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Modelling wedding marketing strategies: An fsQCA analysis

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Abstract: *Aim of the study is to develop a model delineating customer perceptions on wedding marketing strategies in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Main objective of this paper is to analyse a category of special events: the wedding market sector in Kaohsiung, Taiwan by examining how they attract consumers regarding their marketing strategies using the method of fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA). Based on a survey to married, in relationship and singles local citizens of Taiwan the relationships between impressions, importance, push factors with decision making was explored. To test the hypotheses of the proposed model a primary research study was conducted employing a mall intercept technique via distribution of a self-administered questionnaire within a cross sectional on-site field research context. A fsQCA modelling approach technique was employed in order to measure, estimate and confirm the different casual paths constructs, as well as to test the significance of the paths between different segments of the wedding industry. Our findings reveal that the presence of importance, push factors and decision making determines the level of consumer perception performance. However, impressions do not show significant impact on consumer perceptions.*

Keywords: Weddings, fsQCA, Taiwan, Marketing Strategies

JEL Classification: M00, M31, R15

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1 INTRODUCTION

Understanding different factors that affect the environment of an organization is highly important to create different marketing strategies (Varadarajan 2010, Bang, Joshi et al. 2016; Volgger et al, 2017). Lin and Wu (2010) say usually how you use your resources and capability is important to sustain a competitive advantage in its environment. That is the reason why enhancing marketing critical resources will affect how a company is situated on an environment as it can create a stronger position in the marketplace (Hooley, Greenley et al. 2005; Martins, 2016). Wedding business provides services and sells wedding products to people who get married. Wedding services include wedding schemes, wedding etiquette, providing wedding hosts, photography, making videos, and holding wedding. Wedding stores have comprehensive services for the people who get married. Holding a wedding involves many practical matters to do. Customers come to the wedding store, and the store arranges everything for the customer. (Wu, 2012). With reference to

Nutt (2007), setting up usually starts by setting a date. This is not a simple task, as the planner must choose a date which is not only convenient for the couple but also for the guests. A wedding is a once-in-a-lifetime-experience, so it is assumed that most couples would prefer this event to be witnessed by their entire intended guests. Subsequently, the type of ceremony would have to be finalized as well because this will indicate whether the wedding is formal or semi-formal, big or small (Krishnan, 2008; Sotoriadis and Shen, 2017).

Aim of the study is to develop a model delineating customer perceptions on wedding marketing strategies in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Main objective of this paper is to analyze a category of special events: the wedding market sector in Kaohsiung, Taiwan by examining how they attract consumers regarding their marketing strategies using the method of fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA). A new model is developed related to related to wedding customer perception, impressions, importance, push and pull factors and decision making. More of that this model was applied on a different types of wedding segments which makes it unique as up to

our knowledge no other model examines those factors. More of that, the proposed model was evaluated with a contemporary method such as fuzzy set/Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) which wasn't used in the past to explore the factor of a wedding related model

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Setting up a wedding celebration, ranging from the venue, props, foods, and reception can be done by anyone who has the patience and time to allocate for the overall operation, as weddings indeed consume much time (reference from our journal). Nowadays there are some changes, since parents respect children's wishes and now couples pursue the elaboration, professional, and custom-made theme wedding. In Taiwan there many different tribes and that is why the same situation occurs for Aboriginal and Hakka. According to Shone and Parry (2004), "weddings involve an entire range of services and customers that are making use of these services". Consumers are influenced by some factors which are the price (it is many people most concerned about), quality (the degree of reputation for a greater impact), and creativity (derive the planning of wedding planners). To attract more consumers and continuously progress to integrate with different industries, Taiwan's wedding business needs to fully understand customer needs, work together to clients and find way to create a competitive advantage. Wedding companies should investigate their available resources and capabilities and decide based on a large number of complex factors which are the best marketing strategies to select (Lyons and Branston, 2006; Wu, Lin et al. 2010; Chatzigeorgiou, 2017).

Seebaluck, Munhurrin et al. (2015) examine push and pull factors for a wedding destination and their findings revealed that destination's attributes and destination marketing and promotion encouraged tourists to marry in Mauritius. Related to decision making some of the most important issues is employee attitude, cleanliness, and food quality on how couples decide to book a banquet for a wedding in Hong Kong (Lau and Hui 2010). They also find out that first impression is a catalyst on how people choose a specific company. Few scholars have attempted to investigate impression management (Brandon-Lai, Armstrong et al. 2016; Almeyda-Ibáñez & George, 2017; Liu et al, 2015; Nella & Christou, 2010; 2016; Chatzigeorgiou and Christou, 2016) and decision making in wedding marketing.

3 METHODOLOGY

Several researchers claim that structural equation modelling (SEM) and multiple regression analysis (MRA) used in hypothesis testing that is connected to net effects estimation may be confusing in some cases especially when we are faced with low multi-collinearity (Woodside 2013, Skarmeas, Leonidou et al. 2014, Woodside 2014). However, the use of fuzzy logic and fuzzy sets is a recent tool that avoids this kind of problem. Fuzzy logic was first introduced

by Zadeh (1965) and fuzzy set form by Smithson 1987. Ragin (2000), introduced fuzzy set/Qualitative Comparative Analysis (FsQCA) in the 1990s and subsequently developed FsQCA software for other researchers. This method solves the above mention problem since, as Elliot (2013) mentions, correlation analysis with fsQCA is enhanced in three ways: (1) variables are treated as symmetric-- (2) several solutions can lead to the same result and (3) the researcher can focus on combinational effects. A number of researchers have applied this technique rather than the standard regression approaches for these reasons (Christou and Kassianidis, 2002; Christou, 2006; Eng and Woodside 2012, Cheng, Chang et al. 2013, Stanko and Olleros 2013, Ganter and Hecker 2014, Skarmeas, Leonidou et al. 2014, Woodside 2014, Leischnig and Kasper-Brauer 2015).

As Skarmeas, Leonidou et al. (2014) state, fsQCA is a method particularly powerful because it allow researchers to calibrate partial membership in sets using values in the interval between "0" (non-membership) and "1" (full membership) without abandoning core set theoretic principles (Ragin 2008, Ragin 2008, Mendel and Korjani 2012). This is the reason that three adjustments must be made when the researcher calibrates the set related points at 0.05 for full non-membership, at 0.50 for maximum membership ambiguity, and at 0.95 for full membership. This study uses the statistical software package fsQCA 2.0 for its analysis. The advantage of fsQCA is that it can cause one or more different combinations which will be tested if they are sufficient to obtain a concrete outcome, for example such as $X1^* \sim X2^* \sim X3$ can be satisfactory for an outcome (Y) where * is union and ~ is absence or negation.

The data is collected by a self-administered questionnaire to married, in relationship and singles local citizens of Taiwan. A primary research study was conducted employing a mall intercept technique. This study issues 500 questionnaires, from which 426 were valid responses, giving a response rate of 85.02%. Assessing the differences between the early and late respondents with regard to the means of all the variables reveals no significant differences, suggesting that nonresponse bias is not a significant issue. The early and late respondents showed no significant differences on any of the variables, indicating that late respondents do not differ from early respondents and the absence of non-response bias.

In the present study, the outcome was "consumer perception". The antecedents examined, following the necessary prior calibration for the fsQCA method, were a series of characteristics such as: "importance", 'impression', 'push factors', and 'decision making'. The questions for those measures also correspond to values on a seven point Likert scale.

4 RESULTS

In this section, we verify whether we can consider any of the causal conditions as a necessary condition of the outcome. A condition is necessary when the outcome constitutes a subset of the cases of that causal condition (Kvist 2007, Fotiadis, Yeh et al. 2016). We also checked consistency scores where

“1” indicates that the combination of causal conditions complies with the rule in all cases. In our case for our necessary conditions we used an over the 0.9 threshold to see if a combination of conditions is necessary or almost necessary. Coverage is calculated as a score close to “0” will mean that this condition is unimportant. As we can see table 1 the analysis of necessity between different causal conditions related to the outcome consumer perception indicates that no condition meets the above mention requirements. For that reason, no condition is necessary for the outcome.

Table 1: Analysis of necessity (\pm consumer perception).

	fsout	~fsout		
	Consisten cy	Coverage	Consisten cy	Coverage
Importanc e	0.61370	0.71312	0.59672	0.65233
~Importan ce	0.42341	0.52345	0.51222	0.31231
Impressio n	0.68467	0.65821	0.67345	0.71221
~Impressi on	0.43512	0.47723	0.42352	0.44124
Push Factors	0.63231	0.81221	0.65232	0.59423
~Push Factors	0.41234	0.46452	0.42343	0.49323
Decision Making	0.59882	0.63233	0.61223	0.67232
~Decisio n Making	0.49823	0.42321	0.39212	0.44321

Then the next step is to make an analysis of our subset where we can verify the conditions of sufficiency. For that reason, we create causal paths which are the combinations of these causal conditions. Based on table 2 we can consider that two of the causal paths can be considered as empirically important. Empirical importance stems from the degree to which the causal condition or combination of conditions explains the result. And the empirical importance is assessed by two scores, the raw coverage and the unique coverage, suggested by Ragin (2006).

Table 2: Combinations of conditions of sufficiency.

	Solution	
	1	2
Configuration		
Importance	●●	●
Impression	∅	∅
Push and Pull	∅	●●
Decision Making	●●	●
Consistency	0.89	0.89
Raw Coverage	0.56	0.62
Unique Coverage	0.18	0.07
Overall solution Consistency	0.87	
Overall solution coverage	0.79	

● indicate the presence of a causal condition, and ∅ indicate absence, ●● indicate core conditions.

With regard to the first configuration, importance and decision making shows up as an extremely important causal condition for customer’s perception. From this combination the results in Table 2 reveals that customer with high level of importance and decision-making factors present a higher level of positive customer perception in 56% of the cases. From the second solution we can see that high level of push and full factors can offer a positive customer perception in 62% of the cases.

Customers also with high levels of importance and decision making have a positive perception for the wedding companies’ strategies in 53% of the cases. Our findings reveal that the presence of importance, push factors and decision making determines the level of consumer perception performance. An interesting result is that impressions do not show any significant impact on consumer perceptions.

5 CONCLUSION

This study seeks to develop a model delineating customer perception on wedding marketing strategies in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. The analysis of necessary condition shows that importance, impression, push and pull factors and decision making is not necessary to generate positive consumer perception. As the study reveals three different solutions are suggested as possible to create positive customer perception from marketing strategies developed by wedding companies. As marketing strategies for wedding companies is not well developed so far, more research is needed related to this topic.

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