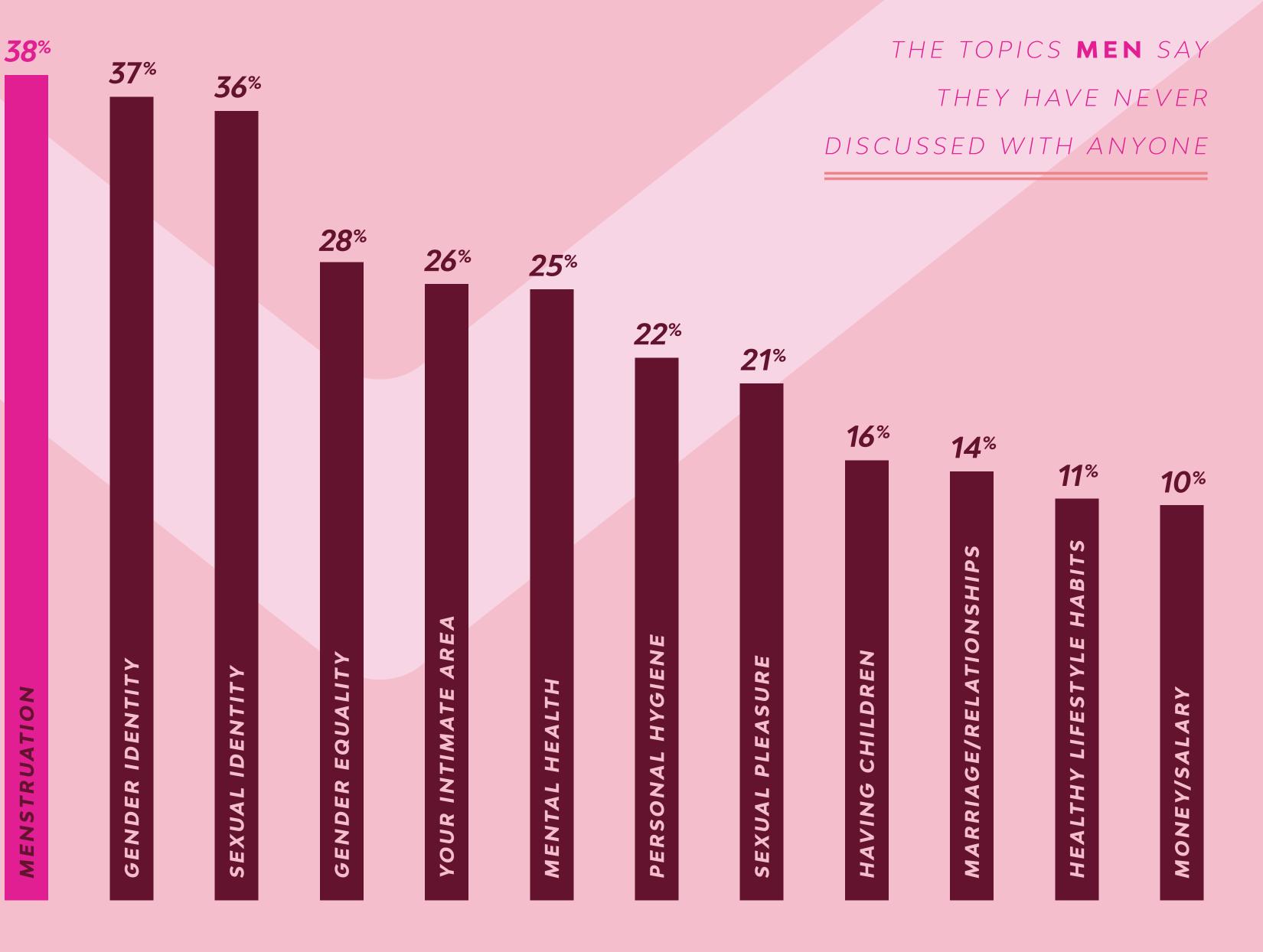
BASE:

All women: n = 7,055

OVER A THIRD OF MEN
HAVE NEVER DISCUSSED
MENSTRUATION WITH
ANYONE, MORE THAN THEIR
OWN MENTAL HEALTH

There are some topics men do not share with anyone.

Over a *third* of men have never discussed menstruation with anyone, even more so than their mental health or having children.



NOTES:

Q: Which of these have you ever discussed with...

BASE:

All men: n = 7,034

Despite most women and men saying that women should feel comfortable discussing period pain with others, this topic remains so taboo that only *two in five* women say they have discussed menstruation with their partner.

Likewise, only 43% of women say they have talked about their intimate area with their partner and only 56% have discussed sexual pleasure with their partner.

NOTES:

Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements?

ATTITUDES TO PERIOD PAIN:

71% OF WOMEN

& 59% OF MEN

AGREE THAT WOMEN SHOULD

FEEL COMFORTABLE TALKING

TO OTHERS ABOUT HOW

PAINFUL THEIR PERIOD IS

87% OF WOMEN

& 77% OF MEN

FEEL COMFORTABLE GOING TO

AGREE THAT WOMEN SHOULD

THEIR DOCTOR IF THEIR PERIOD

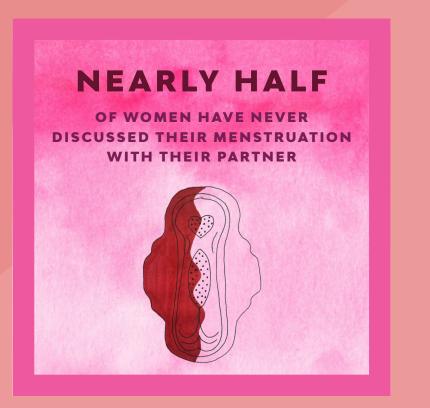
PAIN BECOMES UNBEARABLE



KEY TOPICS WOMEN SAY THEY HAVE DISCUSSED WITH THEIR PARTNER/SPOUSE:







BASE:

All men: n = 7,055 **All men:** n = 7,034

TABOOS AROUND MENOPAUSE

GLOBAL V TABOO TRACKER

Taboos around menopause and ageing are present globally.

Compared to men, women more often show more positive attitudes towards older women.

However, women also
perpetuate menopause
and ageing taboos as they
are more likely than men
to believe society sees
those who have entered
menopause as old.

TWO-FIFTHS OF WOMEN BELIEVE THAT SOCIETY SEES WOMEN WHO HAVE ENTERED MENOPAUSE AS OLD

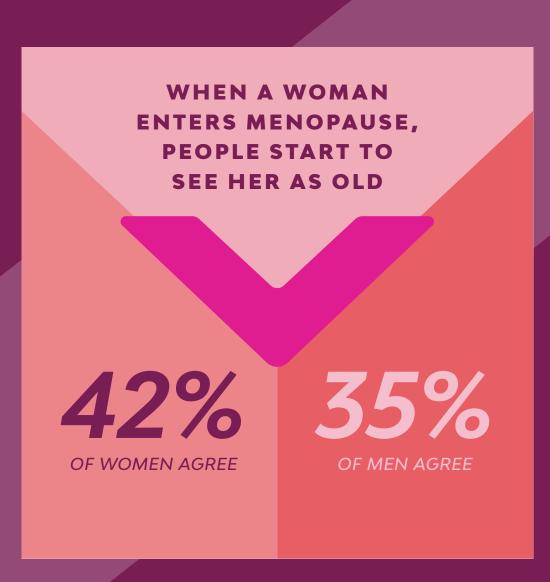
IF A WOMAN IS EXPERIENCING MENOPAUSE, SHE HAS LOST HER FEMININITY

75%
OF WOMEN DISAGREE

OLDER WOMEN SHOULD FEEL COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT THEIR PERIODS OR MENOPAUSE

71%
OF WOMEN AGREE

6 OF MEN AGREE



NOTES:

Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements?

All men: n=7,055 **All men:** n=7,034

GLOBAL V TABOO TRACKER

Globally, women face taboos every day.

However, the current
landscape showcases areas
of hope and progress as
women are embracing
themselves and their
bodies as well as seeing
periods being portrayed
in adverts in a more
normalised way.

WOMEN SHOULD NOT FEEL
ASHAMED FOR WANTING
TO EXPERIENCE PLEASURE
DURING SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

OF WOMEN AGREE

WOMEN HAVE

BECOME MORE

BODY POSITIVE

72%
OF WOMEN AGREE

WOMEN'S EQUALITY

HAS COME MORE INTO

FOCUS CULTURALLY

70%
OF WOMEN AGREE

PERIODS ARE BEING

PORTRAYED IN

ADVERTS IN A MORE

NORMALISED WAY

66% OF WOMEN AGREE ATTITUDES TO WOMEN'S

INTIMATE AREAS ARE

BECOMING MORE POSITIVE

IN YOUR COUNTRY

52%
OF WOMEN AGREE

NOTES:

Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements?

Q: Are attitudes about women's intimate areas becoming more or less positive in your country?

Q: Indicate your level of agreement regarding current efforts in your country to improve perceptions of women's intimate areas?

BASE:

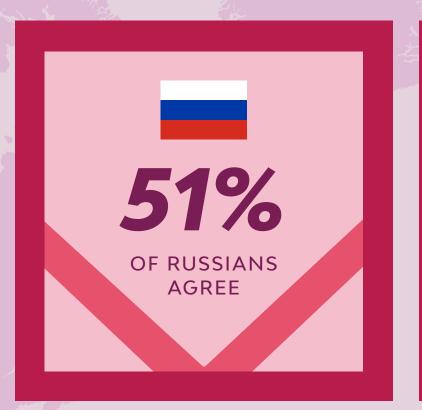
All women: n = 7,055

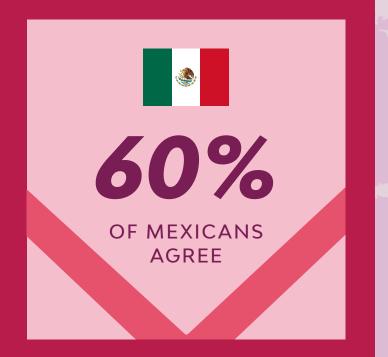
MARKET COMPARISONS

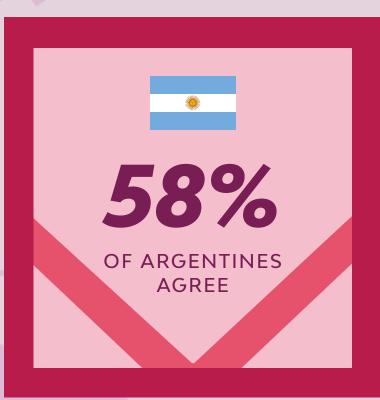
Latin American markets and portions of European markets are more likely to hold taboos regarding period pain, while Asian markets are more likely to hold prejudice toward period sex, deeming it unhygienic.

52% GLOBALLY

SAY THAT PERIOD PAIN IS JUST SOMETHING
WOMEN HAVE TO DEAL WITH









NOTES:

Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

- **Q:** To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements?
- **Q:** Are attitudes about women's intimate areas becoming more or less positive in your country?
- **Q:** Indicate your level of agreement regarding current efforts in your country to improve perceptions of women's intimate areas?

BASE:

Total (men and women): n = 14,089

Total Argentina (men and women): 2,017

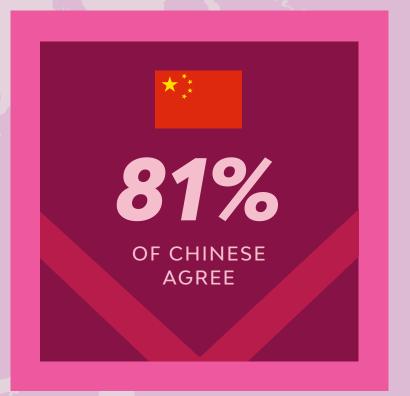
Total China (men and women): 2,002

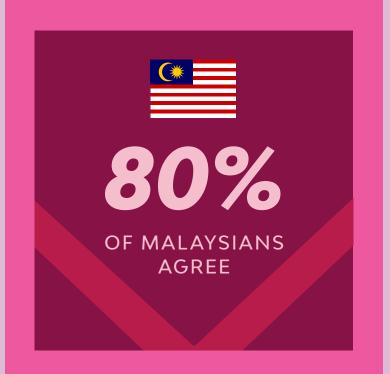
Total France (men and women): 2,006

Total Malaysia (men and women): 2,004
Total Mexico (men and women): 2,002
Total UK (men and women): 2,003
Total Russia (men and women): 2,055

53% GLOBALLY

SAY THAT WOMEN SHOULDN'T HAVE SEX DURING THEIR PERIOD BECAUSE IT'S UNHYGIENIC





24% GLOBALLY

SAY THEY'VE NEVER DISCUSSED
MENSTRUATION WITH ANYONE

30%
OF RUSSIANS
AGREE



Latin American markets
and the UK are more
accepting of older women
speaking openly about
their period or menopause.



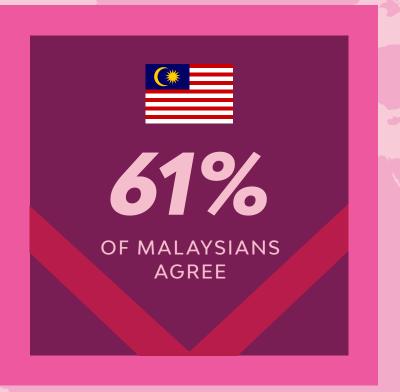


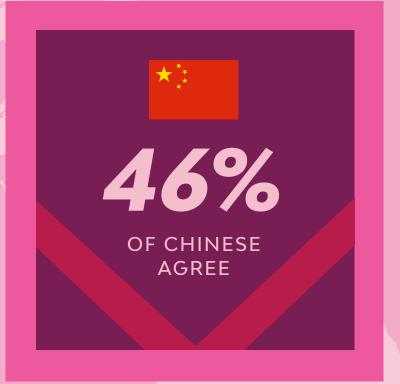


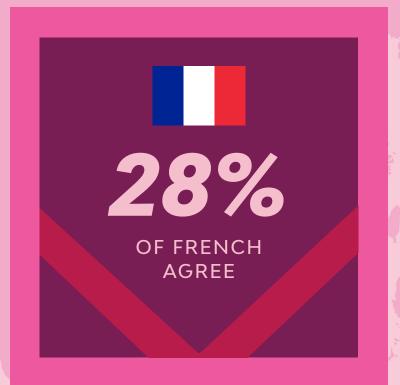
64% GLOBALLY AGREE

THAT OLDER WOMEN SHOULD FEEL COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT THEIR PERIODS OR MENOPAUSE









NOTES:

Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements?

BASE:

Total (men and women): n = 14,089

Total Argentina (men and women): 2,017

Total China (men and women): 2,002

Total France (men and women): 2,006

Total Malaysia (men and women): 2,004

Total Mexico (men and women): 2,002

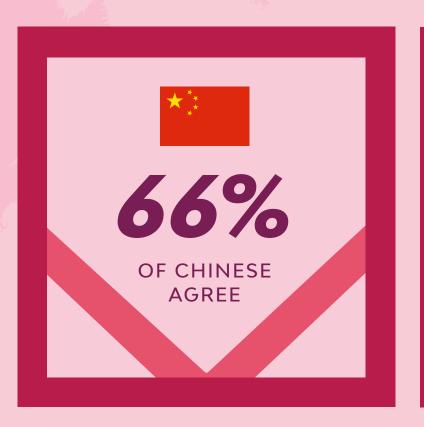
Total UK (men and women): 2,003

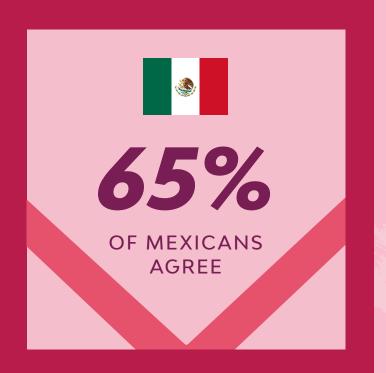
Total Russia (men and women): 2,055

European markets keep silent about their intimate area while shame and prejudice is driven by Latin American and Asian markets.

51% GLOBALLY

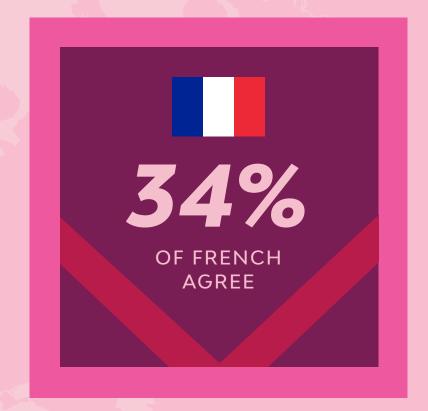
GLOBALLY THAT IT IS EMBARRASSING FOR WOMEN TO TALK ABOUT THEIR INTIMATE AREA OPENLY

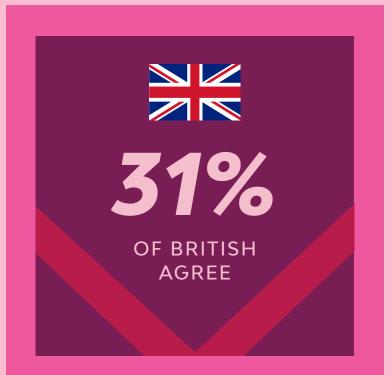




26% GLOBALLY

SAY THAT THEY HAVE NEVER DISCUSSED THEIR
INTIMATE AREA WITH ANYONE









NOTES:

Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements?

Q: Which of these have you ever discussed with...

BASE:

Total (men and women): n=14,089

Total Argentina (men and women): 2,017

Total China (men and women): 2,002

Total France (men and women): 2,006

Total Malaysia (men and women): 2,004
Total Mexico (men and women): 2,002
Total UK (men and women): 2,003
Total Russia (men and women): 2,055

KEY TABOOS BY THEMES FROM THE GVTT

The Global V Taboo Tracker found *five* key topics that drove taboos surrounding the V-Zone.



FERTILITY
AND
CHOICE

FEMALE PLEASURE



VULVA AND VAGINA

AGEING
AND
MENOPAUSE

PERIOD AND PERIOD PAIN RELATED TABOOS

GLOBAL V TABOO TRACKER

Although periods are a part of women's lived experience, only two in five women have discussed them with their partner.

Moreover, women
experiencing period pain
is an accepted reality
for both women and
men globally.

PERIODS

ONLY
40%
OF WOMEN

HAVE DISCUSSED MENSTRUATION WITH THEIR PARTNER

• •

ADVERTS IN A MORE

NORMALISED WAY

PERIOD PAIN

52%

OF MEN

51%

OF WOMEN

THINK THAT PERIOD PAIN IS

JUST SOMETHING WOMEN

HAVE TO DEAL WITH

NOTES:

Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

- Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements?
- **Q:** To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements on period pain?
- Q: Indicate your level of agreement regarding current efforts in your country to improve perceptions of women's intimate areas?

19%
OF MEN
16%
OF WOMEN

THINK THAT WOMEN
SHOULDN'T COMPLAIN ABOUT
THE PAIN THEY EXPERIENCE
DURING THEIR PERIOD

BASE:

All women: n = 7,055 **All men:** n = 7,034

Sexual pleasure is not widely discussed among women, even less so than salary.

Additionally, both men and women perpetuate taboos about period sex and lack of hygiene.

52%

OF MEN

54%

OF WOMEN

THINK WOMEN SHOULDN'T HAVE SEX DURING THEIR PERIOD AS IT'S UNHYGIENIC

45%
OF WOMEN
43%
OF MEN

THINK PERIOD
SEX IS GROSS

21%
OF MEN
26%
OF WOMEN

HAVE NEVER DISCUSSED SEXUAL PLEASURE WITH ANYONE

29%
OF WOMEN

THINK THAT WOMEN
WHO HAVE SEX ON THEIR
PERIODS ARE LOOSE
SEXUALLY

WOMEN ARE MORE LIKELY TO DISCUSS THEIR SALARY

42%
THAN THEIR SEXUAL PLEASURE

50%
WITH FEMALE FRIEND(S)

21%

OF MEN

THINK THAT WOMEN
WHO USE INTIMATE
CARE PRODUCTS ARE
LOOSE SEXUALLY

NOTES:

Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements?

BASE:

All men: n=7,055 **All men:** n=7,034

VULVA AND VAGINA RELATED TABOOS

GLOBAL V TABOO TRACKER

Women not only
keep silent about
their intimate
area, but also feel
pressure to maintain
a certain image of it.

50%
of MEN 579

OF WOMEN

AGREE WOMEN HAVE TO
WORK HARDER THAN MEN
TO KEEP THEIR INTIMATE
AREA LOOKING GOOD FOR
THEIR PARTNER

51%

OF WOMEN

FIND IT
EMBARRASSING TO
TALK OPENLY ABOUT
THEIR INTIMATE AREA

22%

OF WOMEN

HAVE FELT THE NEED
TO APOLOGISE WITH
A PARTNER FOR HOW
THEIR INTIMATE AREA
LOOKS AND SMELLS



ARE

ONLY

43%

OF WOMEN

HAVE DISCUSSED
THEIR INTIMATE
AREA WITH THEIR
PARTNER

21%

OF WOMEN

HAVE BEEN SHAMED BY
THEIR PARTNER FOR HOW
THEIR INTIMATE AREA
LOOKS OR SMELLS

25%

OF WOMEN

OF WOMEN KEEP
SILENT ABOUT THEIR
INTIMATE AREA

NOTES:

Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements?

Q: Which of these have you ever discussed with...

BASE:

All women: n=7,055 **All men:** n=7,034

GLOBAL V TABOO TRACKER TABOOS RELATED TO FERTILITY AND CHOICE

Men hold more traditional views on choice and abortion and further perpetuate taboos surrounding motherhood and fertility.



CHOICE

26%

OF MEN

THINK THAT IF A WOMAN HAS HAD A MISCARRIAGE, SHE SHOULD NOT TELL ANYONE BEYOND HER PARTNER

25%

OF MEN

THINK A WOMAN DECIDING NOT TO HAVE CHILDREN OF HER OWN IS ABNORMAL

30%

OF MEN

OF WOMEN

THINK DECIDING NOT TO HAVE KIDS IS SELFISH

26% OF MEN

OF WOMEN

THINK THAT INFERTILITY SHOULD MAKE WOMEN FEEL LESS LIKE A WOMAN

25%

OF WOMEN

32%

OF MEN

THINK THAT IF A WOMAN HAS AN ABORTION, SHE SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF HERSELF

19%

OF WOMEN

OF MEN

DON'T THINK WOMEN SHOULD BE ABLE TO DECIDE THEMSELVES IF THEY WANT TO TERMINATE THEIR OWN PREGNANCY

NOTES:

Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements on women's fertility? BASE:

All women: n = 7,055 **All men:** n = 7,034 AGEING AND MENOPAUSE RELATED TABOOS GLOBAL V TABOO TRACKER

There is more global acceptance surrounding ageing and menopause taboos.

However, a large proportion of women still feel societal prejudice related to ageing and menopause.

OF WOMEN OF MEN WHEN A WOMAN ENTERS MENOPAUSE, PEOPLE START TO SEE HER AS "OLD"



Agree: % selecting somewhat or completely agree

Q: To what extent do you personally agree with the following statements?



BASE:

All men: n=7,055 **All men:** n=7,034

THANK YOU

